



St. John's R.C. Church 1854

Osgoode Township

Historical Society & Museum

Vernon School

P.O. Box 83 - Vernon, Ontario

Newsletter

Volume 3 1977 Number 2

This Newsletter is going out three weeks later than expected. Sugar Making time arrived two weeks earlier than expected, and continued through a record rainfall, a record heat of 70 degrees, and a record snowfall - for a total period of over five weeks. Members of the Historical Society were on hand on Saturdays to serve pancakes to any who came to visit, to buy syrup, or to tour the old sugar bush and observe a now unfamiliar process of turning clear sap into maple syrup or taffy.

We have been busy, too, making preparations for celebrating in 1977 the 150th year of known continuous settlement of our Township. A meeting was held in the Township Hall, Metcalfe, Friday evening, March 18, and a second one two weeks later on April 1st. The meeting was chaired by Counsellor Phillip McEvoy and Jennie Dow acted as secretary. We are delighted with the response from all corners of our large Township and with the representation from a great variety of organizations. The next meeting is planned for Friday April 22. All interested persons are welcome. The celebrations will take various forms and held in various areas during the period beginning with the second weekend in June and ending the last day of Metcalfe Fair. The time for the special celebrations by the Historical Society at the Vernon Museum will be the first week of August - our Old Home Week - with a special gathering the weekend of the 6th of August. We are pleased with the research that is going on into all aspects of our past history.

We have some additional information gleaned from research by our Vice-President regarding the St. John's Church.

"In 1918 the Church pictured above was replaced by a beautiful stone building. The frame building was sold to Patrick Shields - farmer in the Township - for the sum of three hundred dollars; some of the timber is still in use today in the farm buildings of Andrew Shields of Greely. The centre beam was of pine, 12 x 12 and 60 feet long with neither a wain nor a splice. The perline plates were 8 x 8, also pine 60 feet long, and neither a wain nor a splice.

In 1858, St. Brigid's Church was built on the River Road - a Mission of St. John's, and this original Church is still being used. Father Thomas O'Boyle remained Pastor till his death. His headstone in St. John's Cemetery reads:

Rev. Thomas O'BOYLE, Native of County Mayo,
First Pastor of this Parish
Died Jan. 7, 1866, age 46 years

A brother of Father O'Boyle was married to a McGregor of Rob Roy's proscribed Clan. She was left a widow and married Daniel O'Connor, a school teacher, teaching at West Osgoode in 1864. A great great grandson, Kevin O'Connor, now a resident of Osgoode Township, is a teacher at the Metcalfe Public School.

Rev. Thomas O'Boyle was succeeded by Rev. James McGwan; then came Rev. Vaughn; and then Rev. Aeneas McDonnell Dawson. It was then that the Prescott Road Parish took the new name of St. John's of Dawson. In later years the Dawson Post Office had its name changed to Enniskerry because of a mix up in mail delivery with Dawson in the North West.

The next Newsletter will tell a little of the distinguished career of the Rev. Dr. Dawson.

Michael Daley

With this Newsletter we are enclosing information regarding the O.G.S. Seminar (Ont. Genealogical Society) which is to be held this May in Ottawa. This is a rare opportunity to meet unknown kith and kin from all parts of North America, and to get much better acquainted with the vast storehouse of information

at the Public Archives. The Ottawa Branch has offered us booths where our Historical Society can display information on our Township, artifacts from our Museum and Family Pedigree charts. We urge you to attend.

The publication of PIONEER FAMILIES OF OSGOODE TOWNSHIP continues. But there are many families which are still not represented. For instance, the 1871 census lists the William Stackpole family on Lot 3 concession 5 with three young men and three young women in the family, and a grandmother(?), Mary Stackpole, age 100 years. We should like to learn about this family and many, many others.

We list the families of:

JAMES DEMPSEY
THOMAS DOW
JAMES DOW
PATRICK KELLEY
GEORGE LATIMER

VOLUME 111

PETER McCAUL
THE McEVOYS
MICHAEL MURDOCK
JOHN HENRY SAUNDERS
ANDREW SIMPSON

The cover picture is of the George Latimer Homestead.

VOLUME IV

DALEYS - Part 2
WM. DEMPSEY
THE DEWANS
ALEXANDER DOW
CLARKE MOSES

THE McRUERS
ROBERT REANEY
DONALD ROBERTSON
THE SAUNDERS FAMILY
JOSEPH TAYLOR

The cover picture is of George Lewis' steam engine.

We have had 500 copies of each Volume printed, and already almost half have been sold. Volume V should be printed in about two weeks time and Volume VI shortly afterwards.

