



President's Report

Maggie Wilson

We quietly celebrated our 20th anniversary this year. While much has changed in the two decades since the Cobalt Historical Society incorporated, much remains the same, most of all, the passion people have for the story of the silver mining camp and the people who built it.

This was most evident during our Speakers' Symposium in June when a small but enthusiastic group gathered to take part. Debra North recounted the inspiring story of Cobalt's first nurse, Annie Saunders. Another well-known local author, Bruce Taylor described the Taylor Hardware dynasty through the stories of the men and women who worked with the company. Photographer Robert Larocque shared his methods for analyzing old photos and how to date the images based on the architecture in the ever-changing landscape of the boom time. Maggie Wilson presented an outline of her book about Horatio Barber, a famous aviation pioneer in the UK who managed to make his fortune in Cobalt in a less-than-ethical manner. For those of you who were unable to attend, we have made the proceedings available in *Selected Chapters of Temiskaming Heritage Chapter Two*. (Details on how to order on page 4.)

Among the several visits this year, both in person or online, three stand out in particular.

We are most grateful to Ann Harvey for sharing digital copies of photographs of her grandfather Antonio Giachino and his many enterprises in town. We tell her story in this issue, and include some of the pictures. The most notable is his Bijou Theater that was located at the north end of Lang Street, were St. Patrick's school stands today.

Historical Society member Maurice O'Shaughnessy surprised us with a gift from his father's career with the Temiskaming Testing Laboratories. C. V. J. O O'Shaughnessy was manager at the time when new plant was installed during 1942-43. Alex MacLean was commissioned to conduct a photo study of the facility and the images were bound in a portfolio. Maurice kindly donated both the album and the presentation his father delivered about the plant and the processes.

Finally, a conversation with Bob Hawkins led to the fulfillment of a life-long dream: a visit to Cobalt to see the town that silver built. Bob has a very special connection to the place. His great grandfather, Charles H. Taylor was the man who built the Hydraulic Air Plant at Ragged Chutes. The system delivered compressed air to drive the equipment in the mines. Bob

continued on page 4



Temiskaming Testing Laboratories circa 1943 Alex MacLean photos

Antonio Giachino



The Bijou at the north end of Lang Street, 1910. Today, St. Patrick's School is on this location.

music blaring. “He was an amazing man, he was great for Cobalt,” wrote one member.

Giachino was a marketing man at heart and promoted his assorted businesses with creativity and gusto. In 1957, the *Family Herald* ran an article titled “Mr. Giachino’s Land of Opportunity.” It is a profile of the man who as a “young Italian, knew he could make his dreams come true in Canada – and he did. When Fortune’s wheel slowed, he gave it a flick.”

We are grateful to Ann Harvey, a granddaughter of Antonio Giachino. She sent us an astonishing digital collection of images from his early days in Cobalt. For the first time, we have pictures of the *Bijou*, the theatre he built at the north end of Lang Street in 1910.

By way of a brief background, Ann told us that she used to spend summers with her grandparents here in Cobalt. She remembers riding with him in his truck, and “going to Legion dances up on the hill on Saturday nights. He made much of the furniture in their home...even the toilet and the beds.” Every time the family visited Antonio would record his grandchildren’s voices.”

Orsola, Ann’s grandmother was a quiet but steady force behind her grandfather. “He had a total of four months schooling. The youngest of thirteen children, he left home at fifteen for America, and was unable at that time to speak English. He returned to Italy in 1907 and married Orsola who had a grade four education and who came back to America with him. The two built their businesses.”

Orsola ran the Palm Gardens Confectionary next door to the *Bijou*. The family lived upstairs.

Most people today who remember the man know him when he had his grocery store at the former Coniagas headframe at the corner of Prospect Avenue and Silver Street. The former mine shaft made a perfect refrigeration unit.

We posted a series of the images on our Facebook page. Several people remembered when the grocer and travel agent used to drive his van through town with the with the



Mr. Giachino and his famous van – note the loudspeaker on the roof. MacMillan’s Garage is in behind, on Silver Street. Unknown date.



Antonio Giachino in front of his home on Lang Street. Orsola Giachino operated the confectionary and the family lived upstairs at 129 Lang Street from 1910 to about 1919.

