



THE HAMILTON ASSOCIATION
FOR
THE ADVANCEMENT OF LITERATURE
SCIENCE AND ART
(HAALSA)

1857 – 2011

Celebrating 154 years of educational endeavour in Hamilton

Free Public Lectures
2011–2012 Series

Dates, Titles, Authors and Abstracts

All lectures will be presented in
Room 1A1, Ewart Angus Centre
McMaster University Medical Centre

Paid parking is available on the McMaster campus

To inquire about a possible cancellation, phone 905-527-0080

Printer-friendly donation and membership forms available at

<http://www.haalsa.org>

Saturday September 10, 2011 at 8 pm

Faction: The Merging of History and Imagination in *The Book of Negroes* by Lawrence Hill

Acclaimed writer Lawrence Hill will describe the research he undertook to write *The Book of Negroes* and the challenges involved in blending historical facts into a dramatic narrative. Both a literary and popular success, the novel tells a compelling story of how one woman's life was shaped by the slave trade in West Africa, Britain, the United States and Canada. It has been published in various countries as *The Book of Negroes*, *Someone Knows My Name*, *Het Negerboek* and *Aminata*. It won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Book, the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize, the Ontario Library Association's Evergreen Award and CBC Radio's Canada Reads 2009.

Formerly a reporter and parliamentary correspondent, Lawrence Hill has lived and worked across Canada, in Baltimore, Spain and France and is now a Hamilton resident.

Saturday October 1, 2011 at 8 pm*

Tragedy & Triumph: The McQuesten Legacy by Mary Anderson

The High Level bridge, McMaster University, the RBG, Gage Park, the QEW, Niagara parks and Rainbow Bridge were among the visionary projects championed in a long and successful political career by Thomas B. McQuesten. They remain as landmarks but he is largely forgotten.

His sister Ruby was a beautiful, gifted young teacher and artist who worked to put Tom through university. When he graduated, she fell ill and died, and her part in his success was also forgotten.

Author Dr. Mary Anderson recounts their story in an illustrated presentation while Liz Corey and Peter Ormond bring Ruby and Tom to life in a dramatic reading of their letters. Dr. Anderson is author of *Tragedy and Triumph in the McQuesten Story at Whitehern* and *The Life Writings of Mary Baker McQuesten*.

*** Annual General Meeting, 7:15 – 7:45 pm**
(members only)

Saturday November 12, 2011 at 8 pm

The Terra Cotta Warriors and Chairman Mao by Helen Vreugdenhil

A 1974 discovery uncovered thousands of life-sized clay sculptures of Chinese warriors, now known world wide as the Terra Cotta Army. One of the most significant archaeological finds in history, it has allowed experts and amateurs alike to learn about China's rich history and the early political and social transitions taking place in this rising world power.

The sculptures were created as symbolic guards for the first emperor, who welded together disparate peoples into one single and powerful kingdom in the third century BC. But the 1970s were another volatile period in China — an important part of this talk describes how the all-powerful ruler Mao Zedong came close to destroying all reminders of China's imperial past, including the newly discovered monuments to one of China's most important figures.

Helen Vreugdenhil is Assistant Professor of History at Redeemer University College.

Saturday December 3, 2011 at 8 pm

Climate Change and Northern Ecosystems: Carbon Sink or Carbon Bomb? by Michael Waddington

The boreal and subarctic regions are home to some of the world's largest forests and peatlands. These ecosystems represent a long-term carbon sink storing carbon over the last several thousand years, which has helped maintain lower atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations.

However, with climate change, these northern peat and carbon reserves are likely to become increasingly vulnerable to drought, wildfire and permafrost degradation, switching them to a large and persistent carbon source.

Dr. Waddington discusses his research on these changing carbon dynamics with special attention on how to potentially diffuse the 'carbon bomb'.

Dr. Waddington is Associate Director of the McMaster Centre for Climate Change, professor in the School of Geography and Earth Sciences and Associate Editor of *Ecohydrology*.

The 13th Dr. John Rae Lecture

Saturday January 14, 2012 at 8 pm

The South Pole Expedition for Kids by Peter Turkstra

Exactly a century after Ernest Shackleton trekked the Antarctic terrain in 1908, a group of men, from Hamilton and area, Peter Turkstra, Fred Losani, Mark MacLennan and Steve Stipsits, experienced some of the same challenges and hidden dangers on the icebound continent. They took part in an expedition to ski 200 km to the geographic south pole from a private base camp in the Ellsworth Mountains of western Antarctica, to raise funds for local inner-city school children. Mr. Turkstra numbers himself among roughly 100 people who have skied to both north and south poles.

