

## ***History of stonehooking focus at meeting***

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The Mississauga South Historical Society presents an evening of stonehooking at the Port Credit Library, Tuesday, Sept. 20 beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Lorne Joyce will be the guest speaker at the meeting, and he will talk about the practice of stonehooking, a trade that was unique to Port Credit on the Great Lakes.

A fleet of stonehookers dragged the mouth of the Credit River for Dundas Shale that was used in construction for about a century prior to the First World War.

"Most buildings' basements around here were built with Lake Ontario shale," said Joyce, a retired optometrist. "The stones were also used in the construction of sidewalks and cobbled streets."

According to Joyce, Sundays would see between 20-40 schooners in Port Credit Harbor. They formed up to three rows from the east to

west bank below Lakeshore Rd.

Several factors combined to make obsolete the practice of stonehooking. First was the introduction of concrete, which was much easier to work with than huge slabs of shale.

Second was the progress of transportation and the local infrastructure. With the advent of trucks, inland quarries became much more feasible. Large loads didn't necessarily have to be moved by ships.

"The stonehookers pretty much died out just after the First World War. For about 60 years, though, stonehooking was a booming trade."

Joyce has been interested in the Great Lakes navigation most of his life.

"I guess my grandfather got me interested in shipping and the people involved with it. Once I got started, I couldn't quit."

Over the years Joyce has met many fascinating characters.

"Most of my research was face-to-face, but a lot of the people who had first-hand knowledge of what went on out there have passed away. It's fascinating, but those people lived an entirely different life than the one we know."

Members of the public are welcome to attend the MSHA meeting.