
THE CABOOSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

ISSN 1203-147X

Volume XXII Number 4

October 2013

President's message (by Jean-François Beaulieu)

We continue to have some great heritage activities in our neighbourhoods. I recently attended a book launch at the Shenkman Arts Centre which had been organized by the Société franco-ontarienne du patrimoine et de l'histoire d'Orléans. There are also plans underway to unveil heritage plaques on important houses in Orléans. For our own heritage work, I am looking forward to seeing the members at the November 6th meeting.

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 six times each year by the Cumberland Township Historical Society.

Our Executive

- Jean-François Beaulieu, President
- Dorothy-Jane Smith, Past President, Caboose editor
- Vice-President – vacant
- Gilles Chartrand, Treasurer
- Verna Cotton, Director
- Ross Bradley, Director
- Brian Coburn, Director

Ex-officio

- Randall Ash, Caboose production
- 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



The National Cenotaph was unveiled in Ottawa in May 1939 and was the centerpiece of fireworks that night. While the capital city might indeed have the grandest memorial to the war dead, all across Canada small communities like our own built memorials in the 1920s and 1930s to express their depth of feeling for the losses and the heroism of the War. (photo from the collection of Edward Smith)

Next meeting of the CTHS

The next General Meeting of the CTHS will take place on Wednesday, November 6th, 2013 in the 2nd floor boardroom of the Ottawa Regional Police Station, Tenth Line Road and St. Joseph Blvd. The Cenotaphs of Cumberland Township will be the topic. Jeannie Smith will speak on the Cumberland cenotaph, Ross Bradley on the Navan cenotaph, and Ivan Tanner on the Vars cenotaph. 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 2013/14 events, please contact a member of the executive committee or visit our website at www.cths.ca.

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Nov. 6 th | The Cenotaphs of Cumberland Township, Jeannie Smith for Cumberland, Ross Bradley for Navan, and Ivan Tanner for Vars |
| Jan. 1 st 2014 | Cancelled in light of the holiday |
| March 5 th | To be announced |
| May 7 th | CTHS AGM and an evening of celebration |

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 7:00 pm.

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

Contact the museum for costs and times

Vintage Village of Lights, starting November 30, 2013

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:

- Jean-François Beaulieu, President (841-0424) jeanfb@sympatico.ca
- Dorothy-Jane Smith, Past President (225-3554), Caboose editor
- Randall Ash, Caboose production (833-3207) randall2620@rogers.com
- Karly Ali, Website, cths@cyberus.ca



Calling volunteers!! With Brian Coburn on board, we can pull ahead but we still need more people. Are you interested in being a director and taking on some special aspect of our work? Perhaps you would like to maintain our audio-visual equipment? How about joining in the fun of the search for Cumberland's history in the archives and by interviewing residents? It is a chance to keep our history alive, to work with like-minded people, while choosing your level of participation in telling Cumberland's story.

We get feedback

More about a royal visit. It seems the best vantage point for seeing King George and Queen Elizabeth in 1939 was probably in Ottawa. Bob Burns remembers being marched down from the Navan school to the railway station to see the royal train go by. As he recalls, he could not believe how fast a train could travel. All he saw was dust. Joyce Kennedy, on the other hand, has phoned from Arizona with her memories of the day. She was taken into Ottawa to see the king. Unlike those who stood along the ceremonial route, Joyce saw the King dressed in ordinary clothes, no doubt going to one of the various duties he undertook during that visit. She remembers thinking how disappointing it was. He looked just like an ordinary man. But since that time, she has come to see the King as a hero and continues to hold him so to this day.

Have you read?

(from the editor's bookshelf)

I have two good reads on my shelf right now. One is a historical biography that explores the experience of the genteel in trying to cut a farm out of wilderness in the early nineteenth century. I am speaking of Charlotte Gray's *Sisters in the Wilderness*, a biography of the sisters Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill. The second is fiction set in the past and written for young people, N.M. (Nora) Fitzpatrick-Hanson's *Whitfield's Wharf*. The two books are quite different and yet complementary for both explore the changes forced on families migrating to Canada with one set of expectations and meeting a rather different reality.

