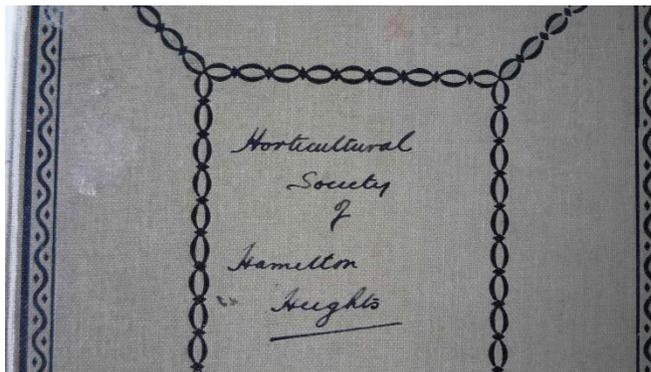


How the Mount Hamilton Horticultural Society got Started

On 10 May 1927, the Mount Hamilton Improvement Society called a meeting at Brown's Hall which was located on Concession Street a few blocks east of Wentworth St. Its precise location is still a point of contention. The purpose of the gathering was to gauge if there was enough interest in the Hamilton Mountain community to start a horticultural society. Harry Nettleton was appointed to chair the meeting. He referred to conversations he had had with a Rev. Tibbs from Burlington and a J. Lockie Wilson from Toronto about starting a horticultural society. A motion was passed authorizing Mr. Nettleton to appoint a committee of thirteen men to canvas the mountain for members, and he was empowered to call an organizational meeting when he felt it was appropriate to do so.

It didn't take the canvassers long to complete their job as an organizational meeting was called only eight days later, on 18 May 1927. Once again, a motion was carried appointing Harry Nettleton to chair the meeting. He explained that the purpose of the gathering was to organize a horticultural society in the community and reiterated that no one could vote unless they were a paid-up member. There were thirty-one members at that initial gathering. By July, the Society had ninety-one.

The first order of business was to elect an executive. The names for a president, a 1st and 2nd vice-president, and ten directors, five appointed for two years and five for only one year, and two auditors were put forwarded and a motion was carried declaring them duly elected. Not surprisingly, Mr. Harry Nettleton was the first President. The first director's meeting was held immediately after the organizational meeting. The purpose was to appoint a secretary and a treasurer. It was decided to combine the two positions, and Mr. Harry D. Rooke was appointed. As for bonding the office of secretary-treasurer, it was decided that Mr. Rooke's word would be taken as his bond.



At that first meeting, a motion was passed suggesting that the name of the group should be the Mount Hamilton Horticultural Society. An amendment to the motion put forth the name, Horticultural Society of Hamilton Heights, as another option. After a discussion, the latter name was selected. That's why the cover of the first Minutes Book of the Society has that name on it.

The name would last until early 1929. At the Society's annual meeting, held on 11 January 1929, a name change to the Mount Hamilton Horticultural Society was proposed. After a lengthy discussion, it was moved and carried that a letter be written to the Ontario Horticultural Association in Toronto asking for their permission to change the name. The OHA's response is not recorded in the Society's minutes, but at the next Director's meeting, held on 9 April 1929, the club is referred to as the Mount Hamilton Horticultural Society.

What appears to be the first regular meeting was held on 31 May 1927 at Lloyd George School on Concession Street. Rev. M. Tibbs from Burlington, whom Harry Nettleton consulted before the Society's organizational meeting, "gave a very interesting lecture on 'The Garden Beautiful' illustrated by lantern

views". The Society ended its first year with 105 members and in the black financially. Receipts of \$279.53 against expenditures of \$255.55 left a balance of \$23.98.

Written by Stephen J. Kostyshyn (Photo by Stephen J. Kostyshyn)