

THE CABOOSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

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President's message (by Gérard Boyer)

My very first message as your president is one of gratitude for the work of the following members: Jean-François Beaulieu, Bob Serré, Dorothy-Jane Smith, Jeannie Smith, Verna Cotton and Ross Bradley. I know there are others, but these are the ones who allowed me to build on the fruit of their past labours. They are also part of the reason why this historical society must continue to thrive. I look forward to this year's endeavors and I look forward to being at the CTHS booth at the Navan Fair this year! For those of us who haven't seen it yet, we'll get to see Michael O'Meara's name on the Navan Community Builders Wall. Finally, a big welcome to two new members on the executive: Tom McNeely as vice-president and Ivan

Tanner as director. We're sorry to see Brian Coburn go, but appreciate the fact that he'd prefer to be a less active member, though an attentive one.

Our Society

The Cumberland Township Historical Society (CTHS) was founded in 1986. We are a non-profit, volunteer and community-based organization whose goal is to preserve Cumberland Township history.

Our newsletter

The Caboose is published four times each year by the Cumberland Township Historical Society.

Our Executive

- Gérard Boyer, President
- Jean-François Beaulieu, Past President
- Tom McNeely, Vice-President
- Gilles Chartrand, Treasurer
- Verna Cotton, Director
- Ross Bradley, Director
- Ivan Tanner, Director
- Ex-Officio
- Randall Ash, Caboose production
- Dorothy-J. Smith, Caboose editor
- Karly Ali, Website.

Our address and local history room

Cumberland Branch
Ottawa Public Library
Local History Room
1599 Tenth Line Road
Ottawa, ON K1E 3E8

Our World Wide Web address

www.cths.ca



Cumberland Village School, pre 1925, from the collection of David Chamberlin.

The CTHS will be at the Navan Fair again this year from August 7 to 10, 2014. Our theme of Cumberland schools will be augmented by the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum who is lending us a collection of school artifacts for display in the booth. Please come out and tell us your memories of school days in Cumberland Township.

Next meeting of the CTHS

The next meeting of the CTHS will take place on Wednesday, September 3rd, 2014 in the 2nd floor boardroom of the Ottawa Regional Police Station, Tenth Line Road and St. Joseph Blvd. Gerry Boyer will talk about the search for Cameron and McMillan ancestors in the Scottish Highlands. Plan to arrive at **6:30 pm** as the meeting will begin at **7:00 pm**. Be sure to bring a friend along. Light refreshments, as always, will be served. **Important: parking rules have changed. Please park on the street beside the police station (Eric Czapnik Way).**

Society calendar



For more information on these and other upcoming 2014/15 events, please contact a member of the executive committee or visit our website at www.cths.ca.

Sept. 3 rd	Gerry Boyer on Touring Scotland in search of Camerons and McMillans
Nov. 5 th	Gilles Chartrand with items from the World War collection in the Clarence-Rockland Museum
January 7 th	TBA
March 4 th	TBA
May 6 th	TBA

CTHS meetings - Unless other stated, all meeting are at 10th Line Road Police Station 2nd floor Boardroom. Doors open by 6:30 and start time is 7:00 pm.

At the Museum – 613-833-3059 / CumberlandMuseum@ottawa.ca

Contact the museum for costs and times

July 27 th	10 a.m. to 4 p.m. All Aboard! A day of railway history fun.
August 23 rd	6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Wizard of Oz at the Drive-in.
August 31 st	10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Amazing Maize. The history of local food and farming from the 1930s to today.

The Caboose is made possible in part through a grant from the City of Ottawa.



Contact us

If you have questions or suggestions regarding any aspect of the Society, you may contact any member of the executive by phone or by email:

- Gérard Boyer, President
gcooyer@hotmail.com
- Jean-François Beaulieu, Past President
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- Randall Ash, Caboose production (833-3207) randall2620@rogers.com
- Karly Ali, Website, cths@cyberus.ca

Feed-back time

I heard from a number of Vars people about the photo postcard of the Methodist Church in Vars. The man who sent the card was G. Hilliard Browne and not Browse. I have found a George Brown in the 1911 census, born in 1891 and leading a household consisting of his parents Thomas and Esther Brown.