Charlotte Gray has written an biography about ladies (and they were ladies) who migrated expecting to reproduce in Canada their English lives of high culture and solid social standing despite their reduced financial circumstances. Instead, they had to work hard physically while supplementing family income through their writings. They also had to deal with those they considered social inferiors ignoring the family's claims to superiority, particularly as the Traills fell into deep poverty. I had read the writings of both women and at times found myself irritated by their clinging to English pretensions in this new country. Charlotte Gray makes me re-look at the sisters and to sympathize with them but without sentimentalizing them. This, for me, is the mark of a good biography. The author must engage with the whole person, warts and all, but with kindness and caring for the human being behind the warts. This is a biography well worth reading whether you are interested in the experience of settlement life in early Ontario or simply enjoy reading life-stories. You can borrow this book from the Ottawa Public Library.

Nora Hanson has written a fictional story of two generations of a family, the Whitfields. The settler generation was an English family who came to a spot on the Ottawa River where they could stretch their investments into a life of landed country gentry. The second half of the story is that of the teenaged great-grandchildren. The cousins encounter each other in the 1940s on what is left of the estate, a small farm endangered by debt. Like all good stories written for the young it does not talk down to the reader and can be enjoyed by all. The characters are engaging and the feel of the 1940s, the feel of the farm, and the feel of the river are all strong. All of which brings me to sense of place, something the author has done very well. As I read this book last Christmas, a picture developed in my mind of Pinhey's Point, just on the other side of Ottawa from Cumberland. I was curious if this was coincidence or if Nora, a Cumberland Township woman, had seen the house and bay at the Point. When I read a few lines from the book to Bruce Elliott of the Pinhey Point Foundation his reaction was instantaneous: *that's* Pinhey's Point. Then, on hearing the author's name, he delved into his filing cabinet and came up with a genealogical enquiry he had received years

ago from a Nora Hanson of RR1, Cumberland. She was tracing her own family history in that general area west of Ottawa. Perhaps her choice of place was a going back of sorts to an upper part of the River that was as much hers as the lower Ottawa River. Whatever her motivation for placing her story in that place, it works well. This book is also available at the Ottawa Public Library, or you can buy a copy from Nora Hanson.



On October 2, 2014, the Nifty Fifty Drop-in Centre of Navan hosted Stephen Blais and Verna Cotton as they unveiled the plaque that will be placed in the Syd and Verna Cotton Park next spring at the corner of Forest Lea and Sunnydale in Navan. This renaming of the park has been done in recognition of all that Verna and Syd have contributed to Navan over the years.

Arriving

by Dorothy J. Smith

I used to think early immigrants left the boat at Quebec City, travelled up the St. Lawrence, again by boat, and then up the Ottawa to Cumberland, arriving fresh on the land from Scotland or Ireland. Some families probably did this but just as many came to Cumberland with at least one extended stop along the way. Even the early French Canadian migrants who came to Cumberland sometimes came via a series of steps. For example, the Paquettes had

an interim stop in Hawkesbury East. Edward Paquette was born in St. Eugene, Ontario about 1848 and died in Cumberland in 1915. We have to go back to his parents Peter/Pierre Paquette and Catherine Larocque to find the original Quebec-born migrants.

The area around Hawkesbury appears to have been an important starting point for populating Cumberland. There are a number of names common to the Hawkesbury region and Cumberland: Boyer, St. Denis, Ferguson, Lough, McLaurin. To take just one example from this list, Dr. James Ferguson was born in Caledonia Springs in February 4, 1838, but lived much of his youth in Vankleek Hill. He died in Cumberland Village in 1921. His wife, Susie Rice McLaurin, was also born in Caledonia Township about 1840 to 1842. Her mother, Maria Rice, came from St. Andrews East in Quebec.

Vaudreuil was yet another source of migrants to the northern portion of Cumberland Township. One of the several Cameron-McMillan families in Cumberland Township came from Vaudreuil. In this case, these were ancestors of Gerry Boyer who has recorded their story in the Caboose. William Wilson was another arrival from Vaudreuil, having been born there in 1841. And so was Clovis Duford, born in Vaudreuil about 1835.

