



HALIFAX WOMEN'S
HISTORY • SOCIETY

Halifax Women's History Society Newsletter

Fall 2019

A Halifax Women's History Society membership is a meaningful and special way to support women and diverse public history.

[Consider gifting a membership this holiday season!](#)

Round Up

A lot happened in the fall of 2019! It was the 75th anniversary of Portia White's debut in New York City, Remembrance Day and the second anniversary of *The Volunteers/Les Bénévoles'* unveiling!

- [Portia White](#) was an African-Nova Scotian vocalist and opera singer who achieved international success, the first Canadian women of colour to do so. She is widely considered one of the best singers of the 20th century.
 - On November 9th, 2019 a concert was held at Saint George's Round Church, [Genius Child: Portia White at Town Hall](#), to celebrate Portia White's historic debut at New York City's Town Hall in 1944.
 - On November 30, Dalhousie Medicine will be holding it's 14th annual [Portia White Gala Concert](#) and fundraiser.
 - George Elliott Clarke, Toronto Poet Laureate and great-nephew of Portia White, is releasing a new children's book called [Portia White: A Portrait in Words](#), illustrated by Lara Martina. On December 10 he will be [presenting and discussing the book](#) at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.
- Dr. Heidi MacDonald (UNB) spoke to the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society on [the history of the women's suffrage movement in Nova Scotia](#).
- Historic Nova Scotia published a piece about [Sister Mary Donald](#) from Port Hood. She became a teacher and nun, and taught in schools across

- Robyn Brown's piece on the Acadiensis blog tells the story of [Rose Welch](#), an enslaved woman who was put on trial for murder after giving birth to a stillborn baby. Ultimately Rose was found not guilty, but that is just one small justice in the cruel history of slavery in Canada and Nova Scotia.
 - What is thought to be [Nova Scotia's first all-women lobster fishing crew](#) will be setting sail in Lunenburg next week. The *Nellie Row* is named for one of the crew member's grandmothers, who worked in the fishing industry for decades and even at the very boatyard where the boat was built.
 - November 16, 2019 marked the two year anniversary of HWHS unveiling *The Volunteers/Les Bénévoles*. It was truly a momentous day that was the culmination of years of hard work, dedication and generosity. We could not be more grateful for the support we received from the community that day and every day since.
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Blog

[Holiday Traditions by Bridget Graham](#)

When thinking about my family's holiday traditions, the list is almost a mile long. My parents have always loved Christmas, and that love was instilled in my brother and me from a young age. But baking and cooking was at the centre of it all. I would spend hours upon hours preparing fruit cake with my grandma, and lots of other goodies with my dad. These are memories that I will always cherish, especially now that my grandma is gone. Her spirit remains so vivid and present in my life because of her recipes and the joy of baking that she gave to me. As someone passionate about history, cooking and baking, I understand the importance of sharing recipes, stories and memories. In doing so we nurture our links to the past and present, and allow those moments in history to live again.

And while most years my family's baking list was quite straightforward, there were times where we took a few risks. For a couple of years, we made our own peanut butter cups, and as you may imagine it was time consuming. We had our standards; snowballs, chocolate drops, Graham bark, and a variety of cookies. I continue to bake a number of these things to enjoy with friends now as an adult.

While I remember my holiday traditions as a child so fondly, it is also nice to make new traditions as an adult. While baking remains prominent, so does my

While some things change, my love of the holiday season never will.

Grandma's Snowballs

- 2 cups peanut butter
- 2 cups icing sugar
- 2 tbsp melted butter
- 2 1/2 cups rice crispies
- small amount icing sugar, vanilla and milk
- shredded coconut

Mix peanut butter, icing sugar, melted butter and rice crispies. Form into small balls. Mix icing sugar, vanilla and milk and dip the balls into it. Roll in coconut to cover. Put in freezer or cold location for 30 minutes. Enjoy!

Dad's Golden Graham Candy

- 2 cups white chocolate wafers
- 1 cup peanuts
- 4 cups Golden Graham cereal
- 1 cup raisins

Melt chocolate in microwave or double boiler. Add peanuts, cereal and raisins. Spread on cookie sheet. Put in freezer or cold location for 30 minutes. Break into small chunks. Enjoy!



Loretta Graham (née Young) and her son Kemmel Graham in the 1980s

Joined the HWHS board Spring of 2019

From Nova Scotia, Kirby Ross grew up just outside of Halifax. Specializing in women's contributions on the homefront in Nova Scotia during World War Two, she wrote her Undergraduate Honours thesis on women's involvement in the shipbuilding and ammunition industries in Pictou County during Second World War.

Kirby has an upcoming publication with the Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society on the same topic. She is currently working on her Master of History degree at Saint Mary's University, focusing on entertainers during the Second World War in Halifax.

In her free time, Kirby enjoys travelling, visiting different historic sites, thrifting, TV binging, reading and hiking. She also runs a blog, which focuses on her history related travels.



What We're Reading

- *Mobilizing Mercy: A History of the Canadian Red Cross* by Sarah Glassford
- *The Extraordinary Life of Anna Swan* by Anne Renaud
- *City of Girls* by Elizabeth Gilbert

Society News!

Want to keep receiving updates? Make sure to let us know if there are any changes to your contact information!

Contribute to the Halifax Women's History Society!

We are proud to say that the society has successfully erected the first historical monument celebrating women in Halifax, but we still have much to do. If you would like to be a part of our future endeavours,



"The Volunteers/Les Bénévoles"
Sculpted by Marlene Hilton Moore

are always appreciative of
community support.

**To donate via Pay Pal, please
follow this link to our website:
[http://halifaxwomenshistory.c
a/donations/](http://halifaxwomenshistory.ca/donations/)**

About the Society

Founded in 2013, the Halifax Women's History Society (HWHS) researches and makes known the untold story of the remarkable contributions that women have made to the history of Halifax. "A Woman on the Waterfront" was the Society's first project.

Membership is available for anyone who wishes to support us. Lifetime membership is \$25 for adults and \$5 for students, purchasable by paypal on our [website](#).

Women's work is too often invisible to the public, especially in the history of the Second World War, which focuses on men and rarely mentions women's volunteer work. Without the work of countless volunteers, Halifax would not have been able to meet the needs of the huge influx of people into the city or support the military personnel and their families who made Halifax home during the war. There are more than 100 cairns, steles, sculptures and plaques in Halifax. Less than a dozen are of female figures and most of these are from mythology or are symbolic. A monument — The Volunteers/Les Bénévoles — to women volunteers honours them and provides public acknowledgement of their numerous contributions.



Newsletter Submissions

Have something you would like to see in our next newsletter or on our blog? An event, news story, picture, piece of writing or historical figure that is relevant to our cause? Please send us the information and we would be delighted to consider it. We are always looking for contributions of 300-700 words to our bi-weekly blog.

