

# The Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre Visits the Massey Club Meeting

December 6, 2009 at Country Heritage Park, Milton Past-president of the Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre (CIHC), Donna Stewart, and the CIHC's new Executive Director, Karen Dearlove, were delighted to be able to give a brief presentation at the Massey Club's recent meeting. The Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre is a registered non-profit organization located in Brantford that seeks to promote and to honour Canadian Industrial Heritage through public education and the preservation of historical data, resources, and artifacts. While the CIHC grew out of the 2000 Cockshutt Plow Company Homecoming in Brantford, the organization is dedicated to preserving and promoting the story of industrial history, first in Brantford, and eventually for all of Canada. The CIHC is currently working with Terrasan, a developer seeking to redevelop the 52 acre Greenwich Mohawk brownfield site in Brantford, to transform the 1903 Cockshutt Plow Company office building into a Heritage Centre, to exhibit and tell the stories of industrial history.

Brantford is an appropriate location for an Industrial Heritage Centre. By 1914, Brantford was the third largest manufacturer of exported goods in all of Canada, after only Toronto and Montreal. Brantford was once home to many significant industries, and Brantford's impressive industrial history is intrinsically linked to Massey Harris. While Massey's roots started just outside Newcastle, Ontario, several important historical events in Brantford led to Massey's overwhelming presence in the city. Several companies that became incorporated into Massey had roots in Brantford. These companies include J.O. Wisner & Son Company that was established in 1871 in Brantford; the Harris farm implement company that moved to Brantford in 1871; Verity Plow Company that moved to Brantford in 1892. Brantford soon became recognized as a centre for the manufacture of agricultural implements. By the end of the 19th century Massey-Harris was the largest single industrial employer in Brantford, and together with Cockshutt the two companies employed 35% of Brantford's manufacturing workforce. Massey continued to grow and thrive in Brantford, and by the late 1970s the company employed over 3000 people in Brantford.

This is only one of the important stories that the Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre wants to tell in an Industrial Heritage Centre, but this story demonstrates Brantford's significance in Canadian industrial history, as well an important part of our past that needs to be protected and promoted. While the Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre is making progress towards its goal, we have a long way to go and need support and help from individuals and organizations like the Massey Club. The CIHC is still a relatively small, grass-roots organization, and we are seeking members to join us as we push forward in the creation of an Industrial Heritage Centre in Brantford.

We are working on building our collection of artifacts and historical documents of material relating to industrial history, and would be interested in hearing about any possible additions to our collection. Lastly, the CIHC is a registered charity, and our continued existence is dependent on revenue generated from the sale of DVDs that we have produced from archival footage from

the Cockshutt Plow Company, and from the support of individuals who see the value in preserving Canadian Industrial Heritage.

The Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre is dedicated to telling the story of Canada's great industrial history, stories like that of Massey-Harris-Ferguson. If not for collectors like yourselves, and other dedicated individuals who have taken it upon themselves to preserve these important artefacts of our past, these stories would be lost. The Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre wants to create a permanent home for these stories, where they can be collected, preserved, and shared. For more information about the Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre please see our website: [www.canadianindustrialheritage.org](http://www.canadianindustrialheritage.org) or email us at [info@canadianindustrialheritage.org](mailto:info@canadianindustrialheritage.org) or call 519-732-1000. Thank-you again to the Massey Club for your hospitality.

**Below: Massey Harris factory in Brantford, ON.**



**Below: Cockshutt Plow factory in Brantford, ON.**

