

Hillary House National Historic Site

## The Godfrey Collection Inventory Project: An Update

By: Claire Smith, Collections Management Intern

Since the Fall 2023 edition of the Attic, The Godfrey Collection Inventory Project has been progressing well, except for one minor timeline adjustment. Originally, we had planned to have fully inventoried all of the archival collection boxes before the end of last year. However, this past November, we learned that goal would be unattainable. After completing box #12 of the Godfrey Archival Collection, Kathleen and I found an additional 13 boxes requiring inventory, increasing the number of boxes from 12 to 25.

Finding these new materials meant that inventorying the 78 Godfrey Book Collection boxes would be delayed until the Archival Collection was completed. Therefore, the AHS team realized that we were going to need extra help to meet the original project end-date. While I started to work through the newly accounted for boxes, Kathleen sent a call out for volunteers to help with the project and thankfully, our amazing AHS volunteers answered the call. In early January 2024, our Godfrey Project volunteers began assisting with the inventory of the Book Collection boxes. We are happy to report that our volunteers have fully inventoried 16 boxes! Thank you Isaac, Sonia, Layla, Hilary, and Nadia for all your help!

The contents of 23 of the 25 Archival Collection boxes have now been organized, inventoried, and researched. These 23 boxes contained a total of 14,482 items, of which 2,482 potentially rare and historically significant items have been digitally scanned. There are still two more boxes to go before I begin inventorying the Godfrey Artifact Collection.

Once the Artifact Collection's inventory is complete, I will then be able to join our volunteers in inventorying the Godfrey Book Collection.

Just as there were many interesting items found in the first 12 boxes of the Godfrey Archival Collection, the past 11 boxes that I have been working through have been just as interesting. What stood out were some original letters written by famous Canadian physician and politician, John Rolph.



Envelope addressed to Dr. Aikins 53 Queen St. Toronto.  
from Dr. John Rolph, MP. Godfrey Collection.

John Rolph (b.1793 – d. 1870) was a notable figure in both the medical and political landscape of Upper Canada in the mid-1800s. Rolph was born in England and emigrated to Canada in 1812.

*Continued on page 4*

This issue of *The Attic* is generously sponsored by:

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## Winter Open Hours

Come and visit Hillary House  
Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm.  
Please call ahead to ensure Staff availability.  
While you're here, visit the Gift Shop.

# President's Message!

As this President's Message is being written in mid-February, in sub-zero very snowy weather, I wonder what the weather will be like when the Attic is published and distributed in March. Based on the last few years, unsettled seems to be the safest prediction! But whatever the weather, we hope that you and your family have had a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

By the time you read this, the AHS will have had a Special Members Meeting to discuss the future of Hillary House. The preservation of our National Historic Site has always been a top priority of the Aurora Historical Society and over the past number of years, the Board of Directors has become more and more cognizant of the financial challenge of doing so. That is the driver behind calling the special Members Meeting for February 28th.

As the newsletter will have gone to press by the time the meeting is conducted we obviously can't comment on the outcome. But we do wish to thank everyone who attended and offered their input, and the Board will be reporting back to the members on our next steps.

As you will see in the coming pages, we had a very successful winter season and over the past months, Kathleen and Selin have been busy working on our exhibitions and programming for the rest of the year.



Front entrance of Hillary House.

Claire has been making great progress on the Godfrey Collection and has found some real gems; Shannon has joined us to learn and assist with programs; and Julie has been working her magic on getting our costs down.

We close this brief President's Report with a big thank you to our staff, Board, and volunteers!

And we wish you a productive spring!

Alan Lambert & Geoffrey Dawe



Co-Presidents: Geoff and Al

## AURORA HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2023

### Board of Directors 2023

<b>Co-President</b> .....	Alan Lambert
<b>Co-President</b> .....	Geoffrey Dawe
<b>Co-Treasurer</b> .....	Geoffrey Dawe
<b>Co-Treasurer</b> .....	Dan McGeown
<b>Secretary</b> .....	John Green
<b>Director</b> .....	Michelle Primeau

### Committees

<b>Grounds Maintenance</b> .....	Alan Lambert
<b>TOA Heritage Advisory Committee Rep</b> .....	John Green

### Staff

<b>Curator/Manager</b> .....	Kathleen Vahey
<b>Programming &amp; Outreach Coordinator</b> .....	Selin Kahramanoğlu
<b>Administrative Assistant</b> .....	Julie Preston
<b>Collections Management Intern</b> .....	Claire Smith
<b>Education and Programming Intern</b> .....	Shannon Buskermolen
<b>Newsletter Production</b> .....	Julie Preston
<b>Newsletter Editor, Volunteer</b> .....	Christine McLure
<b>Newsletter Layout, Volunteer</b> .....	Brenda Snape

We invite members to submit suggestions for inclusion in the newsletter. Please email [community@aurorahs.com](mailto:community@aurorahs.com).

