



## THE HAMILTON ASSOCIATION

FOR  
THE ADVANCEMENT OF LITERATURE  
SCIENCE AND ART

Since 1857



*Frozen Waterfall, Pat Green*

## Free Public Lectures 2023–2024

Held in Rm. 1A1, Ewart Angus Centre,  
McMaster Medical Centre,  
1200 Main St. W., Hamilton, L8N 3Z5

**Saturday, 7:30pm, Sept. 16, 2023**

### **Battle of the Atlantic: Gauntlet to Victory**

*by Ted Barris*

In the 20th century's greatest war, one battlefield held the key to victory or defeat – the North Atlantic. It took 2,074 days and nights to determine its outcome, but the *Battle of the Atlantic* proved the turning point of World War II. The siege pitted German U-boats (attempting to destroy Allied transatlantic Merchant Navy convoys to the UK) against Royal Canadian Navy escorts and bomber-reconnaissance aircraft. Canada's navy went to war with exactly 13 warships and about 3,500 sailors and grew to 400 fighting ships and over 100,000 men and women in uniform. By V-E Day, 1945, it was the world's fourth largest navy.

Bestselling author Ted Barris tells stories from his latest book, *The Battle of the Atlantic*, with sympathetic regard for individuals and families caught in tumultuous times. Books will be available for sale following the talk.

**Saturday, 7:30pm, Oct. 14, 2023**

### **Causes and Continuing Effects of the Black Death**

*by Hendrik Poinar*

The Black Death (1345-1350), the first wave of the second plague pandemic, killed an estimated 100 million people and reduced the European and Middle Eastern populations by 30-40%. Until 2011, the narratives around causes and consequences of the Black Death were driven by historical texts alone. Today, using DNA molecules extracted from the teeth of plague victims, researchers have uncovered a new and compelling story of when the Black Death emerged, how it moved across Europe and Western Asia, and what consequences were for survivors. This talk will discuss how ancient DNA is helping revise cultural and genetic knowledge about the Black Death pandemic.

Dr. Hendrik Poinar, Professor of Anthropology at McMaster, is the principal investigator at its Ancient DNA Centre.

**Saturday, 7:30pm, Nov. 18, 2023**

**Dreamers, Schemers, and Builders:  
A Glimpse at Royal Botanical Gardens'  
History**

***by David Galbraith***

New archival research is painting a fresh picture of Royal Botanical Gardens' development as institution and cultural heritage landscape. The origins and development of RBG, now Canada's largest botanical garden, include tales of grand, early 20<sup>th</sup> century efforts to beautify Hamilton. By 1934 "The Ambitious City" had more parks acreage than any other Canadian city – much of it became RBG. The City Beautiful movement, McMaster's campus, the first Commonwealth Games, the Great Depression, and Canada's best architects became entangled with bankruptcies, threatened wetlands, and plans for arctic research – all parts of RBG's story.

Dr. David Galbraith is Director of Science at RBG, Adjunct Biology Professor at McMaster University, and a passionate advocate for both natural and cultural heritage.

**Saturday, 7:30pm, Dec. 9, 2023**

**Taking a Dot for a Swim:  
The Art of Surface Weaving**

***by Mita Giacomini***

In pursuit of ever more texture, colour, and meaning, Dundas textile artist Mita Giacomini has developed a novel technique she calls "surface weaving". Strands of fabric and fibres swim together, creating textures and exuberant colour interactions as an image takes form. "Why make images with fibre, rather than with paint or drawing media?" She illustrates how the fibre medium offers a sculptural dimension, rich cultural associations, and a resonance with nature difficult to achieve with other media. Its unique qualities offer something new with every look.

Mita Giacomini's colourful, neo-impressionist birds and semi-abstract images inspired by nature have appeared in galleries and museums across Canada and internationally and in many fibre art articles and books.

**THE 23<sup>rd</sup> DR. JOHN RAE LECTURE**

**Saturday, 7:30pm, Jan. 13, 2024**

**Unveiling Antarctica's Subglacial  
Secrets: A Journey into Hidden Waters**

***by Christine Dow***

Antarctica is a vast, cold desert at the far ends of the Earth. However, underneath kilometres of ice there is a fascinating world of waterways, lakes, and long sinuous rivers that flow from the interior into the ocean. This water plays a vital role in the behaviour of the ice sheet, in some regions causing the ice to flow faster and driving enhanced melt where the ice first begins to float on the ocean. To predict the future of the ice sheet in our warming planet we need to know what's happening at its slippery base.