In April 2014, Jeannie Smith and Gilles Chartrand were among the many men and women who volunteered their time to judge at Ottawa's Regional Heritage Fair for elementary school children. As well, the CTHS presented a monetary prize to the best history project on rural living as chosen by the Heritage Fair judges. Winners were Farrell Finestone, Isabel Quintal and Marisa Gopalakrishnan, Grade 8 students at Glashan Public School, for their exhibit entitled "Maple Tree Syrup / Sirop d'érable".

Remembering People

A *township* is a map made up of roads and buildings. A *place* is made of memories of times spent with people we loved. All of us have memories of important people who influenced us as children. People we knew in our immediate families as well as extended families and at school, or scouts or even on our first job. Today we have four memories of important people from Cumberland Township, a farming couple, and three women, two who never married but lived life to the fullest, and one who cared not only for her own husband and children but for all of those around her. Ordinary people who made a difference in someone's life! We hope you agree. Please think about who was important in your life and let us know their story.

Auntie Vic

by Elaine Findlay

Victoria Robertson Burch was born on May 24, 1891, the Queen's birthday, which is why she was named Victoria. She was the eldest of the four surviving children born to William Burch and his wife Catharine Margaret Robertson. Her siblings were William Robinson, Maude Ellen, and Hugh James.



William Burch and Catherine (Robertson) Burch with their children. Standing - Victoria Robertson Burch, b. 24 May 1891; seated l-r: Hugh James Burch b. 12 Jan 1896, William Robinson Burch b. 27 May 1893, and Maude Ellen Burch b. 5 Aug 1894. From the collection of Ethel (Burch) Findlay.

I knew very little about Victoria's early life until I talked to her niece Ethel (Burch) Findlay, Robinson's daughter, who gave glimpses into those years. Victoria and Robinson were born in Osgoode Township. The family then moved to Cumberland Township, living near Canaan where Maude and Hugh were born.

In 1904 William Burch bought a farm south and east of Cumberland Village. This farm, at what is now 3150 Wilhaven Drive, has been in the Burch family ever since.

Victoria received most of her education in Maxville, Glengarry County, where she lived with her grandparents, Hugh and Isabella Robertson, and their daughter, Victoria's Aunt Isabella (who married later in life). By the time of the 1911 Canada Census, twenty-year-old Victoria was back at her parents' farm.

Victoria was happily engaged to William T. Kinsella, son of Henry Kinsella and his wife Mary McEachern, when he became ill. A year later, in June 1923 at age 41, the unthinkable happened; William passed away in hospital,

from tuberculosis. Victoria was at that time 32 years of age. The dream became a memory, to be gently tended with the passing of the years.

A practical-minded daughter, Victoria became the family caretaker, first to her aging parents, then to her Aunt Isabella and Uncle Rory in Maxville. When the latter passed away, funds from the sale of their home enabled Victoria in the late 1940s to purchase a house in Cumberland. When niece Ethel Burch entered the working world in 1948, she lived with "Auntie" in the village until her marriage to Allan Findlay in 1951.

In the 1950s, Victoria Burch came into my life because she was a longtime friend of my grandmother, Myrtle (Lough) Russell. To my brother Billy and to me, she was simply "Auntie Vic". Whenever we came home from school and saw her sitting comfortably in the old kitchen rocking chair, chatting away with Grandma, we knew that she would be staying a couple of weeks or more. We were quite fond of her; it was almost like having another grandmother there.

She had very large, almost sad-looking eyes, and her white hair was always gathered up into a bun. She wore an old-fashioned, flat-topped black hat, which was attached to her hairbun with a very long, rather dangerous-looking hatpin. She was mild-mannered and soft-spoken. In short, she was a gentle soul. She and Grandma used to have great conversations.



Front row 1st and 2nd on the left, William Kinsella and Victoria Burch at Clifford Hayes and Violet Williams wedding. From the collection of Ethel (Burch) Findlay.