# Highlights from Hillary House



*Our Programming & Outreach Coordinator (right) and Collections Management Intern (left) run the AHS booth at the Fall Youth Volunteer Fair.*



*A spookily decorated Study at Hillary House, ready for the A Haunted Halloween event.*



*An actor from Shadowpath Theatre writes a letter during the Aurora's Haunted immersive performance in the Study at Hillary House.*



*AHS actors and participants take a photo after completing the Murder Mystery game at our heritage property.*



*The volunteer team that was handing out free hot chocolate and Timbits during the Santa Under the Stars parade, donated from the Tim Hortons off of John West Way.*



*Participants crafting away in the Ballroom at the Holiday Wreath-Making Workshop, a partnership between the AHS and Garden Aurora.*



*Cubs from Scouts Canada attempting to guess artifacts during their visit to Hillary House.*



*Holiday cards written by visitors during A Family Christmas, captured hanging from the upper foyer at Hillary House*

## Rentals

This is the time of year to book your upcoming wedding photos at Hillary House. The ballroom is ready to host your special events. Please contact the office for rental rates and packages available year-round.



A display case at the Aurora Public Library, prepared by our Programming & Outreach Coordinator, highlights the past Youth Mentorship Program exhibition on Victorian interior design.

Damage:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abrasion/Scratches	<input type="checkbox"/> Burns	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brittle/Floaking
<input type="checkbox"/> Fraying/Splitting	<input type="checkbox"/> Chips/Dents	<input type="checkbox"/> Residues/Fingerprints
<input type="checkbox"/> Mold	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fading/Stains	<input type="checkbox"/> Loose Parts/Weak
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Holes/Wear	<input type="checkbox"/> Distortion/Warping	<input type="checkbox"/> Missing Parts
Treatment:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Extensive	<input type="checkbox"/> Some	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None		
Evaluation: Is it worth keeping in the museum?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
Reason: <u>It doesn't look very cool</u>		
<u>caul</u>		

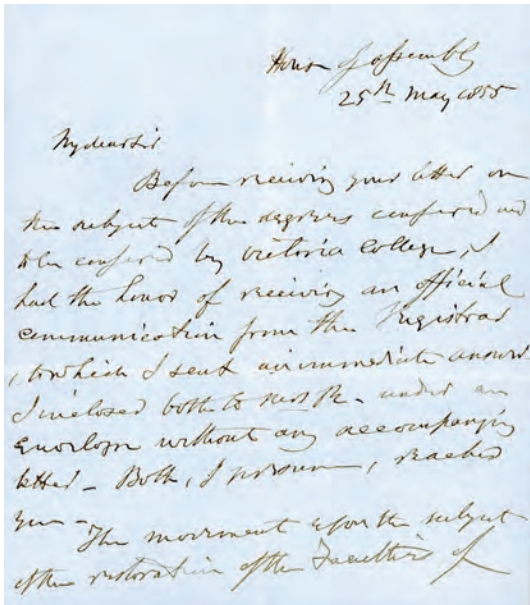
A Collections Worksheet filled out during a St. Andrew's College student visit, listing a valid answer that an artifact should be removed from the museum because "it doesn't look very cool."

## The Godfrey Collection Inventory Project: An Update

Continued from page 1

Over the course of his career, Rolph worked as a physician at various medical institutions across Ontario and in 1851, he founded his own medical school, Toronto School of Medicine (TSM). Many prominent doctors and educators came to work for Rolph at TSM. One of those doctors was William Thomas Aikins (b.1891 – d.1900), who went on to become one of the most prominent figures in the history of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Medicine. During the later years of Rolph's life, his relationship with Aikins became strained due to their disagreements over the operation of TSM.

