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COPPS TO LEAD THE PARADE OF HOMECOMERS FROM VANCOUVER, LONDON AND SINGAPORE

Moses and Anna Copp would be astonished — happily, one hopes.

When Georgeville's founding family crossed the lake ice from near Gibraltar Point to take up residence on the site of Copp's Ferry in March 1797, "not a tree was fallen," their eldest son Richard, who was 11 at the time, later recalled.

Two hundred years later, more than 650 villagers — past and present — will gather for Georgeville's Homecoming Weekend on July 11-13 to celebrate that auspicious crossing and the pleasant implications it has had, down the years, for them.

"If there is a theme to the Homecoming, apart from catching up with old friends, I imagine it is that Moses led us to what we all feel is a promised land," says Bernard Drew, chairman of the Community Association's bicentennial committee and himself a seventh generation descendant of Moses and Anna Copp.

According to reservations chair Judy Bachelder, among the homecomers will be Copp descendants from Oregon, Alberta and Massachusetts, McGowans from California and Saskatchewan, and several score other Georgevillians returning to their native soil. Former full-time or summer residents will be coming from cities as distant as Vancouver, London and Singapore.

The Homecoming weekend schedule strikes a relaxed and casual note — a reception beginning at 7



Rosalyn Smith and Bernard Drew and Bicentennial float at Canada Day Parade

p.m. Friday evening in a gaily-decorated tent on the lawn of the Murray Memorial Centre. The opening ceremonies at 1 p.m. on Saturday will be followed by children's games on the village green and a festive dinner-dance back at the tent on Saturday night. On Sunday an interdenominational service of song and praise will recall a tradition of open-air services on the lakeshore; it will be followed by a barbecue lunch.

As part of the opening ceremonies, the Nebesak Abenaki Drum, a group of métis Indians from northern Vermont and the Townships, will present a performance in tribute to the area's aboriginal inhabitants.

The Saturday afternoon schedule includes a blacksmithing demonstration by Edward Kay, spinning and weaving by Judy Bachelder, and the Georgeville quilters at work. Crop Kohl will show his prize-winning Highland cattle on the grounds of the hall and there will be horse-drawn wagon rides around the green. The children's games, under the direction of the Community Association's recreation counsellors, also reach into the past with rolling hoops, "the game and graces" — a variation of ring toss — and stilts.

At the Murray Memorial Centre photographer Mary Landry's "Faces of Georgeville" will exhibit portraits of Georgevillians past and present.

MAKE IT A DATE

SHG/GHS ANNUAL MEETING July 19, 2:30 pm
Guest Speaker: Desmond Morton, director
of McGill's Institute for the Study of Canada
Murray Memorial Centre

SHG/GHS EXHIBITION OPENS July 9
Bicentennial Exhibition
Chamberlin (Quinn) Store

After year-long preparations, the village itself has put on a shining face — beginning with the Murray Memorial Centre, handsomely renewed as a result of the generous support given to the Community Association's Bicentennial Building Fund (see following story). New swings and playground equipment await younger Homecomers, another splendid donation, and volunteers have spruced up the village green. The freshly-painted Chamberlin (Quinn) Store on Carré Copp will open on July 9 as the historical society's Exhibition Gallery.

For its part the municipality has improved the drainage of the green with new ditching and, in the nick of time, asphalted Carré Copp around it.

The Homecoming Weekend climaxes a year-long series of bicentennial celebrations, including a Winter Carnival in February at which the Erwin and Richard Camber and Edward Kay and friends demonstrated the bygone art of harvesting ice from the lake. Stored in sawdust at Bernard Drew's farm, the ice will be used during Homecoming to keep drinks cold for the weekend's events.

The weekend is by no means the end of bicentennial year festivities. They include, later in the summer, an invitational softball tournament for boys and girls, an antique boat show at the wharf and a return of an old favourite, the chicken pie supper.

ABENAKI DRUM HERALDS AN UNBROKEN CHAIN

A highlight of Georgeville's Homecoming Weekend will be a performance by the Nebesak Abenaki Drum. Here Mariella Squire, a member of the group who holds a doctorate in cultural anthropology from the State University of New York and is a visiting professor at Dartmouth, explains the origin and aims of the Nebesak band and the sacred significance of the drum.