Auntie Vic's house on the main street in Cumberland, two doors east of the Anglican

Church, was an interesting place. Billy and I used to visit once in a while with our mother. There was a hand pump in her kitchen, and a spongy area on the floor. Auntie warned us not to walk on that, lest we fall through into the cistern. We had a cistern at home, so we knew we didn't want to end up there! What I liked best was the pump organ in the parlour, which she used to let us try to play. It definitely took teamwork, one of us on the bellows and the other on the keys, to coax any reasonable sound out of it.



Victoria Robertson Burch circa 1922, wearing her engagement ring. From the collection of Ethel (Burch) Findlay.

Auntie Vic did lovely crochet work, including hairpin lace, just like Grandma's. They both made it look so easy. Every Christmas from about the age of ten, I received a couple of potholders and/or doilies for my Hope Chest. Some of these are tucked away in my cedar chest as memories of another world. One summer Auntie made me a Copen-blue broadcloth dress with cowl collar and sash; I proudly wore it on the first day of high school, and many times thereafter.

At about this time, Auntie Vic moved in with Ethel and Allan, and was with them for fourteen years. She liked making quilts in addition to crochet work. Ethel has a couple of these as keepsakes. Auntie loved Ethel's selection of needlework magazines - fresh ideas to ponder.

Although her health was declining, Auntie Vic was a treasured guest at our wedding in 1974. It was shortly afterwards that the time came for more care. She agreed to the Home in Sarsfield with the same unruffled acceptance with which she had met most of life's turns. In conversation with family she usually referred to the staff as "the maids". She passed away in the fall of 1979.

Auntie Vic was an ordinary person, just like a lot of us. She was not put on earth to "set the pond on fire", so to speak, but she made a difference in MY life, and she will always be special to me.

My Extraordinary Relatives, John and Millie Smith

by Margaret Goldik (Smith)

Let Proust have his madeleines: the scent of manure and timothy hay instantly transport me to some of the happiest times of my life.

These were the special summers when my sister Deanna and I were sent for a farm vacation with our Uncle John and Aunt Millie (Presley) Smith. It probably eased the congestion back at home in Ottawa, where we were a gang of seven kids.



John and Millie Smith on their wedding day with best man Edward Smith (left) and bridesmaid Luva Presley (right). From the Smith family collection.

John Smith, or as he was officially known on his birth certificate – Alton Alfred Smith, farmed on Concession 1 East Commons at the Canaan Road. He was the son of Robert Smyth and Nellie Sell and brother to my father, Edward Smith, along with Norman, Walter and Elsie Smith (Hewens). Millie Presley was the daughter of James Presley and Ida Wylie from Clarence Creek. Her sister Luva was married to John's brother, Norman.

These two wonderful people, John and Millie, put up with the city slicker nieces, even when we committed gaffes, like using the chamber pots under the beds instead of braving the dark and the spiders to use the outhouse in the night. Mum scolded us for this when we got home, since it made extra work for Aunt Millie.

The lessons I learned from them have stayed with me in the fifty plus years since. I would be dimly aware of Uncle John getting up in the dark to milk the cows. The haying, which for us was a lark, was hard work for those forking the hay up into the full wagon. I gained an immense respect for the farmers who provide us with our daily bread.

I sometimes helped to herd the cows back to the barn for milking in the evening, and I still remember my wonder that these huge boney-hipped bovines actually moved when my cousins and I shouted "Cobos!"

We loved Dick and Pearl, the huge draft horses. My first (and last) experience of horseback riding was perched on the back of Pearl – rather like straddling a sofa. But the horses, like the cows, had to be tended, and Uncle John and our cousins, Wayne, Terry, and Eric, always took care of the animals before they came in to wash up and eat. That was an important lesson learned.

I learned another valuable lesson from the quiet Sabbaths. Uncle John first put us all into the pickup truck and drove us to the United Church in Cumberland Village for the Sunday service. The animals still had to be taken care of, naturally, and food had to be prepared, but I saw Uncle John sit on the couch in the kitchen and read the farm journals. That he took time from the busyness of his daily work to rest impressed me then, and it impresses me still. I'm sure there was always something that he could have been doing.