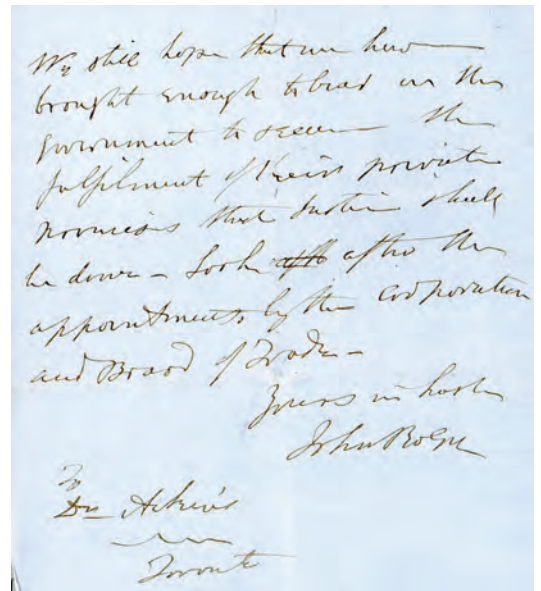
One of the original letters found in the Godfrey Archival Collection showcases a moment when Rolph and Aikins' relationship was beginning to breakdown. The letter shown here was written by Rolph to



Letter from Dr. Rolph to Dr. Aikins. Godfrey Collection.

Aikins in May of 1855, when Rolph was serving as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. During this time, the Toronto School of Medicine became attached to Victoria College, which would later become part of the University of Toronto. In this letter, Rolph refers to a meeting with the registrar and board of Victoria College.

In total, the Godfrey Archival Collection contains 11 original letters written personally by John Rolph, and over 20 original letters written by other Rolph family members. Just as the William Osler letters



Letter from Dr. Rolph to Dr. Aikins. Godfrey Collection.

showcased a series of private moments from the life of a public figure, the Rolph letters provide a snapshot of what was happening during an infamous time in Toronto's medical history, capturing a more private side of another famous Canadian.

As I continue to work through the remaining Godfrey Collection, I look forward to what new treasures I will find and share with the Aurora Historical Society.

# Upcoming Events

## AHS Speaker Series:

"Spirits & Stories at Hillary House"  
with the Paranormal Seekers

Hybrid

Wednesday, March 27th @ 7pm

Reserve  
a Spot

Are spirits roaming the halls of Hillary House? The Paranormal Seekers are an investigative team specializing in historic locations and afterlife awareness. They explore locations with a goal of bringing history and stories back to life, while validating paranormal experiences. Join us to hear what they found at our very own Hillary House.

## Youth Art Workshop

In-Person, Hillary House Ballroom

Wednesday, April 10th @ 3:30pm

Reserve  
a Spot

In partnership with the *Royal Rose Art Gallery*, a fun and creative session for youth aged 12 to 16 (contact us for age exceptions).

## AHS Speaker Series:

"Lost Archival Representations of Shell Shock"

with Cameron Telch

Hybrid

Wednesday, April 24th @ 7pm

Reserve  
a Spot

A presentation to highlight the representation of shell shock in First World War media, featuring a review of two unprecedented archival discoveries.

## Mother's Day Tea

In-person, Indoors at Hillary House

Saturday, May 11th (with Child Ticket Prices Available)

& Sunday, May 12th (Regular Prices)





Our Mother's Day tea is back with two event dates! Come to Hillary House and let's celebrate the moms who are special to us.

Reserve  
a Spot

Saturday, May 11th

Reserve  
a Spot

Sunday, May 12th

<b>Seniors Programs</b>  Designed to come to you.	<b>Murder Mystery</b>  For private groups.	<b>Curriculum Connections</b>  For school groups.	<b>Guides &amp; Scouts Programs</b>  Engaging activities for young audiences.
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Happening all-year-round! Connect with the AHS Office to book.

# Save the Date

There are exciting days on the horizon! Mark your calendars for these upcoming events.

## AHS Speaker Series: Vishnudat Persaud

Hybrid

Wednesday, May 29th @ 7pm

## AHS Speaker Series: Kathleen Vahey

Hybrid

Wednesday, June 26th @ 7pm

## Father's Day BBQ & Yard Sale

In-person, Outdoors at Hillary House

Sunday, June 16th (weather permitting)

## Heritage Craft Workshop: Historical Fiction Writing

In-person, Hillary House Ballroom

Saturday, June 22nd @ 1pm

It's back again for a second year!

