

THE CABOOSE

Newsletter of the Cumberland Township Historical Society (CTHS)

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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

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



President's message

The exciting news since our last publication is that we now have an agreement with the Ottawa Public Library to catalogue some of our collection in the History Reading Room of their Cumberland Branch. We wish to thank Jeannie Smith who will work with the library staff to guide them in this process. The Ottawa Public Library will also undertake the copying and binding of our assorted family tree booklets in a format that will allow cataloguing. Once the current family tree booklets have been copied, we are hopeful that the City of Ottawa Archives will then digitize the originals and make them available online. However, no agreement has yet been made with the City of Ottawa Archives.

We are disappointed that the Early History of Cumberland Township book is still in the editing stage. Executive members and members of the writing team have seen an incomplete early draft and are generally pleased and excited about its upcoming publication.

Tuesday, March 27th may be the date where the final draft will be ready. I wish to thank our executive for their support to date and I wish to thank Laurie Watson, Denise Beaton and Marilyn Seguin for the very detailed corrections that they have made to the initial draft.

We wish to congratulate Bob Dessaint on his recovery from a serious injury last summer. I was fortunate to be in the Navan arena for my brother's "Bradley Cup Tournament" and I was able to speak to Bob. He is our key contact in the anticipated installation of an historical plaque in downtown Sarsfield. Maybe this will be the year.

We have the possibility of working with the Russell Historical Society on plaques at either end of the Forced Road, the oldest road in Cumberland Township. And Cumberland village is overdue for an historical plaque somewhere, but I have not as yet been able to link up with a member of the Cumberland Community Association to move

that agenda forward. That is the disadvantage of having a president that lives in Thunder Bay. Perhaps one of our readers can suggest a lead person from the Cumberland Village Community Association.

Although there is still lots of history to write, there are few contributors. Please contribute any stories from the past so that we can publish them. We also reiterate our request for recent immigration stories: immigrants' histories complement the histories of those who settled here before them and enrich our local communities.

I remind everyone of our annual general meeting at the Navan Curling Club on Wednesday, May 2 at 7:00 p.m. You will once again be called upon to suspend the constitution for another year if you wish your current president to stay on. However, perhaps one of you will step up and take over and we can once again re-instate our suspended constitution. I hope that many of you can make it to the AGM in May

Gérard Boyer

CABOOSE RENEWAL TIME

It's membership renewal time. Please detach the membership form and send us a cheque for \$15.00 or renew by direct deposit for the same amount. Details on our membership form. If you don't fill out the membership form, please contact Gérard Boyer at 1 807 355 4898 or by e-mail to notify us of any changes."

Annual General Meeting

7:00 p.m. May 2
Curling club,
Navan



Contact

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**
gboyer@hotmail.com

Jean-François Beaulieu, Past President (841-0424)

jeanfb@sympatico.ca

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

Logging in Cumberland Township

I gave a presentation on logging in Cumberland Township on March 7, 2018. I briefly reviewed the location of Cumberland Township's three early sawmills: Walter Beckworth's on Beckett's Creek, Julius Blasdel's on Bear Brook and Joseph Laflamme's on Taylor Creek. Two of those mills ceased operations by 1835, but Blasdel's was still active in 1840. It was clear that Beckworth's and Laflamme's operations were for export: floating their produce down the Ottawa River and the St-Lawrence to Québec City.

However, Blasdel's seemed to be a local sawmill to serve the early settlers of Bearbrook.

I then skipped twenty years to the 1861 Census of Cumberland Township. In doing research for the Early History of Cumberland Township I had noticed the large number of shanties that existed in Cumberland Township in 1861. So I presented a list of those working in each shanty. There were 11 shanties in the whole of the township, most of them in the Bearbrook area. They employed over 200 labourers. Many of the names are those of local settlers. Some of the names are difficult to spell for the following reasons: some are names that are not familiar to us and some are English spellings of French names that we are not quite sure of. Those in attendance were given the lists of men working in the shanties in the hope that we can better identify the laborers.