My own Cameron ancestors came to Cumberland from Lochiel Township in Glengarry. John Cameron and Elizabeth McNair's last child to be born in Scotland was Ann Cameron, born and baptized at Fassfern, Scotland in January 1818. But their two youngest sons, John Stuart Cameron and Charles Peter Cameron, were both born in Lochiel Township, Ontario (John Stuart in 1820 and Charles Peter in 1822). The family came to Cumberland Township in 1828. Gerry Boyer has written about yet another family who came to Cumberland from Lochiel in Glengarry (see "The McMillan Family Burial Plot," Caboose, January 2012). John Ban McMillan and his wife, Elizabeth (Betsey) Graham arrived in Cumberland, probably after 1831 as their last child is recorded as having been born in Glengarry that year. Certainly, the family was here by 1843 when John Ban McMillan was assessed for taxes in Cumberland.

These families settled the front of the Township. There is a logic to travelling up the

river and filling the Township from the river back into the interior. But how did the back of the township fill up? One of the Dunnings wrote a century after the facts that the Bear Brook section was first settled by a group who came to the Cumberland Village and then struck off into the bush, walking in to their intended place of settlement.

How did these people know that there were economic opportunities and a place to settle along an interior river draining into the South Nation? We can only speculate. It is quite possible that information came out of the lumbering camps of the Hamilton brothers as these were located all around the Valley east of Ottawa. This may well explain Nathaniel Blasdell arriving to establish a sawmill on the Bearbrook. Nathaniel Blasdell was the son of Julius C. Blasdell of Hawkesbury West. The Blasdells moved on, ending in Ottawa but the presence of the sawmill was the first sign of industrial activity in the interior of Cumberland Township.

In general, however, a look at the 1842 map which Gerry Boyer has reproduced for sale from the assessment rolls, shows an empty interior. But the area around Navan and the Bear Brook had begun to fill up by the 1861 census. Bruce S. Elliott in *The City Beyond* makes a brief comment that by the 1850s land in the townships west of Ottawa was rapidly filling up. Young families looking for cheap land spilled over the river into Quebec but also circled around Ottawa and came into Russell County from the south.

Among those who came to Cumberland Township from the area west and south of the Township was John Serson Melvin. He was born in Osgoode Township about June 14, 1843 and died in Vars in 1925. His sister Annie (married John Martin) was said by her son, Lloyd Martin of Navan) to have been born in Metcalfe on March 23, 1845. The Walls came from even further west. William Wall (son of John Wall and Catherine Hayes) was born about 1832 to 1836 in South March Township and died in Cumberland Township in 1920. He is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in Navan. His wife, Mary Ann Bell, had been born in Ottawa about 1839. His brother John Benjamin Wall had been born in Carleton County about 1842.

The Railway created yet another settlement pattern. The village of Vars is a direct result of the building of a Canada Atlantic Railway station in the middle of what had been scrubland. Verna Kinsella has both written and spoken to the Society in the past about her railway family, the Rickerds. Her father had been born in "The Diamond" in the Hawkesbury area, that is, the spot where two rail lines cross. The family came to Vars with the railway and that is where she was born and grew up.

I have taken a short look here at the European settlement of Cumberland Township. The story goes on as people continued to arrive throughout the nineteenth century from both Britain and from Quebec. Since the war, the Township has been enriched by migrants from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. It is all these families together that have made Cumberland a home.

Sources: County Marriage Registers of Ontario, Canada, Lochiel Presbyterian Church Baptismal Records, Ontario death registrations

Going Back - Finding our roots in Ireland

by Laurie Watson



Bright skies over Ballyconnell Cemetery, Co. Wicklow

Imagine a bright, cold day in Ireland in March. The skies are blue, and clouds race high overhead. Snow has fallen earlier in the week but there is little evidence of it now. We are touring the "Garden County" of Wicklow and the "Dolmen County" of Carlow in southeast Ireland. Equipped with a few pieces of information about our respective families' origins, we—Bob Burns and Laurie (Bob's daughter) and her husband Perry Watson—are on a quest to find our ancestral roots.