## AHS Youth Mentorship Program



Earn volunteer hours. Learn about the arts and culture sector. Explore community hotspots. Make new friends with shared interests. Gain basic workplace skills. Collaborative peer exhibition coming soon in May 2024.

# In the Community

*Our team is always out and about in Aurora. Here's a sneak peek as to what the AHS is up to when the weather starts warming up!*

## The Art of Letter Writing / From Me to You

Aurora Public Library  
Tuesdays, March 19th & April 2nd  
@ 7:00pm to 8:30pm



## Aurora Chamber Home & Living Show

Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex  
Saturday, April 20th &  
Sunday, April 21st



## Heritage Craft Session

Aurora Public Library  
Tuesday, March 26th  
@ 6:30pm to 8:00pm



## Historic Walking Tour

Starting at Hillary House  
Saturdays, May 25th & June 15th  
@ 10:30am to 12:30pm



# Introducing Shannon

**M**y name is Shannon Buskermolen, and I am the new Education & Programming Intern with the AHS. I am a recent graduate of the Masters in International War Studies program at Universität Potsdam (Germany) and University College Dublin (Ireland). I am currently attending the Museum and Cultural Management graduate certificate program at Centennial College. This internship is a field placement requirement of my program. I feel very fortunate to be able to work directly with Selin and the team to learn about the AHS programming offerings.

It is my goal to gain experience in programming planning, public engagement, and social media content creation. I hope to pursue a museum career where I can share my passion for history and its importance in society in an exciting and engaging way. Naturally, AHS is a perfect place to experience this! I have already learned invaluable knowledge on planning and implementing a wide variety of programs at Hillary House and within the community. I had the pleasure of creating my very own program for a Girl Guide group visit in February, featuring a marionette fish craft. Their program was developed in connection to women inventors from the Victorian Era and female role models who lived at Hillary House.

One of my favourite experiences here so far (aside from



*Shannon assisting with the AHS Heritage Craft Session outreach program at the Aurora Public Library.*

working with the AHS team) is that everyday, I get to leave Hillary House having learned something new. Whether I am researching about the Victorian era, historic medical practices, Aurora's local history, the Hillary family, or the AHS collection, there is so much information to explore. While Hillary House may seem small from the outside, it is packed-full of exciting stories and interesting artifacts. Keep your eyes

peeled for my Collections Corner and Freaky Friday social media posts to share in what I have been learning at the AHS!

I am very excited to experience all that Hillary House has to offer and continue to get to know the wonderful Aurora community.

The Aurora Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of:



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# A Brief History of Medical Education in 1800s Toronto

By Kathleen Vahey, Curator/Manager

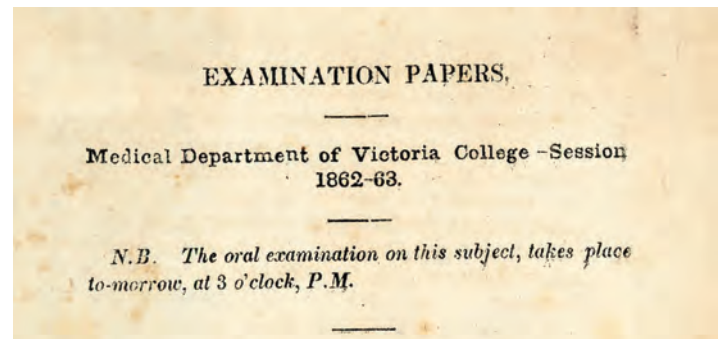
In November 2023, the AHS was contacted by David, a man researching Walter Bayne Geikie (the first doctor owner of Hillary House), who happens to be his great-great uncle. I love to meet descendants of former Hillary House residents, as I am always sure I will learn something new, so I was happy to exchange knowledge with David. However, David's inquiry reignited questions that I had about Geikie's time as a professor and Dean of Trinity Medical College. So down, down, down, into the research rabbit hole I went...

When I began researching Geikie's professorship, it quickly became clear that the history of medical education in Ontario is complicated. It was heavily influenced by men who championed for formal medical education, as well as the politics of the time, all of which is wrapped up in the bigger history of sanctioned educational institutions. For the sake of this article, I am going to briefly explain the medical education landscape of 1800s Toronto, which will not cover every nuance of this topic. I will also use language that is more familiar to a current audience, rather than be historically accurate (i.e. using *Ontario* instead of Upper Canada/Canada West).