By Mariella Squire

Niôna alnôbak nebesakiak. Kwai, nidôbak ta nijak. Kolpaiô n'd'akinna. We are the people of the place of the lakes. Greetings, our friends and family. Welcome to our land.

The Abenaki people have lived in northern New England and southern Quebec for thousands of years. Originally, we were hunters, fishers and gatherers, living in small family units scattered throughout the old-growth forests of our homelands.

After the Europeans came in the 1600s, we became fur-trappers and soldiers for the colonial armies that fought over whether France or Great Britain had the best claim to our land. Diseases, enemy attack and famine reduced our people to a fraction of their original numbers, but by 1800 we had developed a culture that combined the best of our ancestral ways and that of our new neighbours. Today we are a métis community, with both indigenous and European ancestors, but we consider ourselves Indian.

The Nebesak band came together a few years ago to promote a renewed pride in our ethnic heritage, crafts, music and tribal language. It grew out of an indigenous women's group that met monthly in Derby Line to work on crafts like basketry and traditional beadwork.

We consider ourselves one very large extended family of métis Indian people. Nebesak families live

on both sides of the Canadian-U.S. border from Sherbrooke, Que. to Hardwick, Vt. and beyond. Before we organized into a band, our families lived isolated from one another, in and around our American and Canadian neighbours, but still carrying on aboriginal ways as much as possible. Now we work together to improve educational and economic opportunities for our children and to keep our traditional Abenaki culture alive.

The drum, which is a term for both the musical instrument and the people involved in drumming, was formed a year ago. The drum is an all-volunteer group within Nebesak, with about 20 members, ranging from teenagers to senior citizens.

The drum itself was a gift of the Nebesak women to the men. It is the men's responsibility to care for the drum in a respectful and careful way, but both men and women are members of the drum group.

The drum is a sacred symbol for all Indian people. Its sound is the heartbeat of the people and of the Earth. The acts of playing it and singing around it are sacred acts that unite the people, the living world around us and the entire created universe. Through the drum we connect with our ancestors that were and our descendants that will be in an unbroken and unbreakable chain of existence.

The songs we sing are northeastern Woodland songs. Most are in the Abenaki language, a few are Anishnabe (Chippewa and Ojibwa) from the Great Lakes; some are Micmac from the Maritimes. The songs include traditional war songs, prayers, welcome songs, honour songs and dance tunes.

Most are typically indigenous First Nations in form, with repetition of the verses (which have words) and choruses (which are simply syllabic); descending melodic line; and a call and response format combining both song and chant.

Paiô, kitawa pakholiganna. Listen to our drum.

REFURBISHED CENTRE 'AN ELOQUENT TRIBUTE' TO ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

With his blue and gold standard snapping in the breeze at the Murray Memorial Centre, Governor General Roméo LeBlanc and 200 villagers gathered on June 20 for a ceremonial opening of the refurbished centre and the unveiling of a plaque commemorating Georgeville's bicentennial.

Community Association President Richie Camber, welcoming the Governor General and his wife, Diane Fowler LeBlanc, to the outdoor ceremony on the grounds of the centre, pronounced the occasion "a proud day for Georgeville and a very happy day for the association."

Georgeville's resident Senator, John Lynch-Staunton, introducing his former Senate colleague, expanded on the source of the pride - the renovation of the 63-year-old building as the community association's bicentennial project. Supported by donations throughout the community, it will benefit the village for years to come.

Pointing out the importance of the site through most of Georgeville's 200 years - it was the site of the first wayfarers' inn on Lake Memphremagog before the war of 1812, later Abraham Channel's Tavern Stand and still later the old Camperdown Hotel - John Lynch-Staunton paid special tribute to the family whose name it bears.

"Thanks to the generosity of the owner of the property, William A. Murray," he recalled, "the site was given to the school commissioners of Stanstead Township and, in 1934, a consolidated school was opened with 60 students in grades one to nine."