Dr. Christine Dow is an Associate Professor at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, and the Canada Research Chair in Glacier Hydrology and Ice Dynamics. Her research takes her to polar regions ranging from the ice shelves of Terra Nova Bay, Antarctica, to glaciers in the St. Elias Mountains of Yukon Territory.

**Saturday, 7:30pm, Feb. 17, 2024**

**Two-Eyed Seeing: Joining Science  
and Traditional Knowledge**

***by Henry Lickers***

Henry Lickers has spent much of his life thinking about the importance of bridging science and local knowledge gained by Indigenous communities from experiences with the land, water and their inhabitants. As the first Indigenous commissioner on the International Joint Commission (IJC) he has brought an awareness of 'two-eyed seeing' gained through his own experience and previous work as environmental science officer for the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

Commissioner Lickers is a member of the Seneca Nation, Turtle Clan and a biologist. The IJC is a group that oversees all bodies of water shared by Canada and the United States.

**Saturday, 7:30pm, Mar. 9, 2024**

## **How Eclipses and Transits Transformed – and Continue to Transform – Science**

*by Doug Welch*

The total solar eclipse occurring April 8, 2024 is an opportunity for scientists and stargazers alike to witness an event that connects us all to astronomy. Eclipses of both the Sun and Moon have played many roles in historical settings and have revealed a rich set of knowledge about our solar system, fundamental physics, and insights into the evolution of the Earth-Moon system. Dr. Welch traces some of the pivotal research, such as testing general relativity, and discusses the "transit method" that informs our understanding of the abundance of planetary systems around other stars.

Dr. Doug Welch is a Professor in the Dept. of Physics and Astronomy at McMaster whose studies include evolved pulsating variable stars and supernova light echoes.

**Saturday, 7:30pm, April 6, 2024**

## **One Cartoonist's Completely Non-Definitive, Partial History of the Graphic Novel**

*by Joe Ollmann*

Graphic novels are finding their place in mainstream literary circles and readership, in part due to growing recognition for the value of this relatively new narrative form. *Sabrina*, by Nick Drnaso, was nominated for Britain's Man Booker prize in 2018, while Kate Beaton's *Ducks* took home top honours in the CBC competition, Canada Reads, in 2023.

Joe Ollmann gives his take on the development of graphic novels, why they deserve our attention and why some are under attack. He is a Canadian cartoonist and author of eight graphic novels, including *Fictional Father*, the first graphic novel nominated in the adult fiction category of Canada's Governor General's Awards, and winner of the Hamilton Literary Award for the same category. He co-curated 'This Is Serious', a 47-artist retrospective of indie comics at the Art Gallery of Hamilton.

Information about an HPO-HAALSA music talk will be announced on the website, via social media, and by email to the contact list.

**Annual General Meeting, via Zoom, to be announced.  
See website for details.**

### **Executive Council, 2023-2024**

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|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
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*The Hamilton Association, one of Canada's oldest non-profit cultural organizations, has encouraged the advancement of knowledge in the community through free public lectures and support for local arts and science for more than 150 years, and also sponsors the following awards for teens in the Hamilton area.*

### **The Maitland Banting Silver Quill Award**

- an award of up to \$250 for short fiction by teenage entrants in the Hamilton Public Library's Power of the Pen competition showing an excellent use of language. Details at <https://teens.hpl.ca/power-pen/>

### **Young Poet Award**

- an award of up to \$250 for poetry entered in the HPL Power of the Pen competition. Entry details as above.

### **Young Musician Award**

- a \$250 award for excellent performance, administered by the Dundas Valley Orchestra. Stressing musicianship and interpretation, it includes the opportunity to perform at a DVO concert. Details at [www.dundasvalleyorchestra.ca/](http://www.dundasvalleyorchestra.ca/)

### **da Vinci Science Fair Award**

- one or more awards of up to \$250 for students in the Bay Area Science and Engineering Fair. See [www.basef.ca/](http://www.basef.ca/)

**Official receipts are provided for memberships and other donations (of \$5.00 or more). Forms are available at [www.haalsa.org](http://www.haalsa.org)**

Please check the website for a location map, directions, parking advice and cancellations.

**Inquiries: phone 905-527-0080 or**

**Email: [secretary@haalsa.org](mailto:secretary@haalsa.org)**

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