In the early 19th century, many doctors studied in Europe or apprenticed to learn the necessary skills. The trainees could then take an exam and obtain a license to practice medicine in Ontario, which was the route of our Doctors Strange and Robert William Hillary. (See the Summer 2023 edition of the Attic for more on RW Hillary's education.)

However, Doctors Geikie and Robert Michael Hillary were trained in Toronto. In 1849, Geikie enrolled at the Toronto School of Medicine (TSM) under Dr. John Rolph, who was a respected doctor and a prominent Reformer politician. Rolph was a staunch advocate for medical education and had been teaching medicine since c. 1824, before starting the TSM officially in c.1843

Geikie graduated from TSM in 1851, obtained a license to practice medicine from the Medical Board of Upper Canada, and then went to Jefferson College in Philadelphia to get his M.D. degree – the latter he couldn't obtain through the TSM. To address this common problem that Geikie and many medical trainees faced, Rolph and his colleague Dr. William Thomas Aikins negotiated to be affiliated with Victoria College. After 1854, the TSM became the Medical Department of Victoria College. However, TSM students were able to take exams and get degrees from any degree conferring institution (ie. University of Toronto or Trinity College).



An examination paper from the 1862-3 session of the Medical Department Victoria College. Godfrey Collection.

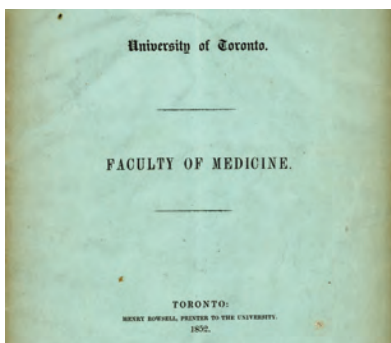


Robert William Hillary's Medical License from 1857 that permitted him to practice medicine, surgery, and midwifery in Ontario. Hillary Collection.

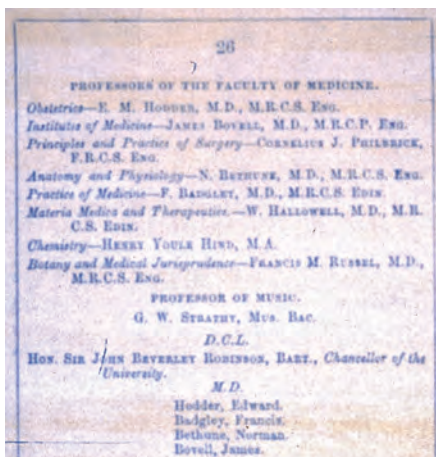
At this time, most of Canada was embroiled in a political tug-of-war between the Family Compact and the Reformers. A 'responsible government' was implemented in Toronto in 1848-1849 and shortly after, the religious (Church of England) King's College was replaced with the secular University of Toronto (U of T). King's College had a medical department since 1843, which transitioned into the U of T Medical Department by 1852. This didn't last long though, as the provincial government passed the University of Toronto Act of 1853, revoking U of T's teaching responsibilities. The goal was to make U of T a collegiate school like those in Britain, where the university was responsible for curriculums, examinations, and granting degrees, while affiliated colleges facilitated teaching. The medical faculty was closed and medical education fell

to proprietary schools for the next 34 years.

With the secularization of U of T, an angered Bishop John Strachan worked quickly to establish Trinity College, and along with it, a medical faculty by the early 1850s. The biggest challenge for this medical school were the strict religious entrance requirements for students implemented by the wider College. Admissions, examinations, and the conferral of degrees were dependent on students declaring their Anglican beliefs, which deterred many from enrolling; thus, affecting the school's tuition funding. The medical faculty attempted to avoid these restrictions by accepting non-Anglican students, and encouraging them to take their final examinations at one of the secular colleges/ universities in Toronto. This, coupled with a sense of independence by the Trinity medical faculty, caused disputes with the larger Trinity College corporation, and resulted in a mass medical faculty resignation in 1856, effectively closing the medical school.



University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine 1852 booklet. Godfrey Collection.



University of Trinity College, Faculty of Medicine, 1855 booklet. Godfrey Collection.