Aunt Millie spent all her time cooking, or so it seemed. Breakfasts, lunches and suppers were gigantic meals, with cakes (tomato cake was one of our favourites), pies, potatoes, vegetables, pickles, all cooked or baked on the behemoth of a wood stove. And then there was the more or less continuous washing up. Deanna was much better at helping with the kitchen chores than I was. And it was to Deanna that Aunt Millie gave the recipe for tomato cake.

When Mum and Dad came to pick us up, Aunt Millie made a nice light meal. It included celery sticks stuffed with processed cheese, which struck me as sophisticated – and so it was at the time. Looking back I marvel that she could find time to go the extra mile for company when she already had a full time job as a farm wife. My dad once said that farm work was hardest on the wives, and I believe it.



John and Millie Smith (centre) at their 40th anniversary party with their former attendants, best man Edward Smith (right) and bridesmaid Luva (Presley) Smith (left). From the Smith family collection.

So what did I learn from Uncle John and Aunt Millie? That even as a guest, one earned one's keep. That farmers and their wives worked – perhaps still do – far harder than anyone should. That farm life in the '50s was only a few steps removed from farm life at the turn of the century – with the difficulties, but also with a deep connection to nature and the seasons.

I remember one particular time on our way between Ottawa and Montreal, my husband and I stopped in to visit with Uncle John. By this time Aunt Millie had lost her battle with cancer. The old inconvenient farmhouse had been replaced by a modern bungalow – fortunately in time for Aunt Millie to have enjoyed it. My children were small, and Uncle John invited them out to play with the kittens in the yard. Thirty years later, they remember that visit. So a very belated “Thank you,” Uncle John and Aunt Millie, for your generous hospitality.

Auntie Kae

*by Marlene Boyer with Kae Kirk's daughter,
Fran Burnside*

Frances Kathleen Dagg Kirk, is one of my Dad, Mervyn Dagg's, older sisters.

She was born January 16th, 1920, at the family farm on what is now Trim Road. Her parents, Samuel Dagg and Lena Wall, were pioneer farmers and provided postal delivery via horse and buggy in Navan. They had nine children, John Thomas (1905-1971), Francis George (1906-1965), Ellen Jane (1908-1975), Herbert (1911-1925), Elizabeth Mildred (1915-1994), Edwin Colbert (1918-1964), Frances Kathleen (1920-2007), Samuel Mervyn (1922-1988), and Elvyna Mae (1920-1980). Most of the children went by their second names, which sometimes caused confusion. They all made sure the children of my generation were called by their first name.

Auntie Kae was born in Navan and did her schooling in Navan. Her ancestors were pioneers of St. Mary's Anglican Church, Navan. Although she left Navan for 'The City', she was always a country girl at heart. Her feelings of family, faith, and community always brought her back to Navan.

She worked for the Federal Government in Ottawa and in 1943 she joined the Canadian Army. She was based at National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa and was discharged as a Sergeant in 1946.

In 1950, she married Harold Melvin Kirk in St. Mary's Anglican Church. The reception was held at the family farm. One of the stories told to me was that the teetotalers celebrated in

the house and those who preferred a drink headed to the shed.



Kathleen Dagg and Harold Kirk on their wedding day, from the collections of Marlene Boyer and Fran Burnside.

Auntie Kae and Uncle Artie had four children, Frances Mary, Samuel Edward, William Harold, and John Melvin. They lived in Ottawa. I fondly remember their visits to our farm on Trim Road, and later to our home in the village of Navan and to our present home. They visited often and always brought lunches and suppers consisting of hamburgers, macaroni and potato salads along with yummy treats, doughnuts with icing sugar (from Morrison Lamothe Bakery), chips, and on special occasions rolled peanut butter and banana sandwiches. After my Mom, Lois (McFadden) Dagg passed away, Auntie Kae kindly brought my Dad homemade meat and turkey pies. Her meat and turkey pies and fruitcakes were delicious.

Auntie Kae loved her visits to Navan and was always so enthusiastic to hear how everyone was and what they were up to. She always wanted to hear about the McFaddens, my Mom's family who lived nearby. She also enjoyed checking up on the flowers in our garden. The annual Memorial Service at St. Mary's was a time for her to reconnect with former classmates and to remind us of our departed ancestors. Every year she would knit many items for the Church Bazaar. When I was young she always knit mitts for me each

Christmas and did the same for my three sons. Puppet mitts were her specialty. One November she was honoured by St. Mary's for her many years of donating various handicrafts by being asked to open the annual Bazaar. Navan never left her heart.



