

Osgoode Township Historical Society & Museum

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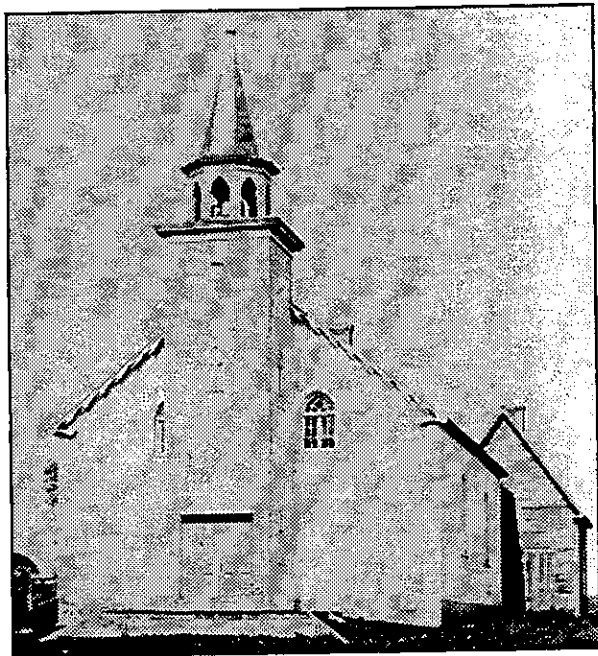
Old Vernon School

Newsletter

Volume XXX

No 4

December 2003



St Brigid's Roman Catholic Church - 1854

FROM THEN

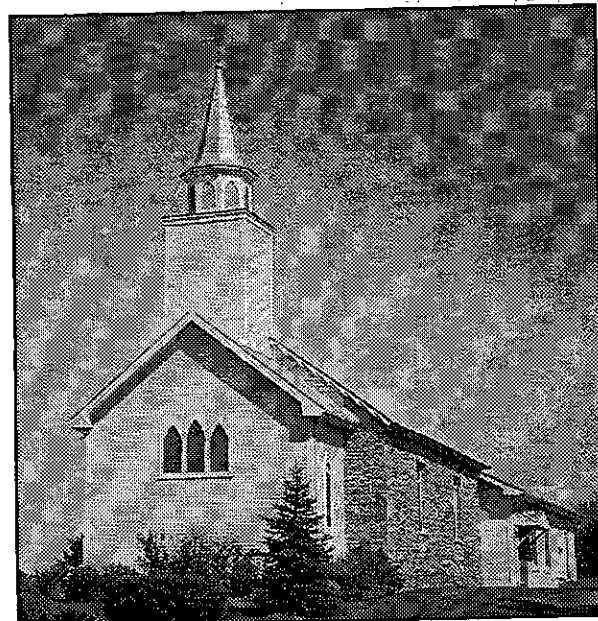
A GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST

The united parishes of St. John the Evangelist at Enniskerry and St. Brigid's Church at Kelly's Landing held a Fall Sunday Brunch on Sunday, September 28, 2003 at St. John's Hall to raise funds for their 150th Anniversary in 2004.

St. John the Evangelist Church is situated on Stagecoach Road on part of lots 19 and 20 in Concession 3 in Osgoode Township. The parish was founded by the Oblate Fathers on August 2nd 1854. Monsignor Guiges, then Bishop of Bytown, came in person to chose a site on which to build a church. The land was donated one acre by Patrick McEvoy and his wife Cecilia Doyle and three acres by John McEvoy and his wife Anastasia Powers.

The pioneer Catholic families in the western part of the township were walking to Our Lady of the Visitation in South Gloucester where there was a resident priest. After choosing a location for St. John's Church, Bishop Guiges accompanied by Father Pellier continued on horse back to search for a location of a Mission Parish somewhere in the Manotick area to serve a mostly Irish descent catholic population of 37 families.

