



Narcisse Cantin's Stanley Steamer



Cabana brick yard



Wharf at St. Joseph 1907

## Who we are

Our mandate is to preserve and celebrate the unique history of the area, to promote this history and to educate the public on this history.

Monthly meetings are held to discuss projects that promote our mandate and to have presentations on local history.

### Contact Us

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**ST. JOSEPH AND AREA  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
c/o Hessenland Country Inn  
72981 Bluewater Highway  
RR 2 Zurich, ON N0M 2T0



Balmoral Hotel from Zurich Hensall Road

## St. Joseph and Area Historical Society

*1846. A group of seven or eight families were the first to arrive from Quebec. They arrived on a hot, humid, mid-July afternoon. During the next few days, they staked out lots of one-half an acre or an acre and erected some crude log shanties.*

# St. Joseph and Area Historical Society

A group of very dedicated and enthusiastic residents from the area have actively encouraged the research and archiving of the significant and very colourful history of the area in and around St. Joseph, Ontario. Many share family connections to their forefathers who had large dreams to make St. Joseph the transportation hub of southwestern Ontario. Together they:

- In **1997** formed the Society.
- In **1999** partnered with Millenium Canada and raised an additional \$28,000 to create the Heritage Walkway in the St. Joseph Memorial Park.
- In **2002 - 2003** established the St. Joseph Museum and Archives
- In **2008** created a website that includes the wonderful history of the settlement at St. Joseph - the only French settlement between Windsor and Midland.

In **2010 - 2011** the Society undertook a massive outdoor project and produced "Narcisse", a new play about St. Joseph - a live outdoor stage presentation that sold out its nine performances in July 2011 and went on to win the first Governor General's History Award for Community Programming for all of English Canada.



In **2012** the Society presented "Grave Matters" nine times over a weekend in July on the grounds of St. Peter's Catholic Church. The audience was directed through the cemetery for short vignettes as local family members shared stories of their forefathers. The project was directed by Dianne Miller, with research gathered by Society members. This event was sold out too.

These families told their stories in the St. Peter's Church cemetery.

Cantin	Denomy	Durand
Gelinas	Jeffrey	Masse
Sreenan		



In **2013** the Society developed and presented the historically and culturally relevant production, "White Hurricane", at Hessenland Country Inn.

The 1913 storm was a blizzard with Hurricane force winds. The play brought to life the decisions to risk one last voyage; the warnings; the lives of those lost; and, the impact on our community.

The production was to run one weekend. It soon became apparent that 3 more nights and another weekend were needed.



*We have a great story!*

*Join us*

*Donate to the society*