"In 1966 the school was closed as it was decided to bus the pupils to Magog and, with the agreement of the Murray family, the property was transferred to the Community Association."

Noting the presence in the audience of Joan Murray and three grandchildren of the donor - Will and Sydney Murray, and Christine Price, as well as Joan Murray - he said "I thank them most warmly for their family's generous contribution to our community."

"Time does not allow me to list all of the activities that keep this centre so busy all year round. I will, however, emphasize its importance to Georgeville by saying that the cost of the renovations, some \$160,000,



Sarah and Leigh Partington presenting flowers to Diane Fowler LeBlanc.

Photo: Arthur Friedman

was met by 366 individual contributions, all but a fraction from Georgevillians, both former and actual, permanent and cottagers.

"Such a massive show of support is eloquent tribute indeed to the role this centre and the Community Association play in the daily life of Georgeville."

In addition to cutting a ribbon to open the centre, the Governor General unveiled a bicentennial plaque that will hang in the centre as a permanent memento of the occasion - more permanent, at least, than the long lost tree that his predecessor, Earl Alexander of Tunis, planted for Georgeville's 150th anniversary celebrations in 1947.

The plaque reads: "To commemorate the 200th anniversary of the settlement of Georgeville (Copp's Ferry), this plaque was unveiled by His Excellency, the Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada. June 20, 1997."

The star turn in the proceedings was played by Leigh and Sarah Partington, who each presented Mme. LeBlanc with a bouquet of flowers. Following the Governor General's remarks (see separate story), Richie Camber presented two gifts from the community to the LeBlancs - a vase by village artist Jason Krpan and a copy of *Copp's Legacy: A Family History*, a 227-page collection of family stories prepared by the

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STORY OF GEORGEVILLE AND THE TOWNSHIPS 'SHOWS A WAY TO THE WHOLE COUNTRY'

Governor General Roméo LeBlanc found echoes in Georgeville of the Acadian village of Memramcook in New Brunswick where he grew up. The text of his remarks at the opening of the refurbished Murray Memorial Centre:

I am happy to help celebrate the bicentennial of your good community. You can look back on two hundred years of history with a great deal of pride.

And you can look ahead with confidence, because I believe the same qualities that build this village and this region will always carry you through.

Within our country, the Eastern Townships hold a notable place, because of their beauty, because of their industriousness, and because of their history. And it seems to me that the story of Georgeville is in many ways the story of the townships.

I was able to read a little about your early days. One can imagine the woods and the blackflies when Moses Copp and his family arrived, to clear the forest, to build their home, and to start a ferry service.

I grew up in an Acadian village in the Maritimes, and in many ways the life was the same as Georgeville's. I can picture the early stores and blacksmith shops and hotels, and the importance of the routes to Montreal and Boston.

But your region had a special advantage: the rugged beauty that drew people to the hotels and summer estates, and charmed so many artists and writers.

In 1867 Georgeville was small but bustling. I am sure this village felt the hope and optimism that accompanied Confederation. And perhaps there were also a few doubters.

Critics had said that Canada could never be united. It seemed that the differences between the regions were just too great.

But visionaries and dreamers, and even people who were practical and down-to-earth, saw beyond the differences. They knew that the power of ideas and common interest was enough to bring people together – and to keep them together.

And when the Fathers of Confederation went to the bargaining table, I suspect that some of them had places like Georgeville and Magog in mind. These communities showed the whole country that people of different languages and faith could live together as neighbours and friends, and could build a prosperous and lasting home.

People in this area share several identities.

I know you are all fiercely proud to be citizens of this village. You value the label "Townshippers." And I know that everyone here considers themselves to be "Quebeckers."

But above it all, I know that you are proud to be Canadian. And all those different identities strengthen one another.

Confederation was an experiment in compromise and cooperation. It succeeded because people were willing to make it work. That effort has been sustained over the generations, through war and peace, depression and drought, bad times and good.

We have found solutions to impossible dilemmas. And we have recognized that nothing worthwhile is ever simple.