You can read the 1957 *Family Herald* article on the CHS website Resource page.



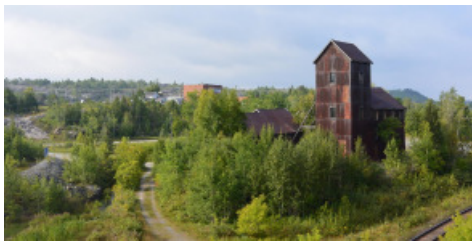
*Antonio Giachino in front of his travel agency on Silver Street. "See this World before the Next!"
Syd Watkinson photo, April 11, 1932*

came to Cobalt with his daughter to meet with Deborah at the bookstore. There, he presented us with photographs from the family albums. We have scanned these and will share them in a future edition of the newsletter. In the meantime, you can read about Bob's visit to Cobalt on his webpage dedicated to his great grandfather's work. <http://charleshtaylor.blogspot.com/>



Bob Hawkins presents a colorized photo of the Ragged Chutes blow-off to secretary Deborah Ranchuk for the Cobalt Historical Society.

We are deeply grateful for the kindness and enthusiasm our members and visitors share with us. Thank you, one and all, for your continuing interest and support.



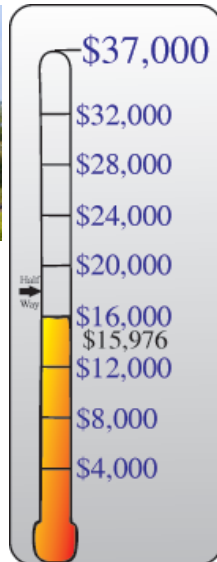
Fund Raising Update

GREAT news regarding our fundraiser to fix the roof on the Right-of-Way Mine! We're keep growing closer to our goal for the roof with **\$15,976** in donations.

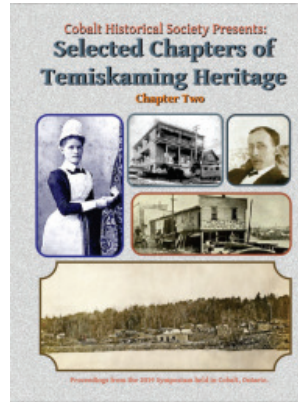
In the meantime, emergency repair on the legs was necessary and has been done. This unexpectedly cut into our budget, but it was necessary. But it has put us behind in our funds for the roof. We need your help.

If you require a tax deductible receipt contact us and we'll advise how this can be done. Donations by mail are fine or you could send us an Interac e-transfer from your bank using this email address: chs@heritagesilvertrail.ca

Together is the way it works. Thank you.



Chapter Two Temiskaming Heritage June 1st, 2019



The proceedings for this symposium are available now. Get your copy at the book store in Cobalt or by ordering online. To order the first book or this one online send an e-transfer to chs@heritagesilvertrail.ca for \$15 each + \$7 shipping. We'll get it (them) out to you as soon as possible.

Membership Renewals

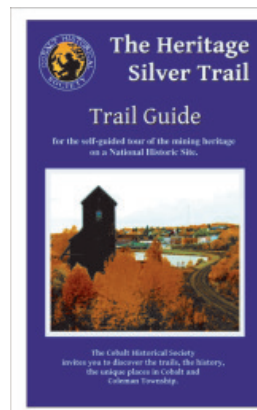
We hope you will renew your membership for 2020. We thank all those who quickly sent their renewals for 2019.

We're looking to accomplish bigger and better things. The form is available for download from the website if you've lost the copy that came in this newsletter. The Newsletter will only be mailed to those who have renewed. If you would prefer an online version rather than a printed one, just indicate it on your renewal, or send us an email, or letter.

We thank Stan Lafleur at Prism Publishing for printing the newsletters. The set-up time has also been donated, so please support the book store in the old Coniagas shaft house downtown so we can continue to serve you.

Between newsletters, stay current with our website and Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/CobaltHistoricalSociety/>



The revised Trail Guide is available in Town and online in PDF format.

Because some of the sites have been withdrawn either due to permission, or safety concerns, we ask that only the sites now on the Trail be visited.

Another educational outreach from the Cobalt Historical Society.