

## Historic Sites and Monuments



### Bell Homestead

In 1870 the Bell family purchased the Tutela Heights property from Robert Morton for \$2,600. The home, built in 1858, was a two-storey wooden-frame house built on a fieldstone foundation that was finished with lath and masonry stucco. The house had a gingerbread trim style veranda, large French windows, twelve-foot high ceilings, and pine and wood pegged floors. Besides the house, the property also included a carriage house and more than ten acres of orchards. It was here that Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone while he was visiting his parents in the summer of 1874. The Bell family sold the house to Matthew Whiting when they moved to Washington, D. C. in 1881. Ownership changed hands several times before the Bell Memorial Association purchased the property in 1909. It was sometime in October 1910 that

one of the rooms was first opened to the public with a display of photographs and telephone artifacts. In 1917 the Association deeded the property to the City of Brantford. A cairn and a plaque were unveiled at the Homestead in 1953 (**Brantford Expositor**, September 12, 1953, p. 1) and it was thought that the property had been designated as a national historic site. However, it was not until 1992 when the curator applied for federal funding for renovations that it was discovered that this was not the case. The Bell Homestead was closed from mid-October 1994 until May 1995 while the exterior of the house was painted, the kitchen was refurbished, new support beams were put in, and the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems were upgraded. A couple of years later the property was finally designated as a national historic site and the plaque was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II during her visit to Brantford in 1997 (**Brantford Expositor**, July 2, 1997, p. C1). The Henderson home, Canada's first telephone business office from 1877 to 1880, was moved from Sheridan Street to the Bell Homestead property in 1969. It was declared a national historic site on August 8, 1971 (**Brantford Expositor**, August 9, 1971, p. 11). The carriage house, which had been torn down in 2005, was rebuilt in 2007 at a cost of \$75,000.

For more information:

- [Expositor Semi-Centennial 1877-1927 \(p. 33, 36 of PDF\)](#)
- [Brantford "The Telephone City" \(p. 15 of PDF\) \(photo\)](#)
- [Views of Brantford \(p. 3 of PDF\) \(photo\)](#)
- [Remember: Brantford, 1877-1977 \(p. 29 of PDF\) \(photo\)](#)
- [Bell Homestead](#)



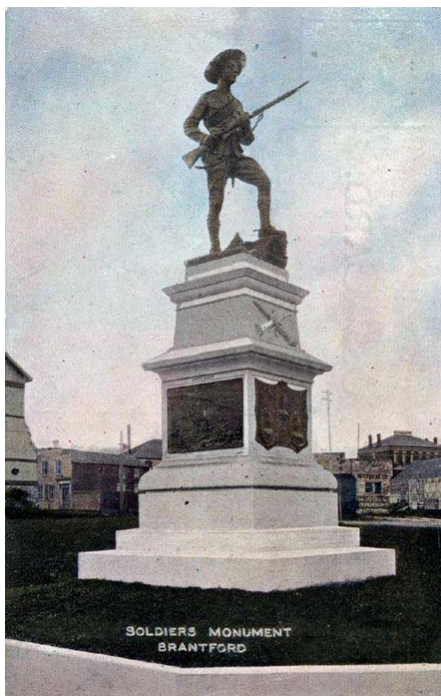
## Bell Memorial

W. F. Cockshutt first broached the idea of building a memorial in honour of Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone. The Bell Telephone Memorial Association was incorporated in 1906. Over \$65,000 was raised through donations from the federal and provincial governments and from citizens in Brant County and elsewhere. In 1908 sculptors were asked to submit plans for the memorial to the designs committee. Walter S. Allward of Toronto won the competition. The memorial was originally supposed to be completed by 1912 but was actually not finished until five years later. The site chosen for the monument was in Bell Memorial Gardens, a small park bounded by Wellington, King, and West Streets. The memorial was designed by Allward to symbolize the telephone's annihilation of space. A series of

steps go up to the main section where the figure "Inspiration" appears over a reclining male figure while the floating figures of "Knowledge", "Joy", and "Sorrow" are positioned at the other side. At each end of the memorial there are two female figures representing humanity. "To commemorate the invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell in 1874" is inscribed on the monument. The Duke of Devonshire, the Governor General of Canada, unveiled this memorial on October 24, 1917 (**Brantford Expositor**, October 24, 1917, p. 1). Alexander Graham Bell made a speech and presented the Governor General with a commemorative silver telephone.