Our ancestors created a new kind of country and made it one of the most respected nations on earth. And we will continue that work.

This morning I was at the graduation ceremony at Stanstead College. I realized again that there is no shortage of ingenuity and drive among the young leaders of tomorrow.

If we live up to the best traditions of our past, then this country will flourish forever. And the citizens of Georgeville can look forward to many more centuries, as proud Townshippers, as proud Quebeckers, and as proud Canadians.

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bicentennial book committee and published by the Community Association's Bicentennial Committee.

After the 20-minute ceremony on the lawn, the Governor General and his wife mingled over tea with those who attended for the better part of an hour. In the evening, Christine Prince, a violist with the Vancouver and Victoria symphony orchestras, rounded off the opening by giving a masterly viola concert in the hall. The acoustics, her delighted audience agreed, have never been better.

A PAUSE TO REMEMBER THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO WENT OFF TO WAR

As an Armed Forces Griffon helicopter from 438 Tactical Helicopter Squadron at St. Hubert thundered in a low fly-past overhead, a Royal Canadian Marine Cadets band from Magog led a parade of Georgeville and area veterans to the Cenotaph in the village green on June 7 as part of a moving "Salute to Our Veterans."

The ceremony was organized by the Community Association's Bicentennial Committee as a tribute to the 15 Georgeville men who gave their lives in two world wars.

"Let it be noted that small in population as the village was at the time, eight Georgevillians lost their lives in World War I and another seven never returned after World War II," said Jean-Paul Clermont, who was guest speaker. "Another 68 served valiantly and are now deceased and 23 are still with us today."

Among the veterans participating in the ceremony was Montrealer Jack King, a nephew of two young men of the village who fell in World War I - Ernest and John King. A retired school teacher, Jack King was a Royal Canadian Navy physical training and commando instructor based at Cornwallis, N.S., during the second war.

The King brothers were sons of Dr. M.H. King, who graduated in medicine from McGill and practiced for many years as a country doctor in St. Sylvestre, Que., near Thetford Mines. At age 50, the doctor married a 20-year-old school teacher, Mary Ferguson.

When Dr. King retired from his practice in St. Sylvestre in 1912, the King family moved to Georgeville, living first in the Methodist parsonage (now the Currie Dixon house) and later in the James A. Davidson house. One of the four King daughters, Gladys, became a teacher at the Magoon Point school.

Dr. King died on the eve of the outbreak of war, Jack King recalled, leaving Mary a widow with nine children. Of the five boys in the family, the three eldest - William, Ernest and John - enlisted in the army.

Ernest F.H. King, 20, joined the 24th Battalion, Victoria Rifles. A sergeant major, he was fatally wounded at the Somme in 1916. The Stanstead Journal reported on Oct. 19: "Our village people were made to feel once more the terrible sacrifices made by the war, when a message came to Mrs. King that her son, Sgt. Ernest A. King was shot in the head and died at No. 9 Clearing Station, France. Much sympathy is felt for the widowed mother, sisters and brothers, two of the last now being at the front."

John F. King, 18 at the outbreak of the war, joined

the 117th Eastern Townships Battalion, and was later transferred to the Victoria Rifles. He was killed at Vimy Ridge on April 15, 1917.

Their elder brother, William, joined the 5th Mounted Rifles of Sherbrooke, won the Military Medal and received a battlefield promotion to the rank of lieutenant.

Jack King recalled that the two younger brothers left at home - Roberts and Reginald - both went to work in their teens to help support the family. His father Roberts worked first at A.W. Bullock's general store and then at a munitions factory in Montreal. Mrs. King and the remaining family moved to Montreal in 1917.

On June 7, as Georgeville paused to remember, Maurice Berry read a roll call of those who lost their lives in the two wars - Thomas R. Hayword, Ernest and John King, Trevor Penny, Lee Rollins, Allan Routledge, Arthur Silvester and Harold H. Williams in World War I; and James Neville Brookhouse, Ashley Baker Elder, Jack Green, Gordon Hume Hand, Kenneth Hill, James R. Leney and Colin Cran Sim in World War II.