Kathleen and Harold Kirk, from the collections of Marlene Boyer and Fran Burnside.

In 1967 she and her sister, Elva, began a Centennial project of tracing their family tree.



Kathleen Kirk, from the collections of Marlene Boyer and Fran Burnside.

She worked on this project until her death some forty years later.

As a kid, I also remember visiting Auntie Kae and her family on Hawthorne Avenue in Ottawa. It was such a treat to visit the big city and to sit outside on a summer night on their beautiful veranda after having been to the corner store for candy and ice cream. When my parents were both hospitalized in their later years, Auntie Kae would take the bus to the hospital on a daily basis and provided palliative support. She would pack up her knitting and sit for hours on end. She also sewed and knit baby clothing for newborns in Mexico and donated many of her craft items to the Anglican Churches she attended. Each November she was a volunteer with the Royal Canadian Legion's Poppy Fund.

Widowed in later years, Auntie Kae lived in an apartment in Sandy Hill. I continued to admire her love of life and her constant dedication to look at the glass half full. She regularly hopped on the city bus with her walker and travelled to the Rideau Centre, Byward Market, and Carlingwood Shopping Centre with a shopping list that included wool for mitts and other craft items.

Despite many medical concerns in her later years, she lived life to the fullest and was a constant support to her family and friends. Auntie Kae passed away on May 27, 2007 at the Peter D. Clark Centre. She is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery, Navan.

"Cousin Mary"

by Dorothy-J. Smith

Mary Cameron was born on June 12, 1899 in the village of Cumberland, the third daughter of Peter Stuart Cameron and Georgiana Elizabeth Franklin. Her parents had already lost their first daughter, Ellen, as an infant in 1892. Her mother died when she was five years old in 1905. Her older sister, Esther, would die at the age of 13 when Mary was ten; old enough to know what she had lost and to grieve.

Her father had remarried in 1908 and after the death of his second daughter he moved west to Saskatchewan. He and his new wife took Mary's brother with them as well as their

own new baby girl but Mary ended up living with her Franklin grandmother.

This seems like a sad start to life and yet my memories of Mary Cameron are of a vital woman with a fierce intelligence and a huge laugh. Mary was my mother's first cousin, her father having been older brother to Harvey Cameron, Millie (Cameron) Smith's father. Grandfather, as the last of the Cameron family remaining in Cumberland, took care of his niece. We have letters in which Harvey writes to Mary while she was away from Cumberland keeping her informed on her Grandmother Franklin's well-being. My mother remembered that Mary always came back to their house for holidays and it was like having an older sister coming home. My Aunt Dorothy (Cameron) Chamberlin's photo albums show Mary as part of family gatherings while a photo of a Christmas dinner in the 1950s brings together the Chamberlin and Smith families with Mary as an important part of the family circle.



Mary Cameron in March 1933, taken when she was teaching in London, Ontario. From the collection of David Chamberlin.

Mary never married. She became a teacher of English and Latin in London, Ontario and later in Toronto. She toured the world as well. I still have a small camel-skin wallet she brought

home as a present from Egypt and a blue bracelet from Copenhagen. It was exciting when she returned from these trips. Her stories of the places she had seen made the world seem full of possibilities. And yet she always came back in the summer to the cottage she owned in Cumberland Village, facing the Ottawa River just off Cameron Street.

Mary was full of life. Each summer she would bring "the three little ones" down to stay at her cottage – that is, myself, my sister Bette, and my brother Edward, we being the youngest batch of seven children. Mary was well into her fifties by this time but she took us out in the rowboat and off on excursions and to movies. We loved visiting her cottage and especially bunking on the front verandah where you could listen to the ferry docking at the wharf while falling asleep.

Her killer Yorkie was another matter. She adopted Pippa as a rescue dog and seemed to take great delight in Pippa's bad behaviour. Yet that too was part of Mary. She was not a cliché spinster schoolmistress insisting on good order and properness. Rather she enjoyed to the full whatever life had to give her.