We should like to make contact with descendants of as many of the twelve children of Archibald and Catharine McDonnell as possible. Mrs. G. E. L. Robertson, 124 Springfield Road, Ottawa, is a grand-daughter of a daughter who did not live in Osgoode but who is buried in the Metcalfe Cemetery.

Margaret Amelia McDonnell, born 1812 in Cornwall (the third child) married when very young, Lieut. Baker in her father's Battalion. The young officer died shortly after the marriage, leaving her some money, and she went back to boarding school, later marrying David Miller Rattray of the family of Charles Rattray of Cornwall. Theirs was a mixed marriage and there was great bitterness in the families on both sides, - the young couple themselves seemed to resolve any religious difficulties tranquilly, but the in-laws.....!

The couple moved to Aylmer and then on up the River to Portage du fort where they established a flourishing depot of men, teams, and supplies for lumber camps...

David Miller Rattray lies in our family plot in the beautifully kept cemetery near Cobden, in the country community where my father practised medicine.... And in the Roman Catholic Cemetery at Metcalfe our little grandmother, Margaret Amelia, is buried beside her father, whose inscription reads:

COLONEL ARCHIBALD MCDONELL, who died Nov. 23, 1853, aged 73
HE WAS THE FIRST WITH HIS FAMILY TO LEAD THE WAY INTO THE
WILDERNESS OF OSGOODE IN MARCH 1827
Catharine Robertson (Nee Rattray)

We are grateful for the account of this daughter of an Osgoode Pioneer.

The copies of FAMILIES are being sold for \$1.00 each, and we urge you to pick them up if at all possible as the cost of postage has risen to about 20 cents. We ask you to include this if ordering by mail.

On April 17, the Museum at Vernon was featured on Helen Vechter's television program, the JOYS OF COLLECTING. We have had many compliments regarding the splendid way she was able to show some of our treasures.

On May 6, at 2:00 p.m., a representative from the Ontario Government is going to speak to us on various aspects of operating an Historical Society. We are encouraged by growing interest in this project, and welcome help of any kind. We have finished typing on cards and indexing by names mentioned, the information on our micro-film reels of THE OSGOODE TOWNSHIP PAPERS. This miscellaneous assortment was arranged by lot and concession, and sometimes valuable bits of information can be found.

In the January Newsletter we stated that the Financial Report for the Museum would be presented in April. The Ontario Government gave us two different grants in 1976. The large Establishment Grant is based on our costs in setting up a Museum over a period of two years after 1973. The grant was for 50% of our costs - \$4500.

Then there is the yearly Maintenance Grant - a grant that matches our gross earnings. The income may be from special projects, donations, bank interest, etc. \$4000. of the grant was invested in a Bank Certificate.

Financial Statement for the Museum for the year 1976

INCOME		EXPENDITURES	
Prov. grants	\$ 5056.00	Maintenance of Museum	\$ 1417.59
Hist. Soc. Donation	1634.81	Shelving - misc.	58.73
Individual Donations	209.00	Project Expenses	433.75
Basket Receipts	134.98	Conference Expenses	60.00
Projects	1185.25	Refreshments	20.25
Publications & Pens	284.00	Bank charges	3.00
Bank Interest	147.86	Total Expenses	\$ 1993.32
Total Income	\$ 8651.90	Certificate	4000.00
		Bank Balance	2549.58
		Cash on Hand	109.00
			\$ 8651.90

Margaret Robb, Treasurer.

We appreciate the help we derive from the research of members who happen by chance upon material of interest to Osgoode Township residents. George Neville alerted us to two diaries at the Archives under the heading 'Alex'r McTavish, Osgoode'. Actually the diaries are those of Archibald L. McTavish, oldest son of Alex'r McTavish and his wife Mary McLaren who came to Canada with their baby boy about 1840. One small diary is for the year 1866 - the year before Confederation - and it gives us a glimpse of the daily life of a young 24-year old bachelor. The other diary is for the year 1876 - the year of the Centennial of the American Revolution. By that time, Archibald had married Margaret McLaughlin, daughter of Hugh McLaughlin and Eliza Robertson, and was a storekeeper and the Postmaster in Kenmore. In 1866 he was living east of Vernon about a mile from the Winchester Township boundary, lot 39, in the 8th. Other members of the family were Margaret who married Peter Campbell, Robert who married Catharine McDiarmid, Christina Phair and Mary McLean - twins - and Duncan who was later a well-known Judge.

Information at the beginning of the Diary states: Letters to any part of Canada (Only Ontario and Quebec then), if prepaid, 5 cents; if unpaid, 7 cents per half ounce.

Excerpts from the Diary, which gives a daily weather report, uses many initials when referring to people. Some we can interpret.