Jean-Paul Clermont expressed gratitude "from all of us to all who served. Such a proud and brave contribution to democracy by Georgeville's sons and daughters is a most eloquent tribute to our community's commitment to Canada, one which we must forever honour."



Jack King at the Cenotaph

FAMILY STORIES RECEIVE ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME

By Peter Smith

On a sunny morning in June an unusually large group of Georgevillians had gathered outside the entrance to the library at Murray Memorial Centre. They had come to pick up their copies of *Copp's Legacy: A Family History* which had just been published in conjunction with Georgeville's 200th birthday.

What they found was a very handsome, 28 x 21½ cm, 227 page book containing the stories of 114 Georgeville families. The book also contains a wealth of historical and personal photographs and drawings which contribute to the truly professional look of the book. The first edition of the book consists of 900 copies and is sure to sell out this summer. There will, however be sufficient copies for sale over the bicentennial weekend. The book is bound to become a valuable historical document. One member of the historical society mused, "It's too bad someone didn't do a book like this in Georgeville in 1850 or 60."

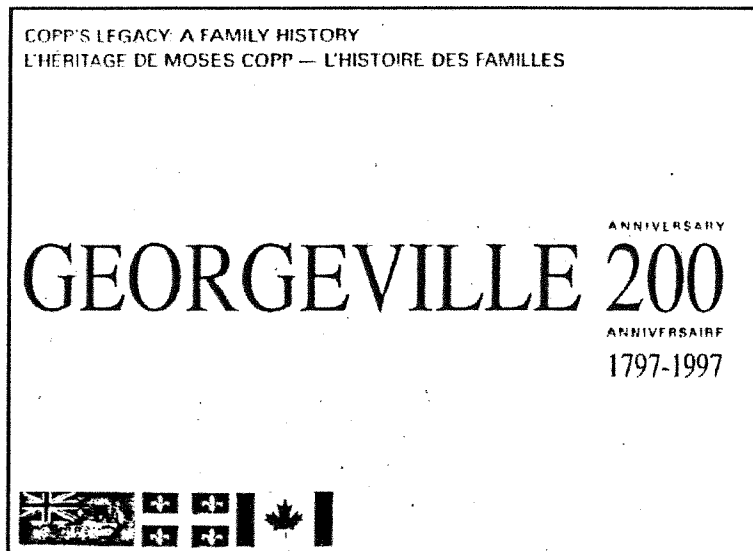
One customer bought a copy of the book and the next day telephoned Editor David Cox to ask for another copy. "She said the first copy was for her family and the second was going into her safety deposit box." He went on to say the reception of the book has been "overwhelmingly enthusiastic."

Cox says in his introduction, the purpose of the book was "to provide our people, whether long established families or first generation citizens...an opportunity to tell their family stories for the benefit of future generations." Cox also points out the diverse ways that the contributors express their stories. "Some write with deep, but modest pride; some with warmth and charm; and others, with wry humor." Indeed, the book is a good read especially for one who knows many of the contributors and would like to know them more. The careful reader can, for example, discover some of the intricate relationships among many of the families in the village. And one can learn what brought people to the village and what keeps them here. The photographs that many people contributed are charming. I am sure everyone will enjoy the picture of

the young Richard and Erwin Camber. Other pictures show familiar, but remarkably youthful faces of families enjoying their lives in the specially beautiful part of the world that is Georgeville and Lake Memphremagog.

The book was a project of the Bicentennial Book Committee made up of David Cox, Maureen Cameron,

Barbara Gibson, Penny McTavish, Peter Kohl as well as a host of others who made major contributions. "The committee worked very well together." said Barbara Gibson. "In spite of all the work we had to do to make the family book happen, we all had an enjoyable time." The whole project from conception to publication took 18



months. Everyone in the village owes Cox and his committee a vote of thanks.

In the introduction to the book, Cox writes "Georgeville seems to cast a magical spell over the people who live and holiday here. I hope this magical quality will emerge as you browse through [the book's] pages." This quality indeed does shine through, and the book itself is one of the things that helps make Georgeville so special to us all.

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