(new) Toronto School of Medicine. Rolph maintained the support of Victoria College and managed to teach all the medical school's classes by himself for two weeks while recruiting new staff, one being our Dr. Geikie. From 1856 to 1870, Victoria College Medical Department and the new TSM were the only medical schools in Toronto and they were often at battle with each other. However, soon Rolph would have a fall-out with the next set of colleagues at

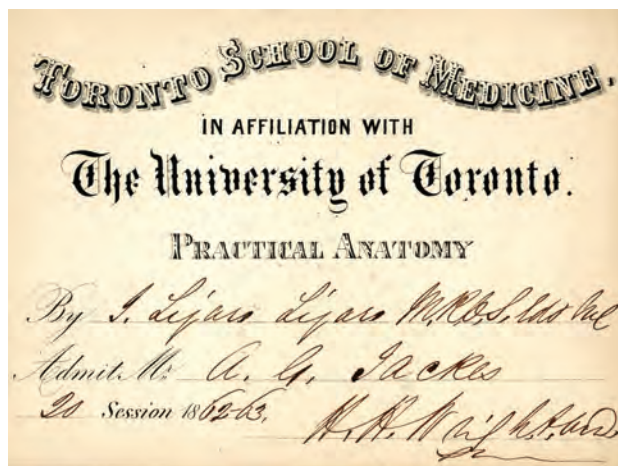
Coincidentally, 1856 was also a year of strife for the TSM/Medical Department of Victoria College. The faculty had grown weary of Rolph's increasing autocratic leadership, and staged a mutiny of sorts by resigning from Victoria College. The faculty took the incorporation charter for the TSM, and started their own

Victoria College, resulting in his resignation in 1870, with Geikie following out of solidarity. The medical department at Victoria College continued for a few years, but shuttered in the mid 1870s.



This student admission card from the University of Victoria College for the 1868-9 session shows Dr. Geikie as professor of Midwifery & Diseases of Women & Children, and has his signature on the back. Godfrey Collection.

Business at the new TSM was running successfully under the direction of Dr. Michael Barrett, and later Aikins, through the 1850s to the '70s. It became one of the most successful and longest continuously open medical school in Toronto, while also maintaining a good reputation for providing comprehensive medical education in a time of tremendous medical advancements. The TSM was an independent body, but Aikins had been a vocal advocate for its close affiliation with U of T. Students would attend classes through the TSM, but were encouraged to take exams and be granted degrees through U of T, rather than Victoria College or Trinity College.

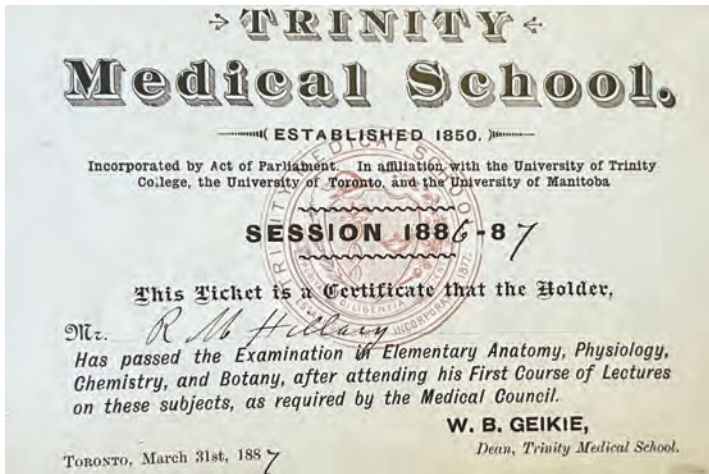


A student admission card from the Toronto School of Medicine for the 1862-3 session, which shows the TSM's affiliation with U of T. Godfrey Collection.

Shortly after his resignation from Victoria College, John Rolph passed away. Geikie, not yet ready to shed his identity as a professor, joined the petitioning of the University of Trinity College to restore its medical department, now that the religious requirements had eased. From their success, Geikie became registrar, treasurer, secretary, and professor.



The school incorporated as an independent body with a voluntary affiliation with Trinity College in 1877, and became Trinity Medical School, later Trinity Medical College (TMC). Geikie became Dean in 1878. This is where Robert Michael Hillary graduated from in 1890.