Unlike Shackleton's crew, this expedition was able to maintain contact with the outside world. Numerous internet followers tracked both their progress and setbacks. Mr. Turkstra will describe his experiences, illustrated by photographs taken in Antarctica, Torre De Paine National Park, Chile and the Magellanic Penguin Rookery.

Peter Turkstra is president of Turkstra Lumber, a family-owned retail and manufacturing business based in Hamilton for more than 50 years.

Saturday February 4, 2012 at 8 pm

'Smart Homes' and Better Health Care by Jamal Deen

Never before in human history has society been confronted with the prospect of such a large aging population. One strategy for meeting their increasing needs is the development of the "smart home" that uses technology to monitor and respond to the medical needs of older people outside of hospitals and long term care facilities. Dr. Deen's research uses advances in information technology, wireless communication, web-based technologies and autonomies to remotely monitor and assist people in their own homes: for the early detection of symptoms, leading to earlier treatment, to promote wellness, and to manage chronic illnesses. Through examples of ongoing collaborative work, Dr. Deen will discuss the critical role of information technology, some challenges and current research issues.

Dr. Deen is Professor of ECE and Senior Canada Research Chair in Information Technology

at McMaster University. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. His current research interests are nanoelectronics and optoelectronics and their applications to health and environmental sciences.

Saturday March 3, 2012 at 8 pm

The Origin of Language by George Thomas

Linguists maintain that the approximately 6,000 world languages all share basic structural features. Do all human languages have a common origin? If so, how was language invented, where was the original language spoken and how did human languages spread and diversify around the globe? For more than 200 years these questions have been taboo in mainstream linguistics. Now genetic data from DNA and comparisons of blood types around the world offer a coherent picture of the dispersal of human beings. These new data have revived interest in the origin and early history of human language. This talk describes current linguists' efforts to respond to the geneticist model and some of the challenges still confronting them.

Dr. Thomas is Professor Emeritus in Linguistics at McMaster University.

Saturday April 14, 2012 at 8 pm

The Titanic Story and 21st Century Materials Science by John Thomson

On the night of April 14–15, 1912, the RMS *Titanic* struck an iceberg and sank in three hours with the loss of 1,517 passengers and crew. Public interest in this sinking has remained strong for 100 years, even growing since expeditions using submersibles have located and filmed the wrecked ship lying on the floor of the Atlantic in two pieces. Analysis of hull fragments recovered from the wreck has altered the popular understanding of how the Titanic sank and provided a good understanding of how the materials used in hull construction contributed to this legendary disaster.

John Thomson, Manager of the Steel Research Centre, will review the events of the sinking and describe the Titanic's design and construction, particularly with regard to the iron and steel technology of the period.

HAALSA Awards Program

HAALSA Executive Council 2011 – 2012

The Maitland Banting Silver Quill Award

Awards totalling up to \$200 are offered annually to teenage entrants in the Hamilton Public Library’s Power of the Pen (PoP) literary competition for short fiction showing an excellent command of language. This award, first granted in 1987, commemorates the late Maitland Banting, who championed and nurtured recognition of young writers. PoP entry forms are available at any branch of the HPL.

Young Poet’s Award

Awards totalling up to \$200 are offered annually to teenage entrants in Hamilton Public Library’s Power of the Pen (PoP) literary competition for poetry. PoP entry forms are available at any branch of the HPL.

da Vinci Science Fair Awards

Awards totalling up to \$300 are offered annually to teenage entrants in the Bay Area Science and Engineering Fair for creativity combined with sound, demonstrated understanding of the scientific method. See the BASEF website for registration details.

Donations for these awards and/or a membership are always gratefully accepted. Tax receipts are issued annually at the end of each calendar year.*

* CRA Charitable Business Number:
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The Hamilton Association is one of Canada's oldest, independent, non-profit cultural organizations. It began in 1857 as the Hamilton Scientific Association and counts among its founding members Dr. John Rae, famed Arctic explorer and physician, who served as the Association's second President.

Many prominent Hamilton and area organizations began with or drew early support from the Hamilton Association, including the Hamilton Public Library, the Art Gallery of Hamilton, the Royal Botanical Gardens and McMaster University.

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