Byrne/Byrnes/Burns

The Shillelagh region in southwest County Wicklow was the home of Louis (or Lewis) Byrne (1804-1868). Louis emigrated to Canada in 1835. After working for a lumber company on the Lievre River near Buckingham and for Captain Archibald Petrie at Cumberland, Louis settled on 100 acres at Lot C, Concession 7, Cumberland Township. He married Mary Ann Wallace (1821-1921), of the Beckett's Creek area, in 1842. They had six children. As years went by their name 'Byrne' came to be spelled as 'Byrnes' and then 'Burns,' and they converted from Catholicism to Protestantism. Louis and Mary Ann Burns are buried at Dale's Cemetery in Cumberland. They are the great-grandparents of Robert Burns of Navan, Ontario.

The 1842 marriage record of Lewis Burns and Mary Ann Wallace states that Lewis was the "son of Patrick Burns of the Parish of Clonmore, County of Wicklow." The Parish of Clonmore is a large one and is located primarily in the County of Carlow, but the declaration that his father lived in the County of Wicklow narrows the location to a small area in southwest Wicklow near the towns of Shillelagh and Tinahely.

The Wicklow Mountains have deep, dark valleys, small

rivers, and streams, and steep hillsides with woods, farms, and stone fences. This rugged

that we have found our Byrne roots: the landscape and the thunder speak to us.



Storm approaching Ballyconnell Cemetery from the Wicklow Mountains

country is where the Byrne clan was pushed centuries ago from their traditional lands around County Kildare near Dublin. The tiny village of Ballyconnell contains the only church of Clonmore Parish that is located in County Wicklow. There is an old cemetery on the outskirts of the village. We suspect that our Byrne ancestors may be buried here. We walk across a field to get to the cemetery. The sky darkens. As we reach the cemetery a phenomenon occurs. A snowstorm moves rapidly toward us from the mountains. We watch it approach and are engulfed by driving snow and wind. To cap it off, there are rolls of thunder. Instantly the sky clears, and the sun shines again. It is as though we are being told that we are in the right place!

We find that many graves are marked simply by large rocks, because people could not afford to buy engraved headstones. The headstones that do exist often tell a detailed family genealogy. While it would have been great to find a gravestone like this for Patrick Byrne, we do not find one, but we are certain

Watson

The Watson family came to Ireland from England in the 1670s. Many English families like theirs were 'planted' in Ireland as settlers. The intention was to populate the land with 'loyal' English people to swamp the native Irish. Centuries of trouble have followed—an understatement to say the least. The Watsons were members of the Religious Society of Friends, or "Quakers," a sect of evangelical Christianity that broke away from the established Church of England in the 1650s. The Quakers prospered in Ireland, creating large landholdings, businesses, and strong communities. Our branch of the Watson family,

however, was not well-to-do. The patriarch of our Canadian family, Benjamin Watson (1794-1858), first worked for his prosperous kinsman, Samuel Watson, in County Carlow. For some reason Benjamin moved his large family in the late 1830s to work on an estate owned by a bishop of the Church of Ireland in County Wicklow. They were farm labourers, working in the fields, with the horses, and in the dairy. In the early 1850s Benjamin followed two of his sons who had emigrated previously. All of his remaining children accompanied him to Canada, and all settled in the Canaan area of Cumberland and Clarence Townships.

The bishop's estate where Benjamin Watson once worked is now the Druids Glen Golf Resort near the village of Kilcoole. What a magnificent estate it is. Its four hundred rolling acres overlook the Irish Sea in the east, with the Wicklow Mountains to the west. A fast-flowing little river, with several arched stone bridges, flows through it.

We are given a guided tour of the house and grounds. Used as a clubhouse now, the house has many beautiful rooms and

unique place, once built on untold hardship, now passes to posterity restored and enriched, a facility to be enjoyed by all future generations."