*RM Hillary's certificate from Trinity Medical School, confirming he passed an examination during his first year of medical school. Note the class was taught by Dr. Geikie. Hillary Collection.*

During this time, U of T viewed both TMC and the TSM as proprietary schools, assisting them financially to update medical equipment and facilities. By the mid-1880s, U of T and the provincial government were increasingly interested in having the schools amalgamate to reduce costs. Geikie refused on behalf of TMC, but Aikins from the TSM had been in favour of this for decades. In 1887, the TSM merged with U of T and became the U of T Faculty of Medicine. TMC remained independent for a number of years, but by the turn of the century, it was getting harder to compete with U of T, which had the financial backing of the provincial government. A complex story but in short, Geikie surrendered the TMC charter to the University of Trinity College, effectively giving up their independence and rejoining the College as a department. This move was on the promise that Trinity College was going to fund a new medical facility. Unbeknownst to Geikie, they had been in talks with U of T to federate and the TMC was the only holdout. Since the TMC was now governed by the larger Trinity College corporation, Geikie no longer had a say on the decision. In 1903, the University of Trinity College federated with U of T, and the medical staff joined the U of T department, except Geikie who resigned.

With that, we come to the end of the century. Thus, we wrap up Geikie's involvement with medical education and I pop my head up out of the rabbit hole (until next time).

## Spring Cleaning?

Do you have items you don't use anymore? Donations to the Hillary House Gift Shop are always welcome.

Please contact the office to arrange your drop off, or if you have queries on what we accept.

All donations and purchases support the operation and restoration of Hillary House.

## In Memoriam

AHS Supporters we lost in 2023.

**Gordon Amos Barnes** passed away peacefully on July 23, 2023. Gordon and his wife were supporters of the AHS and joined as life members in 2009.

**Michael John van Nostrand** eldest child of Frederick van Nostrand and Dorothy van Nostrand (nee. Hillary), passed away peacefully on September 5, 2023.

**Victor Norman (Peter) Styrmø** passed away peacefully on December 31, 2023. Peter was a life-long museum professional and great supporter of history. Peter was the curator of the Marine Museum in Toronto, museum advisor for the Province of Ontario, head of property management for the Toronto Historical Board, and served on the AHS Board of Directors from 2016 to 2021. Peter's wife Diane passed away in February 2023.



*AHS Secretary John Green (left) and Peter Styrmø (right) in 2019.*

# Practicing Mindfulness with a Slow Museum Tour

By: Selin Kahramanoğlu, Programming & Outreach Coordinator

A couple years ago, I was researching the Slow Movement, and my findings really stuck with me. For those who are not as familiar with the Slow Movement, it is meant to challenge our fast-paced lifestyle and encourage mindfulness. These days, many of us feel society's pressure to rush from here to there – put on your factory-made clothing, grab a quick coffee and bite to eat, hurry to work, etc. We are living a life of running around and trying to catch up with fleeting time. For what reason? How many of us have really questioned why we continue to oblige this forced hustle and bustle lifestyle? The Slow Movement asks us to take a breath, enjoy the little things in life, really live our experiences as they unfold, and be a part of the process.

As a result, there are many subcategories of the Slow Movement. For example, Slow Fashion teaches us about making clothes, buying clothing from people who prepare their own textiles and dye their own cloth. Another example is Slow Travel, which explores living the life of a local while in a foreign country, rather than signing up for a resort package during your trip. A last example, and the one that I researched the most, is the beautiful experience of Slow Art. Individuals are invited to spend a little extra time with artwork, understand where the tools and materials were acquired, the technique of making the art, and the various meanings behind it. There are entire workshops and tours dedicated to Slow Art, and I personally enjoyed teaching people about art using the Slow method.

In November 2023, the AHS hosted Jennifer Lee Jones from the Canadian Mental Health Association, York Region & South Simcoe Branch, for a Speaker Series presentation. Jennifer delivered an exceptional talk that I requested to remind audiences that museum visits are a beneficial mental health resource. From the audience discussion at this program, I understood that Hillary House has room to

improve its own accessibility in this regard. Additionally, improving mental health and providing resources is a personal passion and professional goal of mine. From this, I developed a program that would touch on the Slow Movement and also address common museum barriers.



Mindfulness cards from the Slow Museum Tour on a chair in the Drawing Room.

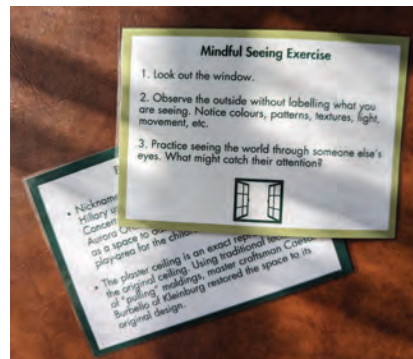
The Slow Museum Tour at Hillary House was created as a response to these community needs.