This period of history is important in that it helps us understand the importance of local logging to the local settlers. They were creating farms while at the same time earning extra income in the winter. This source of

income was probably a great stimulus to the development of Cumberland Township in the mid to late eighteen hundreds. But it would also be short-lived as marketable forests disappeared.

We are really not sure who was directing the logging operations nor how the logs were being delivered. Some discussion after the presentation led to the possibility of the logs being sent by sled along the Old Forced Road to the Ottawa River, thence boomed and sent down river to Montreal. There is evidence to support this from entries in an old Dunning ledger book from Buckingham from the mid 1840's, but at this stage no one has a clear idea of how the logs were being sent to market. It has been mentioned in other publications that logs were sent to Bytown (Ottawa) along Bear Brook, but we do not understand how that could be done: logs don't float upstream and Bear Brook was never navigable in terms of pulling log booms.

We hope that some of our readers may have answers based on information that we are not as yet familiar with. We welcome any new light that can be shed on this historical topic. Should any one want the list of laborers working in shanties in 1861, contact Gérard Boyer at 1 (807) 355-4898 or by e-mail at gcboyer@hotmail.com.

Here is an example of the list of workers at Beckett's Creek. We assume the Lough family was directing this operation and that the Loughs had re-established Walter Beckworth's old mill at Beckett's Creek. This was one of the smaller operations.

Cumberland Township	District 1	Pages 7 and 8		
Alexander Lough	LC	CS	30	
Mary		Ireland	CS	26
Samuel (7), John (6), William (5), Hariet (3), Albert (1) all born in CW				
Elizabeth Madden	CW	CS	12	
James Lough	Labourer LC	CS	23	
Nathan Orton	Labourer CW	CS	23	
Robert Boucher	Labourer Ireland	CS	45	
Léon Larose	Labourer LC	RC	21	
Miss Thibault	Labourer LC	RC	18	
François Lucier & family	Labourer LC	RC	50	
Baptiste Lucier & family	Labourer LC	RC	23	

Index : LC means born in Lower Canada (today's Québec)
 CW means Canada West (today's Ontario)
 CS means Church of Scotland (Presbyterian the United)
 RC means Roman Catholic

Alexander Findlay petition

(continued from last Caboose)

This is the last in the series of letters with regards to a dispute over land between Alexander Findlay and Hugh Fullerton, which we have published over the last two issues. Archibald Petrie, the then district representative, became involved in the discussion and Hugh Fullerton finally responded himself. Here are their two letters. The government of the day denied Alexander Findlay the request to set aside 10 acres for an Anglican church and Hugh Fullerton eventually purchased the land."

To the Right Honorable Lord Cathcart GCB

*Governor of British North America
In council*

*The Petition of Hugh Fullerton
of the Township of Cumberland,
yeoman,
Humbly Sheweth*

*That in the year of our Lord 1843
your Petitioner settled in the East
part of Lot letter D in the 8th Conces-
sion of this Township, and that he
has made a considerable clearance
thereon, and built a house, and made
other improve*

*-ments and is now about to purchase
the same in the usual conditions*

*That your Petitioner is informed
that Mr Alexander Findlay, who
resides on Lot letter E adjoining, is
carrying about a Petition to your
Excellency for signatures in which he
sets forth*

*that the said land is not occupied
and craving that a certain 10 acres,
the best in the lot, be set apart for the
use of the Church of England.*

*That your Petitioner begs leave
to represent that there is not more
than two or three families in connec-
tion with the Church of England in
this Section of the Township, nor for
many miles*

*around, and with the Cumberland
Swamp in the vicinity, no likelihood
of there being any church required
for half a century to come, but it
is the purpose of the said Alexan-
der Findlay to occupy the said ten
acres, if granted, for his own private
benefit having lately projected a road
which he hopes will pass the same.*

*Your Petitioner therefore
humbly prays your Excellency in
Council, that no portion of the said
East part of Lot letter D in the 8th*