Storm is almost upon us



When we leave the country we are satisfied that we have accomplished a great deal in our search for our roots in Ireland. We know that our family name was Byrne, and that our ancestors were Roman Catholic. We still want to learn Lewis Byrne's mother's name, and Benjamin Watson's wife's name. A lot can be learned through Internet research, and it is likely that this is how we will eventually find such pertinent details. Yet nothing will beat walking the land that our ancestors walked and talking to local people. We are reminded of a man in County Carlow who told us that the church in his village is "full of plaques about the Watson family." These would be the rich Watsons, we think! We

furnishings. More important, however, is the recognition accorded the contribution made to big houses such as this by the workers, such as Benjamin Watson and his children, who toiled in them. A plaque in the main hallway states that "(t)he great house stands as a monument to the honour of a steadfast peasant people" and remembers their sacrifices with pride. The horror of the Irish famine of the 1840s is invoked: "We have set the house in the context of its time on the 150th anniversary of the great famine, the most appalling event of the Victorian Imperial era, an Irish holocaust." Finally, the memorial says that "(t)his



Woodstock House at Druids Glen Golf Resort

need to make another trip to see these plaques. And that thunderclap in the Ballyconnell cemetery tells us that we have found the home of our Byrnes.



Library at Woodstock House

Finding The Ones Who Went Away

by Emmett Carr and Dorothy-J. Smith

I am the only child of my parents, William John Carr and Mary Butler, but, even so, I come from a large family. My grandmother, Anastatia (Tessier) Carr, lived with our family until her death when I was nine years old. All her children came regularly to visit their mother, bringing an endless supply of aunts and uncles and cousins to our house. I knew those cousins well and I came to know their children when later we had family reunions picnics on the farm. There would be as many as a hundred people visiting for the day. We had those reunions for about three or so years when I was in my 20s. I made sure to stay in touch, going to wakes and, especially after I had moved to Ottawa, keeping in touch by phone.

But that was my generation. I knew a lot less about my father's cousins. I learned a little from Tessie Morris who had married John O'Brien. Tessie was the daughter of Mary Carr, my father's oldest sister, and John Alexander Morris.

My grandmother had so many children that there was a twenty year difference between Mary and my father, making Tessie close to his age and much older than myself. Tessie later came to live with me and my family in Ottawa. Now her mother, my Aunt Mary, was not much of a story teller. Luckily Tessie took after her father and was a wonderful fount of stories about the area and about family. These stories centred on the Morris family but there were only so many Irish Catholic families in the area. So, Tessie's stories ranged across the Carrs, Morrises, Maddens,

O'Briens, and others. With her

father born in 1867 (married in Sarsfield 1897) and with both the Morrises and her husband's family, the O'Briens, being among the early families of Russell County, she had stories that went well back into the nineteenth century.

And so from Tessie and from others in the family, I knew that my father had an uncle, Mark Carr, and that a number of his children, my father's cousins, had gone out west. But I did not know where or what had happened to them after leaving this area. Now, one of the gone-away cousins, Bridget Carr, had married Nelson Morin [ed. see Gerry Boyer. "Descendents of James Carr and Mary Welch", Caboose July 2013]. One day I ran into one of Trefle Morin's sons at a restaurant in Ottawa. I asked him if he knew about his and my Morin cousins who had gone west. He told me he did. In fact, he could give me an address for the youngest of Bridget and Nelson's children, Raymond Morin. I decided to send this Raymond a Christmas card. Well, 6 am Christmas morning, the phone rang and it was

Raymond calling from Calgary. We talked for an hour.

I later found one of the Carr descendants who had gone to Smithers, B.C. When he and his wife had to come east to close a cottage near Pembroke, they visited me and put me in contact with yet more cousins. Four years ago I went out to Smithers to visit the grandson of Jack Carr who had married Kate Ryan from Ryanville, Quebec. We then went on to visit even more relatives in Vancouver.