Even as a child, however, I knew that what was most impressive about Mary was how smart she was. We have a letter sent to her father in November 1904 by one of his brothers, James Cameron. In it Uncle Jim comments on what a clever child little Mary was. She was very smart indeed and would have gone far academically had she had the opportunities open to women today – or even for that matter, to women of her own time who had families willing to give a daughter a university education. She certainly had high expectations for all of us in the next generation. I always felt challenged by her, that I should use my brain and amount to something. Perhaps we all did for when I celebrated with my family the achievement of a Masters degree in History, there was a constant refrain of how proud Mary would have been.

At the same time, I learned from Mary that having a strong academic intelligence does not mean being an intellectual snob. She loved teaching as well as using her brain simply because it was part of life for her, along with talking to people and enjoying her dogs. I remember Mary always reading but as likely to

pick up a light paperback as anything else. Sitting and chatting with friends was as important, however, as being immersed in reading.



Mary Cameron c.1974 (left) and cousin Millie (Cameron) Smith (right). From the Smith family collection.

When Mary finally retired from teaching, she came back to Cumberland for good. There

were some months when she shared my mother's home and months when my mother shared Mary's cottage as home. They were something of an odd couple for my mother was a strict Baptist and Mary was not. But they were cousins, family, and family mattered hugely to both of them. That is another thing I learned from Mary – that one does not have to marry to have family. But you do have to care about having family and staying close.

Mary died on May 23, 1978. In her last days family again was what mattered for it was cousins, David and Marolyn Chamberlin, who cared for her and gave her last home. She is buried in Dale Cemetery with her mother and her sisters who predeceased her so long before.

Recognition of Michael O'Meara as a Builder of Navan

The Navan Community Association has a special wall on Colonial Street which they built to honour the builders of Navan. The following is the nomination of Michael O'Meara

researched and written by Ross Bradley and Verna Cotton on behalf of the Cumberland Township Historical Society and endorsed by Margaret MacNeill, Laurie Watson, and Liam Burke (of Navan, Ireland). We are proud that a panel of independent judges accepted the nomination and that Michael O'Meara's name has been added to the Builders Wall. The other nominations accepted and honoured at a special ceremony on June 7, 2014 were the Smith family of Navan, Wesley Savage and Sheila Minogue-Calver. - ed.



The Navan Community Builders Wall, Colonial Road, with the Michael O'Meara plaque (inset). Photo, Dorothy-J. Smith.



Verna Cotton and Ross Bradley, June 7, 2014, reading out the submission nominating Michael O'Meara as a Builder of Navan. Photo - Tom Devecseri, Navan (reproduced by permission of Tom Devecseri).

Nomination of Michael O'Meara

We, Donald Ross Bradley and Verna Mabel Cotton both long time residents of Navan and both present day Directors of the Cumberland Township Historical Society are pleased and honoured to represent that Society in nominating Michael O'Meara to be recognized on the Navan Community Builders Wall in June 2014.

Michael O'Meara was born in the Parish of Navan, County Meath, Ireland in the year 1799. He married Julia Theresa Madden in about 1820. They immigrated to Canada in 1835 and shortly after moved to the East Part of Lot 11 Concession 7, Cumberland Township (near the home where Don and Joan Rathwell lived on

present day Colonial Road and just east of Frank Kenny Road).

Michael O'Meara named the first post office in Navan in 1861. It is reported that he named it "Navan" after the well known Irish town of Navan in the County of Meath, Ireland. The streets of Fairgreen Avenue and Trim Road in present day Navan were named in the 1980s after the streets of Michael O'Meara's home Parish in Navan, Ireland. Navan, Ontario of course celebrated its 150th anniversary in style during the year 2011.

By Michael O'Meara's naming of Navan back in the 1860s, he made a distinct impact on every citizen who has ever lived in this community and called it home. In addition the

same will be true for whomever will come to live in this community in the future and call it home.

Michael O'Meara was a member of the Cumberland Township Municipal Council in 1851-52. It is our belief he would have had a major impact at that time on all those who had chosen to live in Navan and its extended community. Michael O'Meara died in 1898 and is buried in St. Hugh's Cemetery in Sarsfield.

