

Newspaper announcements being indexed by volunteers

HELPERS WELCOMED

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Diane Rose, left, librarian with the Lambton County branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, Lambton Room historian Laurie McBeth and indexing project co-ordinator Sheila Hewett, at the Lambton Room.

The Lambton branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society (OGS) is indexing Petrolia newspapers from 1900 to 1999.

Three volunteers are indexing birth and marriage announcements and obituaries in *The Petrolia Topic* and *The Advertiser-Topic*. Already indexed after more than 110 hours of work are five years of *Topic* issues and a CD and paper edition of the indexing has been published. Both are for sale.

"A little assistance would certainly move the project along a bit faster," said indexing project co-ordinator Sheila Hewett, a Petrolian and researcher with the Lambton branch of the OGS. "Everything is done at the Lambton Room (in Wyoming) using old bound copies of the newspapers and microfilm where we have to."

Helping with the project are Diane Rose, librarian with the Lambton County branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, and Karen Ferguson.

The Lambton Room has been given a paper copy of the first five-year index (1900-1904) of birth, death and marriage announcements from two Petrolia newspapers: The Petrolea Advertiser (& Canadian Oil Journal) and the Petrolea Advertiser.

This index is available in CD form (\$15) or print (\$12 plus shipping and handling).

Visit the Lambton branch of the OGS Web site (www.lambtonogs.on.ca) for more information.

Lambton Room historian Laurie McBeth and her staff are being very helpful with the indexing project, said Hewett.

"There is a great deal of co-operation between the Lambton Room and the Lambton OGS," said Hewett. "The Lambton Room is already one of the best facilities for

resources and staff available so this index will only add to their usefulness in meeting the 20th century needs of Petrolia area researchers."

Indexing of newspaper announcements will help family historians, genealogists and educators, she said.

Missing from Lambton Room archives are Petrolia newspaper issues for 1908, 1910, 1911, 1913 and 1914, 1920 and 1923. Also missing are 1876-1881, 1882, 1883 and pre-1874 issues. The Petrolia Topic has been serving Central Lambton since 1866. Anyone with a copy of these issues is encouraged to contact the Lambton Room (519-845-0801), which can archive and copy them for use by researchers.

The project was begun because Hewett discovered that when researching Petrolia area newspapers from 1900 to 1999 there was no index. Many newspapers such as The Observer are indexed up to about 2007. Since January of this year, Petrolia newspapers have been indexed up to and including 1916.

"This will be an ongoing project," Hewett said. "If anyone is interested in indexing or typing the results, this help would be welcomed. Indexing involves going through newspapers to find announcements of births, marriages and deaths and copying any findings on a form provided. Training will be given."

If anyone would like to help with the indexing, they can contact Sheila Hewett at 519-882-0844.