Tradition has it that the party stopped at a height of land just off the Rideau River about halfway between the village of Osgoode and Manotick. Being near noon they had lunch which consisted of bread and butter with boiled goose eggs. After lunch the Bishop thought there was no need of going any further and the decision was made that this was the place for the church. The land was purchased from Dennis Connors Sr., part of lot 13 and his



TO NOW

son Dennis Connors Jr. part of lot 12. The church, a small stone structure 30 feet by 40 feet was solemnly blest by Bishop Guiges on June 10, 1858. The church was enlarged to almost double its size a few years later. In 1858, the Bishop added almost an equal number of families from the North Gower (Rideau) side of the river. The original church is still in use being the oldest standing church in Osgoode Township with an addition in 1988.

With the founding of St. Brigid's Church came the need for a parish cemetery. A narrow strip of land on lot 12 was purchased from Francis LaPlante. A walk throughout the cemetery today brings us face to face with many familiar names but also with names of families which have disappeared from the parish. Names such as Chartrand, Connors, Dolan, Doyle, Driscoll, Fagan, Johnston, Kelly, Kennedy, LaPlante, McEwan, O'Brien, O'Callaghan, O'Leary, Rushleau, Ryan, Tighe and Tohill.

Just north of the property purchased for the cemetery were a hotel and a small store owned and operated by the Dolan Family. The Dolans were also in charge of a wharf where steamers docked to pick up farm produce, and to deliver supplies such as machinery, tile, brick and other necessities. A number of express boats made regularly scheduled trips between Ottawa and Kingston. A few passenger boats also traveled up and down the river.

The parish for a long time bore the name "Prescott Road Parish". Prior to its founding and up to the appointment of a resident pastor, many births, marriages and deaths were registered in the record books of Notre Dame Cathedral, Bytown, Our Lady of the Visitation, South Gloucester, and Holy Cross, Kemptville.

The Bishop promised to send a priest if the people would build a house. The result was a beautiful stone presbytery which measured 36 feet and 25 feet wide. Thus it was that Father Thomas O'Boyle born May 29th, 1820 in County Mayo, Ireland, son of Thomas O'Boyle and Mary Cline, was appointed the first resident priest to St. John's and St. Brigid's. Father O'Boyle was ordained to the priesthood in 1847 by Bishop Joseph Eugene, De'Mazenod of Marseilles, France. He served as pastor from 1855 to 1860 at Our Lady of the Visitation Parish, South Gloucester. He was also responsible for missions of St. Catherine's, St. John's and St. Brigid's. This well known Celtic scholar departed this world at an early age, January 7, 1866. A Celtic tombstone ravaged by the mists of time, marks the spot where his body was laid to rest, amid those of his countrymen and women in St. John's Cemetery far from the land of their birth.

OTHS & M gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the City of Ottawa

Ottawa

A GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST CONT'D

On July 17, 1870, Father Aeneas MacDonnell Dawson was appointed pastor and remained until 1879. His long years of service merited that the parish be named after him, St. John's of Dawson. A Post Office was established at Dawson in April 1875 with John McEvoy appointed as first Postmaster. Due to a mail conflict, there already being a Dawson in the Yukon Territory, the name was changed November 1st, 1909 to Enniskerry.

Around the turn of the century, Thomas Grant from Metcalfe built a home at Dawson. A general store was established and with his wife (Anne Daley) served the area until his death in January 1938. The store was sold in 1944 to Peter Cousineau and his wife. A grist mill and feed store was added to the business. In October 1949, Maurice Cunningham and his wife Irene bought the thriving business. After operating the store for many years, they closed the store due to ill health. In 1967, Bill Cleasby and his wife opened a store in Enniskerry but found that with supermarkets within a short driving distance, he could not compete with big business.

In 1900, the parish hall was built. In 1905, a new rectory was built at a cost of \$4,538.46. In 1918, the present stone church was built. By September 29, 1919, the church was blessed. In November 11, 1930, the church was partially destroyed by fire. After repairs had been made the bell tower was added and a false ceiling installed in the interior of the church. On May 24th, 1935, disaster struck again. Fire completely destroyed the rectory. Consequently a new and more modern rectory was built.

Prior to the coming of modern machinery, farmers working in their fields would listen to hear the church bell ring the Angelus at 12 o'clock dinner time and 6 o'clock in the evening, time to quit. Yes, even the horses working in the fields knew it was time to quit. The bell heard ringing at odd times could mean a death in the community. By the nature of the tolling, one could tell whether the death was that of a man, woman or child.