- 1 We are open Monday to Friday during the colder months, but most people work on weekdays. The tour now allows visitors to have access to the museum on a weekend.
- 2 We are open 10AM to 4PM, but most people are busy during the daytime. The tour is now open at a later hour.
- 3 We have an admission fee of \$5 per person over 12-years-old, which goes towards continuing our operations but is not always easy for guests to accommodate. The Slow Tour is offered for free to everyone.
- 4 We offer guided tours only, but people are then restricted to our Staff's time. The tour now allows participants to wander at their own pace, and includes a basic informational booklet.
- 5 We do not allow participants to touch artifacts to protect both the objects and our visitors. The tour now permits visitors to touch a select number of "safe" historical objects.

6 We do a lot of talking during our tours, which is welcome for some visitors but distracting to others. The Slow Tour has guides stationed throughout the building for engagement at the visitor's request.

7 We focus on the history, which is a part of the AHS mission, but it is not the only way to enjoy Hillary House. The tour now has integrated mindfulness exercises for visitors to decompress and think introspectively about the property.

Knowing that the AHS cannot lift every rule that is in place at the museum, because there is a reason for everything that we do, I was happy with the compromise that came to fruition for this specialized tour. Whenever possible, we wanted visitors to feel like they could come to Hillary House, like visiting an old friend after a long day. We hope our community will take advantage of the Slow Museum Tours that are scheduled in the coming months. Please do come by, have a look around, and we hope you leave feeling a little lighter and brighter.



*Mindfulness cards from the Slow Museum Tour on a piano stool in the Ballroom.*

## Want to join the next Slow Museum Tour?

**Saturday, April 27th**  
**3pm to 6pm**  
**Free Admission**  
**All Ages**

Click here to sign up today!\*

**BOOK MY SPOT**

\*Drop-ins are welcome, but not guaranteed admission if the tour is at maximum capacity.

### A Big Thanks to our:

- Collections volunteers who have spent countless hours diligently scanning photographs, updating the collections database, and helping to inventory the Godfrey Book Collection.
- Virtual volunteers who are once again helping to transcribe some of our archival documents to make them more accessible for research.
- Garden Aurora volunteers who make sure Hillary House is decorated for the holidays, help run the Wreath-making Workshop, and make sure our inside plants are happy and healthy.
- Our wonderful event volunteers who help us offer a wide-range of programs to the community.



# Upcoming Exhibition

*Aurora: Through the Archives – Growing Up Aurora*

On display at Hillary House National Historic Site, the Aurora Armoury, and Royal Rose Gallery from May 6th to June 29th, this is a collaborative photography exhibition between the Aurora Museum & Archives, the Aurora Historical Society, and Amanda Jenkins, Sophie Langille, and Maddison Dearlove-Marshall, Master of Museum Studies students from the University of Toronto. The display at Hillary House will use the lens of archival photographs to delve into experiences of childhood and growing up in Aurora. Visit all of the locations to embark on an immersive experience that blends the past with the present while exploring the Town of Aurora.

## Volunteer Opportunities

The AHS has exciting opportunities for volunteers to lend their hand. Perhaps you are interested in helping the “detectives” navigate through Hillary House during a Murder Mystery evening? Could it be that your “cup of tea” is helping at one of our many tea events? Would you be more interested in getting into our archives by volunteering virtually for the second phase of the Transcription Project? Maybe you would rather enjoy a sunny day, while raking the leaves and watching the squirrels play? Please contact the AHS office for all the interesting volunteer opportunities that are available.



## Membership Update

Did you renew your membership? When you become a member of the Aurora Historical Society, your contribution aids in the preservation, maintenance, and operation of Hillary House National Historic Site and its grounds.

We depend on donor support to provide relevant heritage programming to all ages.

### Membership Rewards:

- Invitations to Members-only exhibit previews
- Members rates on rental of the Ballroom, grounds, and other areas
- Discounts on ticketed events
- Regular updates on upcoming events
- Voting rights at Member meetings such as the Annual General Meeting  
\*Individual and Family memberships only

**Renew your membership**

**HERE**