For more information:

- [Unveiling of the Bell Memorial \(PDF\)](#)
- [Brantford Album \(p. 27 of PDF\) \(photo\)](#)
- [Brant War Memorial \(p. 18-20 of PDF\)](#)
- [Expositor October 1909 \(p. 18 of PDF\) \(photo\)](#)
- [Brantford Heritage Inventory](#)



## Boer War Memorial

A number of Brant County men served in the Boer War in South Africa. Three local men, Corporal Alfred Sherritt, Lieutenant Nelson Builder, and Lieutenant John W. Osborne, were killed during the war. Corporal Sherritt, a well known local cyclist, died at Hart's River on March 31, 1902 (**Brantford Weekly Expositor**, April 10, 1902, p. 1). Lieutenant Builder was fatally wounded at the Battle of Belfast on November 6, 1900 (**Brantford Weekly Expositor**, November 22, 1900, p. 9) and Lieutenant John Osborne was killed in the Spion Kop battle (**Brantford Weekly Expositor**, February 1, 1900, p. 9, 13). Funds were raised to erect a monument to honour these soldiers. The monument was designed by Hamilton MacCarthy of Ottawa and is located in Jubilee Terrace Park in front of the Brantford Armouries near the Grand River. The pedestal is made from Canadian grey granite and the figure at the top represents a Canadian infantryman. There are three panels depicting the location where each of the local soldiers was killed. On the fourth panel there is a bronze tablet with the images of each of the three soldiers. This monument was unveiled on Victoria Day 1903 (**Brantford Expositor**, May 26, 1903, p. 1) by Sir Robert Borden, Canada's Minister of Militia and Defence. Local military units were present as were the Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto and the 13th Battalion of Hamilton. **In search of Alfred Sherritt** by Evan Habrick provides more detail about Sherritt's life.

[Reville's History Volume 2 \(p. 25 of PDF\)](#)

- Brant War Memorial (p. 13 of PDF)
- Brantford "The Telephone City" (p. 17 of PDF) (photo)
- Brantford Heritage Inventory
- Canada & The South African War 1899-1902 (Canadian War Museum)



## Brant County Courthouse

At a meeting on April 15, 1852, the Provisional County of Brant passed a resolution authorizing a building committee to hire someone to design and build a courthouse and jail in Brantford. The Six Nations Indians sold the land needed for the courthouse (now 80 Wellington Street) to the County in July 1852. Designed by John Turner, a well-known architect, and built by William Sinon, the central section of the building, mainly Greek Revival in style with two clusters of simple Doric columns rising from the second floor, was completed in 1853 at a cost of almost \$50,000. The original structure contained court rooms, county offices, a law library, a jail which could hold twenty prisoners, and a jailer's residence. The

jail was enlarged in 1861. In 1886 two large wings were added at each end of the building with towers built in an Eclectic-Picturesque style and there was another addition to the jail. In the late 1800s the original coal furnace was replaced by an oil furnace and electricity was added to the building circa 1909. A provincial plaque was unveiled on September 14, 1974 by the former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, W. Ross Macdonald, and Judge E. O. Fanjoy to commemorate the court house (**Brantford Expositor**, September 16, 1974, p. 11). A thirty-two bed addition to the jail was completed in 1986 and further renovations brought the jail's capacity up to seventy-three inmates. The courthouse underwent two and a half years of renovations and restoration at a cost of \$3.7 million after the building was damaged by two floods in 2005. The first phase of the project included an extensive restoration of the main jury courtroom while the second phase included the renovation of much of the first floor. A ceremony was held in June 2007 to celebrate the completion of the project (**Brantford Expositor**, June 21, 2007, p. A3). This building is where Brantford's Superior Court of Justice is located.

For more information:

- Reville's History Volume 1 (p. 173-174 of PDF)
- Warner's 1883 History (p. 80-90 of PDF)
- 1888 Telegram (p. 3, 35 of PDF)
- Expositor October 1909 (p. 42 of PDF) (photo)
- Views of Brantford (p. 17 of PDF) (photo)
- Brantford Album (p. 14 of PDF) (photo)
- Brantford Heritage Inventory
- Ontario's Historical Plaques
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## Brant Memorial

