

# Chalk Talk

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**PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES !!!**

## Letter from the Editor

Dear Educators:

"I love this country and I think we could not have a better friend and ally." — President Barack Obama, Ottawa, Feb. 19/09

Like most Canadians, I followed with interest the few precious hours that Barack Obama spent in Ottawa during his first visit to a foreign country since his inauguration. Notwithstanding the controversy that preceded the visit, I enjoyed every bit of it. From the moment he was met by our Governor General and the Mounties at the airport and waving at the enthusiastic crowd which had braved a frigid winter's day on Parliament Hill, to touring the Library of Parliament, the Press Conference and the impromptu stop at the Byward Market to pick up souvenirs for his daughters, thrilling shoppers, I was transfixed.



President Obama with the Governor General and the RCMP in Ottawa, February 19, 2009 ([photo, www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov))

This was truly a 'friendly' visit. There will no doubt be opportunity down the road for a longer official visit accompanied by the First Lady, replete with a speech to the Commons, inclusion of Canadian school children, and full pomp and circumstance. Most memorably, an African-Canadian tearfully commented that as the descendent of slaves who had escaped the U.S. via the Underground Railroad, he was proud to witness the arrival of the first African-American President to Canada in a limousine.

This week's *Chalk Talk* features programs celebrating the teaching of history as well as opportunities for students to experience parliament first-hand. CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the work of teachers by providing access to free classroom resources. Visit us at [www.4edu.ca](http://www.4edu.ca).

[Your thoughts are welcome.](#)

Mary Kovack

## 2009 Governor General's Awards — History and Social Studies Teachers Apply Today!



Canada's National History Society is now seeking nominations for the 14<sup>th</sup> Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History.

### Six Recipients Awarded \$2,500!

Six recipients will be awarded \$2,500, a medal and a trip to Ottawa for two, to attend the Awards ceremony and presentation by Her Excellency.

### Six Schools Share in the Winnings!

An additional \$1,000 is awarded to the recipients' schools.

### A Career Highlight!

In addition to the cash awards and recognition, recipients enjoy two days of unforgettable experiences which have included, Vice-regal ceremonies and luncheons with her Excellency, receptions in the Senate, recognition in the House of Commons; as well as private tours of Parliament Hill, Rideau Hall, the Library and Archives Canada Preservation Centre and the Mackenzie King Estate. [View a slideshow](#) of the 2008 ceremony and recipient dinner event.



2008 Award Recipient [Nancy Hamer-Strahl](#), Port Perry H.S., ON and Her Excellency, Michaëlle Jean

### All Approaches are Welcome!

Canada is rich in stories and there are countless ways to tell them. The History Society invites educators from elementary, middle, and senior levels to participate in the Awards, provided that their work features Canadian content with an historical dimension. Teachers can present themselves or a group, or be nominated by a student, parent or colleague. **Deadline for Submissions: May 8, 2009**

Here is how to apply:

#### Rules

<http://www.historysociety.ca/gga.asp?subsection=rul>

#### Form

<http://www.historysociety.ca/gga.asp?subsection=nom>

#### Information

[prixggawards@historysociety.ca](mailto:prixggawards@historysociety.ca) or call 1-800-861-1008

# President Barack Obama's Visit to Ottawa in Pictures

[Left to Right — President Obama and Prime Minister Harper; Visit to the gothic Library of Parliament; President Obama accepts a taste of Ottawa delicacy, Beaver Tails. View slideshow at [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) (public domain).]



## Celebrating 100 Years of Flight!

This year's School Poster (pictured, right), produced by Canada's National History Society and sponsored by Library and Archives Canada, calls for nominations for the Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching History and features the 100th Anniversary of Canadian flight.

Canada's first successful manned, powered flight on Canadian soil was undertaken by The Silver Dart on February 23, 1909 at Alexander Graham Bell's Estate in Baddeck, Nova Scotia. The poster, which should arrive at your school soon, features a spectacular illustration depicting a century of aircraft innovative design and timeline chronicling Canada's history of flight.

Educators are invited to [download](#) an article by renowned Canadian historian, Charlotte Gray, recently published in a special edition of *The Beaver*. You may also want to check out supporting lesson plans, '[Flights of Fancy](#)', developed by Parks Canada.

Visit the education link at [www.historyociety.ca](http://www.historyociety.ca) to access more lesson plans and on-line resources.

CANADA'S NATIONAL HISTORY SOCIETY  
**GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARDS**  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING CANADIAN HISTORY

**Celebrating 100 Years of Flight**  
For more resources, discover Library and Archives Canada's online collection at [www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/)

**THE SILVER DART**  
**100 YEARS OF FLIGHT**

Nominate a Teacher For the Governor General's Awards Today!  
Call: 1-800-861-1008 Visit: [HistorySociety.ca](http://HistorySociety.ca)

Presented in partnership with:  
Library and Archives Canada Parks Canada  
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Canada  
History Society of Canada

## Website of the week



**A citizenship and leadership program in your Nation's Capital.  
Spend a week at Canada's largest youth forum!**

*Encounters with Canada* is Canada's largest youth forum! Every week of the school year, 120-138 teens from across Canada (ages 14-17) come to Ottawa; there they discover their country through each other, learn about Canadian institutions, meet famous and accomplished Canadians, explore exciting career themes, develop their civic leadership skills, and live an extraordinary bilingual experience. Over 78,000 youth have lived the EWC experience so far!



To participate in the [Encounters with Canada](#) program, you must:

- ✦ be 14-17 years of age when you take part
- ✦ be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant
- ✦ be enrolled in an educational institution recognized by the Ministry of Education in your province or territory
- ✦ obtain authorization from a parent or guardian obtain a recommendation from your school

**NOTE:** Selection of participants in each region is made on the recommendation of school authorities in every province and territory. Space is limited due to heavy demand, so register today! EWC strives to have youth reps from every province and territory each week, therefore the number of participants eligible for each area is set on a pro-rata basis.

**The Absolute Canadian Bilingual Experience for high school students (14-17)  
Travel costs covered. Register TODAY!**

[www.encounters-rencontres.ca](http://www.encounters-rencontres.ca)

**1-800-361-0419**

**REGISTER NOW!**

## Education News & Related Articles

[Compelling tale of runaway slaves; Dramatic work adds to history of African Canadian community](#) – George Galt, *University Affairs*, April 7, 2008

### **I've Got A Home in Glory Land: A Lost Tale of the Underground Railroad by Karolyn Smardz Frost**

In 1985, Karolyn Smardz Frost's archaeological team unearthed the remains of what had once been the home of two escaped slaves from the United States. It was a unique discovery that attracted attention from around the world. The site became the first archaeological dig of an underground railroad site in Canada. Local records showed that the house had originally belonged to "Thornton Blackburn, cabman, coloured," and initial research revealed that Blackburn had owned and operated Toronto's first taxi cab, that his wife's name was Lucie, and that they had originally lived in Kentucky. But little else about the Blackburns was known. Fascinated by her find, Dr. Smardz Frost devoted the next two decades to reassembling the Blackburns' lost lives. The result is a dramatic narrative describing their early years as slaves in Kentucky, their escape to Canada as young adults in the 1830s, and their eventual settlement in Toronto, where they prospered. But the book, which won last year's Governor General's Award for non-fiction, offers much more than a recovery of the Blackburns' personal history. [Read more ...](#)

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