1866 January

- Mon. 1 Very little snow on the ground, and a fine mild day. At Town meeting and at a shooting match in Kenmore. Spent a pleasant evening at M.B.
- Tues. 2 Commences making frame timber, a fine day, rough sleighing.
- Wed. 3 Bad sleighing in the bush, making frame timber, visiting at a friends.
- Thurs. 4 At frame timber, fine morning, slight shower of snow this afternoon.
- Fri. 5 Making frame timber, got a little frost bitten at Metcalfe hearing an apostolic preacher.
- Sat. 6 Very frosty day, making frame timber, at R.N.'s this evening.
- Sun. 7 Sharp north wind, some frozen faces seen. At Winchester hearing Rev. D. McD of Beckwith (McDiarmid).
- Wed. 10 At frame timber (also on Mon and Tues), rough sleighing on land but drove on the ice, especially the Castor.
- Thurs. 11 Thrashing fall wheat and oats. Better Waggoning than sleighing. The sheep feeds on the fields yet.
- Sat. 13 Stormy day, at frame timber. Preparing to kill the hogs this afternoon. Enough snow to make pretty good sleighing.
- Sun. 14 Severe frosty day, at home all day, the sheep put from the grass.
- Mon. 15 Killing the hogs today. To Kenmore with the pork this evening, sold to Tobin & Brennen.
- Tues. 16 Finished making frame timber, preparing for Ottawa this evening.
- Wed. 17 Stormy, Ottawa with a load of oats, sold to T. McKay, Chaudiere Mill.
- Thurs. 18 Complaining headache and toothache, thrashing oats this afternoon.
- Fri. 19 Stormy, thrashing oats and barley, preparing a load for Ottawa.
- Sat. 20 Frost rain and sleet, high wind, to Ottawa with a load of oats.

- Sun. 21 Frosty day with high wind, no preaching in the Osgoode Pres, Church.
 Tues. 23 Thrashing barley, preparing a load for Ottawa, at Kenmore for unground grist.
 Thurs. 25 East wind, making a sleigh tongue, stormy appearance this evening.
 Fri. 26 At blacksmiths getting a sleigh tongue ironed. Prince in the sleigh for the first time.
 Sat. 27 Thrashing wheat preparing a load for Ottawa. Braking a road to fence timber. At R.W.'s this evening.
 Tues. 30 Swamping out fence timber (as on Monday) Rev. J. Whyte visiting.
 Wed. 31 To Ottawa with a load of oats and changes of oatmeal. Meets D.R. in Ottawa (Donald Robertson?)

February 1866

- Fri. 2 Swamping fence timber, preparing a load of barley.
 Sat. 3 To Morrisburg with a load of barley, sold to Hartnell.
 Tues. 6 Cold, great drifting, thrashing the barley, finished the barley.
 Wed. 7 At P. McEwens at thrashing, cold and raw (Neighbour)
 Thurs. 8 Commenced drawing home fence timber, at singing school, Winchester.
 Fri. 9 Drawing home fence timber, at P. McAndrew regarding the measure of a coat.
 Sun. 11 At the O.P. Church. A great amount of snow has fallen today.
 Tues. 13 Splitting firewood, R. (Robert) to Morrisburg with barley and oats.
 Thurs. 15 Cold and stormy, nothing to come up to it since the first of Jan.
 Sat. 17 Drifting furiously, finished drawing home fence timber.
 Mon. 19 Thrashing oats, preparing a load for Morrisburg, singing school, Pres. Church.
 Wed. 21 Cutting rafters on P. McAndrews lot, preparing load for Morrisburg.
 Thurs. 22 Splitting firewood, R to Morrisburg with oats and butter, at Metcalfe this evening.
 Fri. 23 Thaw continues, drawing home rafters at P. McAndrews, finished drawing home frame timber, at the singing school at the Pres. Church.
 Sun. 25 At Winchester hearing Rev. D. McDiarmid in the forenoon, Rev. Whyte in the afternoon.
 Tues. 27 Boring fence blocks this forenoon, thrashing peas this afternoon, at singing school at Winchester.
 Wed. 28 Sawing fence blocks this forenoon, fanning a load of wheat for Ottawa, at a Missionary meeting in the Baptist Chapel this evening.

I am glad he took some time off to jot down details of his busy life. I was hoping to learn about sugar-making, but on Sat. March 17 he broke his 'collor' bone coming under Tobin's bridge with a load of shingles he had gone far below the French village, and he was unable to write until April 9 when he went to the sugar bush for the first time since getting hurt. That day, too, Helen McAndrew dies.

At the time of printing we have 180 paid-up members, the same number as at July 1, 1976. The list will be printed in the July Newsletter. We would remind you that we have raised the fee to \$2.00 for the first membership in a family. The second remains at \$1.00.