In 1874 members of the Six Nations first suggested to the Duke of Connaught that a monument should be erected in memory of Joseph Brant. Two years later a committee was formed with the Hon. David Christie, Speaker of the Canadian Senate, as chairman. The Six Nations Council and the federal government both contributed \$5,000 while the city of Brantford and the provincial government donated \$2,500 each to help pay for the memorial. However, it was not until July 1883 that people were invited to submit their designs. On May 8, 1884 the Brant Memorial Association chose Percy Wood, an English artist, as the designer and decided that the monument was going to be erected in the centre of Victoria Park. The corner stone of the monument was laid on August 11, 1886 by Chief Clench (**Brantford Expositor**, August 12, 1886, p. 1). The day was declared a public holiday in Brantford when the memorial was unveiled on October 13, 1886 by the Hon. John B. Robinson, the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario. The memorial includes a nine foot high statue of Joseph Brant with figures representing each of the Six Nations arranged in two groups at the sides of the upper base. There are also four bas-reliefs on the lower base depicting a war dance, Brant addressing the chiefs in council, and a bear and a wolf. Bronze cannons from the British government were melted and used for several of the figures. W. F. Cockshutt read a poem written for the occasion by Pauline Johnson. The Expositor published

a special Brant Memorial Number with almost the entire newspaper containing stories about the two-day celebration (**Brantford Expositor**, October 13, 1886). The Brant Memorial was rededicated on September 16, 2000 after being restored (**Brantford Expositor**, September 18, 2000, p. A1).

For more information:

- [Reville's History Volume 1 \(p. 33-39 of PDF\)](#)
- [Expositor Semi-Centennial 1877-1927 \(p. 122 of PDF\) \(photo\)](#)
- [1888 Telegram \(p. 5 of PDF\)](#)
- [Brant War Memorial \(p. 14 of PDF\)](#)
- [Brantford, the Telephone City \(p. 2 of PDF\)](#)
- [Industrial Recorder \(p. 8 of PDF\)](#)
- [Brantford "The Telephone City" \(p. 5-8 of PDF\) \(photos\)](#)
- [Views of Brantford \(p. 12, 15 of PDF\) \(photos\)](#)
- [Brantford Heritage Inventory](#)



## Brant County War Memorial

The Brant War Memorial Association was organized in 1921 to erect a fitting monument to the 701 local men and women who had died during World War I. The association wanted to raise \$75,000 to pay for the memorial but at the end of five years they had only collected \$16,000 so in 1927 the committee was reorganized with a new monetary goal of \$150,000. Walter S. Allward, the designer of the Bell Memorial, also designed the war memorial. This memorial is located in Brant County War Memorial Park which is surrounded by Dalhousie Street, Brant Avenue, West Street, and Bridge Street. The original design included two pylons standing guard over the stone of remembrance as well as three bronze figures and a piece of crippled field artillery. However, when the memorial was dedicated on May 25, 1933 by the Earl of Bessborough, the Governor General of Canada, none of the bronze figures had been completed since the association had run out of money. To honour the 339

local men and women who died during World War II and the Korean War, a granite "Memorial Gallery", designed by Charles Brooks, was added as a backdrop to the original monument. The memorial was rededicated on July 2, 1956 by Senator W. Ross Macdonald (**Brantford Expositor**, July 3, 1956, p. 13). In 1987 a new Brant County War Memorial committee was formed to replace the previous one which had disbanded in 1960. This committee raised the money needed to complete the Memorial with seven bronze statues - three women and four men representing all of the branches of the Canadian services - in place of the original statues. These bronze figures were sculpted by Helen Granger Young of Winnipeg. The statues were unveiled on September 12, 1992.

For more information:

- [Brant War Memorial \(PDF\)](#)
- [Brantford Heritage Inventory](#)
- [Brant County War Memorials](#)



## Echo Villa

Echo Villa was built in 1851 by Reverend Peter Jones for his wife Elizabeth (Field) Jones. This house was built on fifty acres in the wilderness between Brantford and Cainsville but is now located within the Brantford city limits at 743 Colborne Street East. Peter Jones was the son of Augustus Jones, a Welsh surveyor, and Tuhbenahoequay, an Ojibway Indian. He became an ordained Wesleyan Methodist Church minister and died in June 1856. The house is set well back from the road with a circular drive leading to a covered porch with pillars on either side of the front door. The house was built with red brick while buff brick was used for the chimneys, on the corners, and under the eaves for decoration. There

are two chimneys on both end walls. The front door opens into a wide hall from which the original staircase leads to the second floor. Above the hall is a glass-windowed cupola with access over the staircase. There were four rooms on the main floor and four bedrooms upstairs with high ceilings, large windows, fireplaces, and dressing-room size closets. Behind the house was a scullery and laundry with servants' quarters above. There was also a carriage house, barn, and large outside bake oven. After her husband died, Eliza married John Carey and they lived in Echo Villa until 1867 when she sold the house to the Robinson sisters. In the early 1900s, the rear section which included a large dining room with four pantries opening off it and bedrooms above was torn down. The home has been altered through the years by different owners. A sunken dining room was built behind the living room where the sun porch used to be. A modern kitchen and laundry area and a new master bedroom suite on the second floor of the extension were also added. Other owners have included the Hall family, the Thomas family, Harold Page, and Ralph Kett. When the house was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Sam Wyatt in the early 1950s it was in need of repair and renovations and only an acre and a half remained as part of the estate.



