

Peter C. Newman in Toronto and The War of 1812 Online:



On Wednesday 22 February, Grietje and I met renowned author, Peter C. Newman, at George Brown House in Toronto to review resources available for research for the book that he will write over the next three years about the United Empire Loyalists. Mette Griffin provided him with a catalogue of our collection and gave him a tour of the library and the Butler Room where our materials are kept.

After lunch, we met at 40 Scollard Street to speak to Kathie Orr, Toronto Branch Archivist, to review the extensive collection there. She gave us a warm welcome and showed Peter the resources that Toronto Branch has to offer.

The UELAC has taken steps to bring our message to the public and increase accessibility to information about the Loyalists. We therefore welcome Peter's popular, rather than academic, history of the

United Empire Loyalists. As Peter explained, time today is a priceless commodity with many interests competing for market share. Therefore, print material must entertain as well as inform. Modelled upon his epic history of the Hudson's Bay Company entitled Company of Adventurers and Caesars of the Wilderness, Peter's new book will be called Hostages to Fortune: How the Loyalists Invented Canada. It will appeal to the casual reader as well as to the history buff and pique an interest in further study.

The amount of research material about the Loyalist era has mushroomed in the past twenty years and the challenge is to quickly access relevant information from available sources. One exciting new use of the internet for educational purposes is the www.warof1812online.com registered website being used in partnership with Althouse College of Education at the University of Western Ontario, Northern Blue Publishing and Dundurn Press to present a fixed website and a "wiki" website allowing students and the public to access research material and to publish research in various interesting formats while receiving feedback as they share their results via podcasts, iTunes or other internet media. This project is directed by Dr. Alastair Sweeny and lead contact person, Beth Bruder, Vice-President of Dundurn Press in Toronto. This is an example of the direction that education is going in order to maximize the interest that history can generate. It complements the work that academic researchers are doing as well as the popular history that authors like Peter C. Newman or Pierre Burton have written by bringing information to the student.

Here are two examples of the partnerships that can be forged between the reader and writer and communication that involves teamwork.

Loyally,
Robert C. McBride UE, Dominion President.