

# Book Views

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## ABANDONED ONTARIO



ABANDONED BUILDINGS OF ONTARIO  
BOOK ONE  
GREY COUNTY • SIMCOE COUNTY • DUFFERIN COUNTY • PEEL REGION  
BRUCE R. BRIGHAM

### *Abandoned Ontario*

By Bruce R. Brigham

“Houses are unique in that they hold tightly in their walls memories of the souls that were born, lived and sometimes passed over within,” says photographer Bruce Brigham. In seeking out homes left abandoned, he strives to “capture them in their state today and their somewhat

ghostly existence in our so called modern society.” The book includes images of abandoned houses in Grey County, Simcoe County, Dufferin County and Peel Region, including Caledon, Mississauga and Brampton. Architectural flourishes, stamped tin ceiling panels, discarded toys and furniture are presented in stark black and white, as well as a short description of the different

energies Brigham felt in each house. Many of the properties are found in the Hills of Headwaters, including “Haunted Elba” in the township of Mono where heavy footsteps followed by a metallic crash from the floor above seemed determined to drive him out.

Self published, 2010, \$45.00

Reviewed by Tracey Fockler  
of BookLore, Orangeville



### *Aggie's Dream*

by Donna Mann

Agnes Macphail was the first woman elected to Parliament in Canada. But you knew that, right? Maybe you didn't know that she was born, grew up and represented Grey County in both the federal and provincial governments. Author Donna Mann has been intrigued by this remarkable woman for many years. She re-created her childhood

in *Aggie's Storms* and her recently released second book chronicles Aggie's high school years (1906-1908) in Owen Sound. Titled *Aggie's Dream*, this book explores the teenage years of the headstrong young woman who was destined to become a leader in national and international politics. The author dedicates *Aggie's Dream* to “young people who have a dream of something in life bigger than themselves, who struggle to develop that dream

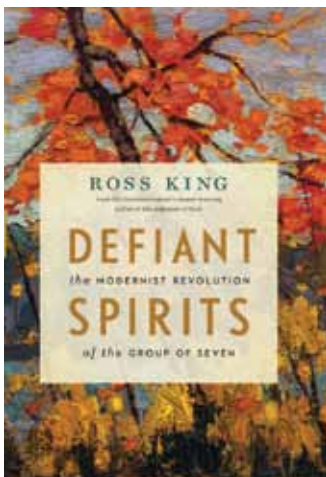
into reality where they can see the image in their mind's eye and who make it their own, having the courage to live it out.” This well-researched book is an excellent read for everyone looking to understand the past with a view to making a difference in the future.

Brucedale Press, 2010, \$20

Reviewed by Maryann Thomas  
of The Ginger Press Bookshop  
and Café, Owen Sound

### *Defiant Spirits: the Modernist Revolution of the Group of Seven*

By Ross King



For lovers of Canadian art the arrival of several new books is very exciting. *Defiant Spirits: the Modernist Revolution of the Group of Seven* by award winning author Ross King begins in 1912 with Tom Thomson and A.Y. Jackson heading out on a painting trip to Algonquin Park. In 1912 Thomson was still a painter of limited skill but Jackson had al-

ready studied art in Montreal and in Europe and was showing in his art the influence of the expressionist style seen in the work of European artists. Many of the eventual group met while working at the printing firm Grip Ltd. in Toronto and by 1914 had established studio space together in Toronto. The author deftly weaves together the individual lives of eight painters, those who were to become The Group of Seven in 1920 and Thomson who died tragically in 1917. Not only is this an in-depth biography of each man but also an accounting of the Canadian scene, politically and socially, from the perspective of art exhibitions and the controversy around the “innovative style” of Thomson and The Group. There are many black and white photographs of the artists and some colour plates but it is the author's thorough research and clear writing that tells this compelling story. The book has just been nominated for the 2010 Writers' Trust Non-Fiction Prize.

Douglas & McIntyre, 2010, \$36.95

### *Bateman New Works*

By Robert Bateman



Another book of note is *Bateman New Work*, a wonderful collection of recent works featuring over 100 full-colour reproductions depicting

birds, mammals and other wildlife from around the world. In his introduction and 11 short essays, Robert Bateman shares his thoughts on nature, education, the environment and the role of art in the preservation of the wilderness. The coloured plates are beautiful and exquisitely detailed as his work is famous for. This is a lovely coffee table and the perfect gift.

Greystone Books, 2010, \$55.00.

Reviewed by Catherine Randall  
of Curiosity House Books  
& Gallery, Creemore.