## I.O.D.E. Cenotaph

The local branches of the I.O.D.E. (Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire) contributed \$1,500 to build a memorial as a tribute to Brant County's World War I dead. It was erected in Gore Park at the corner of Brant Avenue and Colborne Street. The cenotaph, designed by local architect F. C. Bodley, is a plain obelisk made of Indiana limestone which rises from the centre of a slab of limestone. The cenotaph was unveiled on November 11, 1923 (**Brantford Expositor**, November 13, 1923, p. 5). The inscription engraved on the base of the cenotaph reads "Let those who come after, see to it that their names be not forgotten." Bronze standards on each side of the shaft for two flags as well as a bronze hand holding a torch to be kept burning by electricity were originally supposed to be part of the cenotaph but there is no evidence of either of these parts today. The cenotaph was moved to Tom Thumb Park, just north of the Brant County War Memorial, in June 1992 and rededicated on Remembrance Day (**Brantford Expositor**, November 12, 1992, p. A3).



## Wycliffe Hall

A committee first met in the basement of the Zion Church on April 19, 1860 to talk about opening a Brantford branch of the YMCA but nothing happened until a few years later when the committee was reorganized. The first YMCA was located on Market Street between Colborne and Dalhousie Streets and opened in 1868. Ignatius Cockshutt made the first contribution to a subscription fund for a new building in November 1873. The Brantford YMCA was incorporated on April 1, 1874. The corner stone of the new building was laid by Ignatius Cockshutt, the chairman of the building committee, on July 1, 1874 (**Brantford Expositor**, July 2, 1874, p. 2). Located at 185-191 Colborne Street, it cost \$22,000 to build. It was a three-story white brick building with a mansard roof surmounted by a dome. The building included a swimming pool, a gymnasium, a reading room, and a lecture room. This location was used for forty years before the YMCA moved to a larger building at Queen and Darling Streets. Wycliffe Hall was later known as Winter Gardens, a dance hall where Guy Lombardo and other bands often played, the Embassy Room, and the Tic Toc. A fire on January 14, 1961 destroyed the building (**Brantford Expositor**, January 16, 1961, p. 1). Damage was estimated to be more than \$250,000 and seven families were left homeless while three stores were destroyed. Ben Schachar had purchased the building in 1941. The two walls left standing after the fire were considered a safety hazard so they were torn down.

For more information:

- [Reville's History Volume 1 \(p. 140-141 of PDF\)](#)
- [Warner's 1883 History \(p. 163-164 of PDF\)](#)

## Wynarden

Henry Rushton Yates, a town councillor from 1859 to 1862, moved to Brantford from England in the early 1850s. He was the chief engineer of the Great Western Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway and later became a partner with John H. Stratford in various business endeavours. His house Wynarden or Yates Castle as many of the locals referred to it, was built in 1864 on the south slope of Terrace Hill which overlooked the Grand Trunk Railway station and yards (**Brantford Weekly Expositor**, May 12, 1865, p. 3). John Turner was the architect of the house which included two towers, dormer windows, balconies, a fireplace in almost every room, a wine cellar, and a steep-pitched slate roof. The servants' quarters and the brick school house at the back of the mansion were connected to the main house by a tunnel. The initials of Mr. Yates and his wife Emily, "H.E.Y.", were engraved over the front door. There were landscaped gardens with an ornamental fountain and the estate was surrounded by a board fence and stone wall. After Henry Yates died in July 1894 (**Brantford Expositor**, July 23, 1894, p. 4) his wife continued to live in the house until her death in 1910. The house was then taken over by Henry's son Herbert and after his death in 1918 his family continued to live in the home until 1923. The house remained vacant for a number of years and was vandalized by looters. The Talos family purchased the house in the late 1920s and converted it into apartments. In recent years the family received a \$100,000 grant from the Ontario Heritage Foundation to restore the home back to its original state. This house was put up for sale in 2009.

For more information:

- [Expositor Semi-Centennial 1877-1927 \(p. 73 of PDF\)](#)
- [Brantford Album \(p. 24 of PDF\) \(photo\)](#)
- [Brantford Heritage Inventory](#)