Picture with me for a moment if you will. As one wanders amidst the tombstones in this pioneer cemetery and listens to the wind sighing through the pine trees that stand like sentinels, their shadows ever reaching to embrace all those interred beneath them. And in turning back as it were, the pages of time, one cannot help but visualize the hard life these courageous people, our ancestors, lived clearing acre by acre, building first a shelter, a school and a place to worship their God. Along with other pioneers they helped to open up this country and gave us a safe and happy environment in which to live.

Reading the inscriptions on the tombstones, one notices the words "Native of County Antrim; County Carlow; Kings County; County Cork; County Mayo; County Sligo; County Wexford and so on. The following are a few of the family names engraved on their tombstones, ravaged by the mists of time.

The Cleland and the Cangleys
Likewise the Daleys too
The McEvoy's, they number quite a few
The Buckles, Burns and the Blanchfields
The Herberts and the Jordans too
With names like Dewan, Doyle and Devereaux
Fitzpatrick and O'Brien, O'Byrne, O'Boyle
O'Rourke, O'Connor, O'Callaghan and Leahys too
The Shields and the Mantles, Terrys, Tobin
Turner and Sullivan too. Sure n'tis
Little wonder the name was changed to Enniskerry *

* The name Enniskerry derives its namesake situated 12 miles from Dublin City, gateway to some of the loveliest scenery of County Wicklow - The Garden of Ireland.

Michael Daley

THE KENMORE CONNECTION

In 1834, from the head of Loch Tay in Perthshire, Scotland, a chap of strong character and business came over from Kenmore, Scotland. He purchased lot 28, Con 9, the site of the present Town Hall and built a flour mill and later a saw mill which was a boon to the settlers at that time. The community at this time was thriving or beginning to thrive and it was felt that the community should have a name. In 1857, the townspeople gathered and decided that Squire Peter McLaren should have the honour of choosing a name, that being either Glen Lyon or Kenmore. He chose the name Kenmore after his former place where he lived in Scotland, "Kenmore."

It is interesting to note in the readings that Kenmore, Scotland is the birthplace of ice curling, but this is getting away from the connections of the three Kenmores. There is much that could be written. A chap called John McMaster partnered up with a man by the name of Duncan Carkner, built a mill on the Castor River down by the present site. They were two young men who had just moved into the community and had a hard time convincing anybody they needed land to start their mill, but somehow they got started. The partnership did not last long and John McMaster went west and settled on Lake Washington, building a mill and shingle company there. The year was 1889. It was January 10, 1901 that John McMaster named Kenmore, Washington after his former Kenmore, Osgoode, Ontario.

It was because of this connection that the President, Tom Traeger from the Kenmore Washington Heritage Society started to do some digging into the past to learn more about John McMaster, their founder. He sent e-mails and letters, all at random, to different people in this community of Kenmore, Osgoode. Because my mother's maiden name was McLaren, I definitely wanted to be part of this. I called Tom Traeger in Kenmore, Washington and arranged a day that we could meet with them and see the beautiful City of Kenmore, U.S.A. It is a city of 18,000 or so and every bit as beautiful as it sounds. (Washington by the Lake.) They have celebrated their 100th anniversary in the year 2001 and although my visit was too short, we did get a grand tour of Kenmore, U.S.A. in that same year. The visit coinciding with a visit to my son's place in Langley, B.C., but at least we had met. That visit turned into a return visit by the Traegers to Kenmore, Osgoode in October 2003. Kenmore, Osgoode, not being one of the most exciting places in the world to tour with visitors became quite a hustle for my wife and I along with Councillor Doug Thompson and Mary-Lynn. We did host Tom and Bobbi Traeger, who by the way are two wonderful people to meet. Councillor Doug Thompson was most helpful in arranging what you might say the complete day - which by the way was October 10th, 2003. The Mayor of Ottawa proclaimed October 10th, 2003 as Kenmore Day in the City of Ottawa, culminating with a supper in the Kenmore Community Hall with all people who corresponded or had anything to do with the Traegers. Thanks to all and a mighty huge thanks to Gwen Blais who arranged and cooked the supper. I am now looking forward (God willing) to visit Kenmore, Scotland in the spring of 2004 and perhaps a meeting of the Three Kenmores somewhere in the near future. My ancestors on my mothers side come out of Perthshire, Scotland, and this should be satisfaction guaranteed.