This is how I have always worked. Talking to people. Books can give some information but I prefer to research family history by letting one thing lead to another, one person to another. Sharing information can even work with people where we do not share exactly the same family tree. I corresponded for a long time with a Bill Moloughney from Montreal. He was trying to find his great-great-grandmother, Nancy Wylie in the Clarence area. I was looking for an aunt who had lived in Montreal. We worked together keeping an eye out for information, comparing notes, and sharing contacts.

This approach has given me more than information to fill the various branches on a family tree with cousins who went out west. By focusing on making connections and talking to people, I have enriched myself with family. Cousins to call, cousins to write to, cousins to visit. And that is what I find worthwhile about family research.



Reaching Back But Still Looking for Help from CTHS Readers

by Cynthia Brannock

My grandmother's photos and some long winter evenings were partially responsible for me searching for information about my Canadian relatives.

When my sisters, cousins, and I get together for our annual wintertime "cousins weekend" we look at some old family photos, try to figure out how some people from Ontario we had met or heard about when we were children were related to us and say that we really should

have asked these questions when our parents were still living. We knew our grandparents had come from Ontario and (as I remember the conversations) that is about all we knew. For whatever reason, once my grandparents moved to the US, they did not stay in touch with most of their family still in Canada.

Last January I began to search online for some information on my Canadian relatives. I started by just "googling" the few names we knew such as "Robert Scharff", "Vye and Earl Raymond", "Verlie Swain", "Uncle Peter and Aunt Maggie Henry". The amount of information that can be found on-line for those of us researching our families in Canada is amazing – from old Canadian census records to beautiful photos of gravestones at various Ontario and Quebec (and other) cemeteries. Eventually I found an article in "The Caboose" about Benjamin Scharfe and his family written by his granddaughter. I emailed the Cumberland Township Historical Society to ask if the author would contact me, as Benjamin seemed to be my great grandfather's brother. Well the author called and has provided me with an incredible amount of family information.

There are some discussion sites online where various people were searching for information on their Scharf/Scharfe/Scharff ancestors. An email I sent to one person was answered. He also has provided me with much information.

My niece joined Ancestry.com. She and my sister made additional contacts which resulted in finding more of our Canadian relatives who provided even more names, dates and other information. She even found the date that our grandparents came to the U.S.

My other sister gave me some names listed in our mother's wedding book. I "googled" them and found more family connections in the greater Ottawa area and Quebec.

As a result of a few months research on the internet, and the incredible amount of information graciously provided by our new found Canadian family, we now know so much more about our ancestors and what their lives were like. We know the names of our grandparents' siblings, our great-grandparents and great great-grandparents, most of their siblings, years of birth and death for many of them.

We have been to the Orleans, Ontario area twice since May to meet and visit with our newly found family. One cousin even hosted a gathering at her home where we met all the relatives mentioned above that we had been emailing or talking with the past few months plus relatives we had not had previous contact with. What an overwhelming day that was!! What a wonderful experience for us – so many family members there to welcome us. We had an absolutely delicious meal (our Canadian relatives are great cooks!) and a “Welcome” cake complete with U.S. and Canadian flags.

While it is sad that we have missed, for whatever reason, knowing our Canadian family

up to now, we feel blessed to have finally met them. We plan to stay in contact, and visit them as often as we can.

We will definitely need to think about changing our wintertime “cousins weekend” to a summertime gathering at a much larger and more central location!!!

Some of our family names are **Scharff / Scharfe / Scharf, Deavy, Watchorn** and **Robinson**. My hope is that a reader will look at the photo and associate the man in the photo here with one of these names.



This unnamed photo was with a few others (with names) that belonged to my grandmother. It was taken by the J. G. Topley Photography Studio, Rideau St., Ottawa. My grandmother was Margaret (Maggie) Scharff, the oldest child of Robert and Annie Sweeney Scharff. Her siblings were Benjamin, Arthur, Lawrence, Verlie, Isobel and Rubina. The photo may have been taken between 1890 and 1910. If anyone recognizes the man in the photo, please contact me at: chbq@hotmail.com or by mail at: Cynthia Brannock, 1661 Route 9N, Ticonderoga, NY 12883, USA