*Concession be granted or set apart
for a purpose for which it is not now
required, nor likely ever to be so, but
that your Petitioner be per -mitted
to purchase the same in accordance
with the Governt. Regulations and
your Petitioner will and pray*

*Hugh Fullerton
Cumberland Ottawa 23 Oct 1846
Source pgs. 405 and 406,*

*Cumberland 23 Oct 1846
Sir*

*I beg leave to disclose herewith
the Petition of a Settler of this vicinity
who is in danger of losing the best
part of a small piece of ground on
which he has settled by the scheming
of a neighbour of his, Mr Alexander
Findlay, as set forth in his Memorial.*

*There is not a dozen Church
of England people in the front half
of this Township, the people of that
denomination are chiefly in the Bear
-Brook settlement, more than nine
miles distant, where a church will
be necessary in the course of time
and should be a missionary station*

*I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most Obedient
Humble Servant
Archd Petrie*

*The Hon
Dominic Daly
Provincial Secretary*

McKee Tool Chest, Mid-19th Century

I inherited an old wooden tool chest when my father died in 1998. It was found in the basement of my parents' farmhouse on Lake Inistioge, near Flesherton, Ontario.

Dad thought the chest came from Ireland with a forefather, but he didn't know exactly who had made it. It is large and heavy, so he had used it only to store rarely used tools.

Now, 19 years later, I have researched the chest's origins, and restored it as best I can without spoiling its character.

Patrick McKee, born in 1788, immigrated to Canada with his wife, Ellen, in about 1840 and settled on a farm near the village of Cumberland, just east of Ottawa. Their first child, John, born in Antrim, Ireland in 1816, was my grandfather's grandfather. John married Eleanor McLaughlin in Cumberland, farmed there in the 1840s, and was then a labourer in the Elora area as he waited for Crown land in Bruce County to be released for sale. John and Eleanor and their nine children were settled on a farm near Teeswater in the 1860s, and had moved to another farm near Flesherton in 1871.

William Thomas McKee, born in Cumberland in 1848, was John and Eleanor's third son and my dad's grandfather. When I stripped the brown paint from the chest's top edges I was delighted to see a tiny signature stamped into the wood (about 50 times): W.T. McKEE. So, W.T. either inherited the chest or built it, and he must have done enough custom carpentry to justify owning a metal signature stamp.

I have not had the chest precisely dated by an antiques expert, but an extensive Internet search verified the chest is Irish in style and dates from the mid-1800s. There are many factors to consider, such as the thickness and smoothness of the boards, the hand-made dovetail joints, the nail heads (which I did not dig out and expose), the beautiful iron handles secured by misshapen screws, and the lock, but I could not resolve the matter on my own. For now, I'd love to think that it was built by Patrick or John and brought from Antrim, as my father had thought; however, it may have been made in Ontario by W.T. when he was a young man. In any event, as I've told my grandchildren, this chest is at least as old as Canada.

© Ron McKee, 2017-11-20



Before Restoration



Signature Stamp

W.T. McKee and Family, c. 1888



*Cast Iron Handle
After Restoration*





Rockland gas station



Look what I found!!!

While helping someone clean out an old garage in Kamanistiquia, Ontario (close to Thunder Bay), I found this:

My father, Conrad Boyer, managed a White Rose gas station in Rockland, Ontario in the early 1950's. So then I found this photo of that Rockland gas station.

Thanks to our treasurer, Gilles Chartrand, who also manages the Rockland-Clarence museum, the sign will be shipped from Thunder Bay to Rockland so that he can add it to his collection.

We encourage our readers to share their special collections with us!!!

Gérard Boyer



Your membership includes four issues of our Society newsletter, the Caboose. Send your membership dues of \$15.00 (cheque or money order) payable to CTHS (Cumberland Township Historical Society) to:

**Gilles Chartrand, treasurer CTHS, Clarence-Rockland Museum,
1157 Laurier St, Rockland, Ontario, K4K 1J5**

Name:

Address:

Postal Code:

Phone # :
(Include area code)

Email address:

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