Jim Wynn



FROM THE ARCHIVIST/CURATOR'S DESK

The past three months have been very exciting, busy, and productive. We enjoyed the visit of several groups: 31 children and 6 adults from the Montessori School in Alta Vista on September 24th, the Metcalfe Brownies #2 Pack on November 5th, and 20 children with six adults on the Osgoode District Home Educators on December 3rd. In addition to tours of the museum buildings, the children had an opportunity to try their hand at clothes washing, making ice cream and preparing Christmas ornaments using only materials found in nature.

The Osgoode District Home Educators group prepared and presented a beautiful wreath to the Museum for the holiday season. Most of the tiny hands of the participants placed something on this very beautiful gift.

The inventory of the collection which was started late last summer is still being conducted by staff albeit at a much slower pace. Also over the past two months, we have started to paint the interior of the museum, causing of course more disarray in the place. However, as the storage and display areas get painted, and the items sorted, checked off, displayed or placed in storage, the result is proving to be a much cleaner, more organized space.

The Board of Directors adopted a Collections Policy in October, 2003. This document is essential for helping us keep more detailed records of the items which are accepted for the collection, and will help to streamline the collection to more closely meeting the mandate of recording the history of Osgoode Township. Copies of the new policy document are available at the museum, or by mail by contacting the museum or any Board member.

We had a total of 412 visitors in the three month period, handled 103 pieces of regular mail, 623 e-mails, and 152 telephone calls.

The Springhill Cemetery project is now completed and, as I write this, it is headed for the print shop. It is too soon to say what the final price will be for the new edition, however, I can approximate that it will cost approximately \$20.00. Copies will be available starting in mid-December.

The Community Memories project has received an extension to mid-January 2004. We are asking anyone who can contribute to our segments on Home Cures, Midwifery, Beekeeping, Carving, Hunting and Trapping, and Dowsing, to please contact us at 821-3524. We would be pleased to collect your stories for this "virtual display" being created for the web.

The Board of Directors also adopted a Five Year Strategic Plan for Fundraising in 2003. This plan, which will guide the fundraising activities of the Society from 2004 to 2008, is available to anyone who would like a copy. Please contact the museum or any Board member.

New to the Museum/Archives/Reference Collection:

Ruth (McKeen) and Ralph Wilkinson of Ottawa donated a photo reproduction of the William John McKeen family of Osgoode Village.

Doug Hughes donated a photo reproduction of the Metcalfe Club, Carleton County at the Ottawa Winter Fair in 1932.

Willis McCormick of Osgoode donated two "Dominion of Canada" dinner plates which were used at the Central Experimental Farm until the 1950's.

Ed Simons of Redding, CA donated *No Fear: The Biography of Lee Browne*.

Alice Craig donated a photo reproduction of the Baptist Church Manse and Sunday School Building. The photo also shows the wooden sidewalk which once graced the Highway.

Simon Alexander of Dorchester, Ontario, donated a photo of students from SS#21 (Hall School), Class of 1960-61, and a grouping of photos of the Phair farm at E ½ L6, C10.

Danny Cameron of Fredericton donated a copy of his new book: *Candid Cameron: Some Reflections of My Life*.

Bessie Quinn of Greely donated a photo reproduction of SS#11 (Metcalfe School) taken in 1938, and a second photo of the same school, c. 1880-1890, when her father attended there.

Bob Usher donated a book entitled *Our Heroes of the Great War*, which lists the men who served from Osgoode Township and surrounding areas, and a booklet entitled *A History of Long Island, Manotick, 1827-1997*.

Mae Hass of Metcalfe donated a hair wreath made by her grandmother, Lottie Wallace, c. 1900, using hair collected from family, friends and visitors.

Doug Thompson donated a photo of Dr. Calvin & Mrs. Morrow, and a photo of the Metcalfe Hockey Club, 1907.