In more recent times and to this very day, the Kenny family has lived in Navan. They are direct descendants of Michael O'Meara. His daughter Catherine was born in 1825, immigrated to Canada in 1838 and married Michael Henry Kenny on November 16, 1851. They purchased the farm originally owned by Michael O'Meara. One of their children, Henry Augusta Kenny, was born April 5, 1866 in Navan. He married Margaret Elizabeth (Maggie) Shea daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Shea of Bearbrook, September 24, 1902. Henry Augusta Kenny was a member of the Cumberland Township Council 1915-1918. Their six children were all born in Navan. Many of them went on to have a significant impact on the Navan community just as their great grandfather Michael O'Meara had done. For example, Julia Annetta Kenny, their second child born Oct. 2, 1905 was a teacher in Navan. She spent much of her life deeply involved in community activities in Navan. She was a Charter Member of the Navan Women's Institute, December 19, 1931, and its first secretary. She lived in Navan until 1982 and then moved to Ottawa. She threw herself wholeheartedly into serving the Shepherds of Good Hope in Ottawa, an organization established to feed and clothe the poor, shelter the homeless, and visit the sick and incarcerated. She was awarded a medal in 1985 from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, for 50 years of community volunteer service. On April 29, 1987 she was presented with the Order of Canada by Governor General Jeanne Sauv  at Rideau Hall. This is the highest award bestowed on a civilian in Canada.

Annetta Kenny married Alton Percival McDonald on September 20, 1928. Alton died November 21, 1969. Annetta died October 10,

1996. They were both buried at St. Hugh's Cemetery in Sarsfield. They had one son, Frank McDonald, born June 26, 1940.

J. Francis Henry Kenny and Gertrude Lorette Carmel Kenny were born August 27, 1912. They were siblings of Julia Annetta Kenny. Frank Kenny was a long time respected farmer in Navan in spite of having lost an arm in a farm accident early in his life. He was an elected trustee of St. Hugh's Church in Sarsfield as well as being an elected Councillor in the Cumberland Township Municipal Council, 1975-1982. Frank Kenny carried on the municipal traditions of his great grandfather Michael O'Meara and his dad Henry Augusta Kenny.

Frank married Rita McMahan, October 23, 1948. They had six children. Their first son, Henry, was born May 12, 1952 and lives in Navan. Their son Stephen, born May 23, 1954, lives on the original farm today with his family. Their youngest child, Greg lives with his wife Cindy and daughter Robin in their home in Sarsfield.

Frank Kenny was recognized by the City of Ottawa Council in 2001 by the naming of the Frank Kenny Road. This is a major thoroughfare which runs directly past the Kenny farm from Highway 417 (Exit 88) at the southern boundary of Ottawa's Cumberland Ward to its northern boundary at Old Montreal Rd. and close to Highway 174 at the Ottawa River.

We have absolutely no hesitation whatsoever in nominating Michael O'Meara, the Irish immigrant from Navan, County Meath, Ireland who arrived in Navan, Ontario in 1835 and who named the Navan community by naming the Navan Post Office in 1861. His many direct descendants, the Kenny family, have continued to make major contributions not only to Navan but to Ottawa, Ontario and to Canada. There is every reason to believe that the O'Meara-Kenny legacy will continue to flourish in our community for generations to come. It will indeed be an honour to see Michael O'Meara's name recognized on the Navan Community Builders Wall.



The Kenny descendants of Michael O'Meara and Julia Madden holding the plaque adding Michael O'Meara's name to the Navan Community Builders Wall. Photo - Tom Devceseri, Navan (reproduced by permission of Tom Devceseri).



See us at the Navan Fair!

August 7 to 10, the CTHS will have a booth in the Navan Curling Club. Our theme this year is Schools of Cumberland. There will be school artifacts on display as well as photos of school classes from the past. We hope you will take a moment to stop and say hello. Then stay to look over the photos and fill in the names of children you recognize. We are planning a book on Cumberland Schools so leaving your name and contact information or scribbling down your memories on a form in the booth will be a wonderful contribution. And of course Gerry Boyer will be there ready and able to help with genealogical enquiries.