Len Lemoine donated a copy of his self-published book *Road To Kenmore*. Copies of the book are available at the museum.

Ellen Dangerfield of Mountain donated seven unidentified photos.

Laura Porteous of Osgoode forwarded the documents relating to the Osgoode Drop-In Centre, 1974-2003.

The Metcalfe Women's Institute have archived with us their minute books covering the period from 1940-1991.

Marjorie Stanley of Metcalfe donated a stainless steel water bottle, a pair of winter mittens, a straight razor with case, a button hook, frames for drying wool socks, and a selection of papers and records which belonged to her father, Wilmot Stanley.

Upcoming Activities:

We are now in the process of planning our activities for Heritage Week in February. Please watch the local papers, our website, and posters for more news of the activities. The theme for Heritage Week in 2004 is the military.

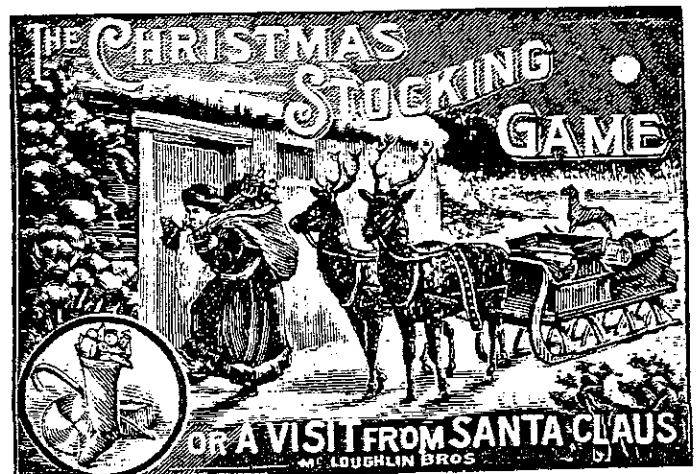
Plans are also underway for holding an Irish Night again. The tentative date is March 14th, and the event will take place in Greely. It is hoped that the second edition of the publication *Manotick Station Story* will be launched at this event.

We will be open during the holiday period, except for December 25, 26, and January 1. We will be open from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm on December 24th and December 31st.

And, finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank our Board of Directors, volunteers, part-time staff and friends for all your generous help and support in 2003.

Happy Holidays to All!

Michelle Lachance



FROM OSGOODE TOWNSHIP PAPERS

Bytown 3rd of December, 1846

To The Honourable M. Commissioner for Crown Lands Montreal. Bernard McGee writing to enquire about the ownership of Lot 10 in Concession 1 on which he settled 3 years before.

Francis Laplant, writing to enquire of Lot 12 in Concession 1. He was led to believe it belonged to the crown by the district agent. But he lately learned this land was the property of some individual and not the government. He is requesting verification of the owner as he would like to purchase the same.
Dated April 22, 1853.

Indenture made the first day of April 1853 between Dennis Connor of the Township of Osgoode and his wife Ellen Connor of the first part and the second part and the Bytown Prescott Railway Company. Part of Lot 13, Concession 1, in the Township of Osgoode.

Indenture - April 1, 1853 (Charles Fagan and the Railroad) Lot 19, Concession 1. Sept 9th, 1850 (writing to Crown Lands Toronto) Writing for word of his Petition for Lot 19 as he would like to put up a barn this fall.

To: Crown Lands - Herewith you will receive the sum of 4 pounds as a deposit on account of the north half of the west half of Lot 24 in the first concession. Dated August 6, 1852. Signed Patrick & Mrs Murphy (X)

Letter - Oath making that James O'Brien was on said lot, number 17, Concession 2 and paid taxes for the past 11 years. Dated 1854. Signed by Pat Shields (5 years) and Thomas Bailey.

Thomas Dailey of the Township of Osgoode made oath and said that James O'Brien (lot 17) paid taxes for the last 3 years and that Patrick Dewan and Patrick Shields paid taxers on lot 16 and never on lot 17. Signed Thomas Daily, Collector.

Michael Daley

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK -IN SEARCH OF MY ROOTS-

March 9th, 1973, I attended a meeting of the "New Horizons Historical Group", their third meeting which was held at the home of Miss Jessie Robertson in Vernon. Those present were Margaret Robb, Laura Taylor, Gerald Hill, Jessie Campbell, Elizabeth Stuart, Jessie Robertson, Michael Daley, Lorne Brunton, Helen Cavel, Jennie Dow, and Sarah Lee.

March 1973 - A trip to the Emerald Isle, the land of my forefathers was the spark that ignited the flame that propelled me into the fascinating world of history and genealogy. Thus it was January 2nd, 1976 that I was appointed by a motion, moved by Elizabeth Stuart, seconded by Margaret Robb that the following be appointed as Directors of our Society - Frances Iveson, Michael Daley, Dr. Lorne MacLachlan and Thomas Stanley. Carried. (I retired as director in Feb. 2003)

I would be remiss if I failed to pay tribute to that long list of volunteers who have given so much of their time and talents compiling and recording, census, church records and so on. The lists are endless. And all those involved in collecting farm implements and artifacts as well as a building to house them in.

It has been my pleasure for the last 18 years to serve as editor of this Newsletter. I greatly appreciate the many compliments and the kind words of encouragement that kept me behind this desk for so many years, but there comes a time when one must say goodbye.

Michael Daley

Sometime when you are feeling important,
Sometime when your ego's in bloom,
Sometime when you take it for granted
You're the best qualified in the room,
Sometime, when you feel that your going,
Would leave an unfillable hole,
Just follow this simple instruction,
And see how it humbles your soul.

Take a bucket and fill it with water,
Put your hand in it up to the wrist,
Pull it out and the hole that's remaining
Is a measure of how you'll be missed.
You may splash all you please when you enter,
You can stir up the water galore,
But stop, and you'll find in a minute
That it looks quite the same as before.

The moral in this quaint example,
Is do just the best you can.
Be proud of yourself, but remember,
There is no indispensable man (or woman)

Author Unknown
Michael Daley

MEMBERSHIP

It is time once again to renew your membership to the Osgoode Township Historical Society for the 2004 calendar year. It is in large part due to our membership that we can provide this newsletter as well as other programs and publications of interest. Thank you for your continued support.

Prices \$15.00 Cdn \$ if mailing to Canada
\$15.00 US \$ if mailing to the U.S.A or overseas

Name _____

address & telephone _____

e-mail _____

I have been a member of the Historical Society since: _____



KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE

August 9, 1894

A couple of citizens had a brief skirmish in a public place Tuesday, but no blood was spilled. They simply showed how foolish men can act!

August 16, 1894

The city of Ottawa has decided to impose a \$1.00 tax on every bachelor living within the confines of the capital. The revenue that will pour into the treasury of the city will be considerable.

May 17, 1894

It is said that hereafter the first Mon in Sept. will be called Labour Day throughout Canada and it will be observed as a public holiday.

Osgoode Station, Sept. 12, 1907

Osgoode Station has secured another new doctor; he is Dr Kerfoot from Smiths Falls. Mr William Logan, Mr Joseph Moses and Mr George Taylor left on Tuesday for the West.

Dalmeny, Oct 11, 1907

Mr Geo Lewis who had the misfortune to get badly scalded about the eyes by oil exploding from his engine, we are pleased to state, is able to be around his work again.

Metcalf, Oct 21, 1907

Mr T.A. Hicks, our local tailor, returned from Cobalt and Haileybury on Wednesday evening. He says there is quite a stir there but quiet towards what it would be were all the mines working. Chief County Constable Hamilton and Police Magistrate Smith of Ottawa are in town today, holding court in the Saunders-Lewis assault case. We understand Saunders was fined \$10 and costs.

Vernon, Nov 8, 1907

Mr T Melrose is engaged for the winter in Mr J.K. Porteous' store. Mr James Dalgleish has moved to Sam Genoa's house while W.J. McPhail has moved to the house owned by J.R Campbell. **Sept 10, 1907**
The Baptist Hall has been renovated for the continuation class here.

Dawson, Aug 13, 1907

Master Eugene Mooney of Watertown, N.Y. is visiting his aunt Mrs Jas. Doyle. Mr Charles Doyle accompanied by his cousins Misses M & A Doyle of Perth are at present visiting their many friends here.

Dalmeny, Aug 13, 1907

Dr McLauren, returned missionary from India who is spending a few weeks with his sister Mrs John Ferguson of this place, assisted the young people with their prayer meeting on Tuesday night. Preparations are being made for opening a continuation class here in September.

August 16, 1907

Mr J.C. Stuart has purchased the grist mill at Osgoode Station, owned by Jas. Ewings.

Nov 11, 1907

Mr & Mrs J.C Stuart and Misses Stella and Elizabeth are the guests of Mrs Stevens, Athens.

Belmeade, Aug 24, 1907

Mr James Slater has moved his dredging machine and will begin work on the Allen drain in the near future. School opened last Monday; All glad to see Miss Byers back again.

IN SEARCH OF THEIR ROOTS



I live in Climax, Saskatchewan and am looking for information about the Genoe/Allin family. My grandparents were George Thomas Allin and Florence Penninah Genoe, daughter of Moses Genoe and Jessie Patton. My mother, Alice May Allin was born in Vernon, Ontario.

Loma Smith: smithlf@sk.sympatico.ca

Firstly, I hope that you excuse me for my very bad English because I am French...I send you this because I have discovered that a branch of my family was at Osgoode in 1871. The name of the family is Grolou (Grolou/Graulou/Grauloup). There were seven people: Philemen, David, Napolian, Sophrina, David, Charles, Dolphes. I would like to find out all I can about this family because I am not entirely certain of the link with my ancestors ...and France is very far from Vernon.

Serge Grauloup: serge.grauloup@wanadoo.fr

I am doing a family McRostie family tree for a great grand daughter of Andrew McRostie, b. 1828 in Scotland, and Christene (?), b. 1833 of Ontario. What I know for sure is that some of Andrew and Christene McRostie's children settled in Russell, Manitoba, about 33 miles north of my hometown of Saint Lazare, Manitoba. What I need to know is who are the parents of Andrew McRostie. The same for Christene and when and where they were married. I've got a possibility on the parents of Andrew McRostie as Alexander McRostie and Janet McNab, but that's just a guess. It seems to me that Andrew was the only one who came to Canada and his other brothers and sisters went to Australia... if my guess is right. Can anyone please confirm if my hunches are correct or not?

Nicole Descottes: ndescottes@canada.com

MUSEUM ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting for the Osgoode Township Historical Society and Museum will be held on Tuesday, February 3, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. at the Osgoode Township Museum, 7814 Lawrence Street, Vernon, Ontario. All are welcome to attend.

Election of Officers for the Osgoode Township Historical Society and Museum is to be held at the Annual Meeting. Any member in good standing is eligible to become a director or officer. If you are interested in serving as a volunteer on the Board, or wish to nominate another member, please forward your intention in writing to:

The nominating Committee at O.T.H.S.

P.O. Box 74, Vernon, Ont. K0A 3J0

e-mail: oths@magma.ca

CHRISTMAS IN THE BACKWOODS OF CANADA

Just before our coming of age, Canadians borrowed or carried over their traditions from their old countries.

Santa Claus developed from the European Saint Nicholas. The first Canadian pictures of him appeared in 1869. Though *The Night Before Christmas* was written in 1823 and he arrived with reindeer, in Canada he came on snowshoes, by horseless carriage and riding a turkey. Once he crossed the St. Lawrence on the back of a whale. As long as he got her, no one cared how.

The sending of Christmas cards started early in the Victorian era. The first being sent in the early 1840's just at the time when Prince Albert introduced the Christmas tree and Dickens wrote "The Christmas Carol". Canadians started making their cards around the 1870's. Many were adopted from popular painting like William Bartlet and Cornelius Krieghoff. Mention of Canada by name was common, perhaps because the cards were sent to relatives in the old country. They were popular enough by the 1880's to start an overload at the Post Office.

The Christmas festival has always centred around the dining table with open house hospitality. The tables groaned beneath their heavy burdens. In Newfoundland, hospitality lasted longer and greater than elsewhere. About a month before Christmas Newfoundlanders started brewing, making fruitcakes, puddings and smoked herrings. They also had special recipes for cod - the "Christmas Fish", which they ate salted on Boxing Day.

In the West where settled life was just beginning, food was much more exotic. In one trading post such delicacy as fish browned in buffalo marrow, moose nose, boiled buffalo hump and beaver tail.

In the *Toronto Globe*, Dec 23, 1868, it is questioned why roast beef has become intimately associated with Christmas. The only reason we have seen given is that on the first Christmas Eve all the oxen were found on their knees in adoration of the great Being who had been born.

French Canadian children had their stockings filled on New Years Day by the Christ child but later the gifts were delivered on his behalf by St Nicholas or Pere Noel. Pere Noel at one time rode in the New Year on a sleigh pulled and pushed by angels on skates. The Christmas highlight was the midnight mass on Christmas Eve.

At the beginning of the Victorian era, the West was still raw wilderness. Travel was difficult and communications were few and far between. In the 1850's the Red River Settlement in Manitoba was getting mail only about twice a year so getting letters and parcels were unheard of.

Among the native peoples, Missionaries had brought Christmas to the native peoples and the mingling of Christmas ideas and primitive customs produced some attractive results. It is said that many Indians thought that the deer knelt down on Christmas Eve in homage to the Christ child.

Inuit on the coast of Labrador had New Year mummings - "naluyuks" - who appeared on New Years Eve and visited houses in costume. These were a mixture of their own traditions and that of the European mummings.

The singing of carols were known especially in Ontario, at least those from England were known to celebrate Christmas in the traditional ways they had left behind. The custom of carol singing from house to house died quickly - probably because of the cold climate. *The Globe* noted its absence with nostalgia, though a few hardy groups persisted.

Nova Scotians, like their Newfoundland neighbours, celebrated the full twelve days of Christmas, also went calling from house to house. Nova Scotians were keen dancers particularly at Christmas time. After church on Christmas Day skates were strapped on or they went coasting on Citadel Hill. The Acadians in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were more like their French cousins in Quebec. For them Midnight Mass was the special event, followed by the reveillon which lasted until the early hours. Presents were exchanged on New Years Day.

The first Christmas tree in England was said to have appeared at Windsor Castle in the 1840's, apparently introduced by Prince Albert. The first North American tree is claimed by Halifax in 1846. Decorations ranged from the dangerous lighted candles to gilded fruit and pine cones, sweets, paper chains and even small presents.

Compiled by Ann Leighton-Kyle
from Canadian Christmas Book, C. Carver, Tundra Books of Montreal

NOTES OF INTEREST

May 7th, 2003 Mad Cow Disease closes the U.S. border to Canada's Export Market of Canadian Livestock. This created an over population of live cattle in Canada with market prices dropping to a low of 2 to 3 cents, to a top of 13 to 14 cents per pound. Devastating not only to the cattle industry, but many farm related industries. There were layoffs of personnel in manufacturing and processing plants across this country.

August 14th, 2003 - A massive blackout occurred in Eastern North America, Ontario, New York State and the North Eastern Seaboard leaving 50 million people in the dark.

September 21st, 2003 - A special ceremony was held on the grounds of the Osgoode Legion for the unveiling of a new commemorative stone. The inscription reads, "In Remembrance W.W.I 1914-1918, W.W.II 1939-1945, Korea 1950-1953, Canadian Peace Keepers."

Michael Daley

THE EDITOR'S ONE-LINERS - LIFE'S LITTLE INSTRUCTIONS

- Sing in the shower
- Treat everyone you meet like you want to be treated
- Watch a sunrise at least once a year
- Leave the toilet seat in the down position
- Never refuse homemade brownies
- Strive for excellence, not perfection
- Return borrowed vehicles with a full tank of gas
- Never waste an opportunity to tell someone you love them
- Leave everything a little better than you found it
- Think big thoughts, but relish small pleasures

**OSGOODE TOWNSHIP
HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM
NEWSLETTER**

Published quarterly at the Museum in Vernon
Objective is to promote, preserve and publicize history in the Township of Osgoode and to foster genealogical research. Museum & archives are free admission.

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