

## Société d'histoire de Georgeville

## Georgeville Historical Society

Newsletter - Summer 2011

### DATES TO REMEMBER SUMMER 2011

*Saturday July 2nd  
Canada Day Parade*

*1 pm*

*Be there to cheer on the GHS float*

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*Sunday July 10th  
20th Annual General Meeting and Talk*

*Murray Hall*

*2:00 pm*

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*Wednesday July 20th  
Boat Tour*

*Wednesday July 27th*

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*Wednesday August 10th  
Magoon Point Road  
Car pool from Murray Hall*

*10 am*

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### A busy summer ahead

The name Nathan Beach is synonymous with the beautifully crafted woodwork which adorns the many public buildings and country

homes he built in the Georgeville area between 1864 and 1911. Louise Abbott will talk about this remarkable man and his achievements after the AGM on July 10<sup>th</sup> in the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual GHS lecture. She has chosen as her title *The Energetic Mr. Beach*.

Deane Moffatt, wearing his GHS director's hat, came up with a truly novel idea for a Society outing: a historical boat tour on Lake Memphremagog. Starting at Fitch Bay on July 20<sup>th</sup>, we will motor up the lake in comfortable pontoon boats, stopping at points of historical interest to listen to a commentary by Steve Moore. Space is limited so we ask you to register by June 27<sup>th</sup>, see the enclosed information sheet for details.

John Boynton, ably assisted by Steve Moore, plans to lead a work party on July 27<sup>th</sup> to clean up and conserve a cellar hole of an ancient home, probably from the days of the first settlers. People interested in joining the team may sign up at the AGM. (maximum: six adults, bring your own shovels.)

The August outing will complete our historical cavalcade along Magoon Point Road, starting at Leslie Road and driving northwards to the village. John Boynton will be our guide and, as usual, will provide explanatory notes and maps

## Pioneer Memorial Misnamed

Visitors to the Stanstead Pioneers Memorial Monument on Dufferin Heights expecting to read there the names of Moses Copp, Richard Packard, William Bullock, or of any other early settler of Georgeville, will be disappointed. The name of the monument is indeed misleading. It would more accurately have been called the Stanstead Plains Pioneers Memorial Monument, since from the beginning it was intended to record only the names of those identified in "Forests and Clearings" as having settled in Stanstead Plain or within four miles of that place. That eliminated the name of Major William Boynton, founder in 1797 of the once-thriving village of Boynton, and of all the other pioneers who settled in parts of Stanstead Township outside of Stanstead Plain.

Included in the list on the monument however, because "Forests and Clearings" records that he settled on Lot No. 3, 12<sup>th</sup> Range in 1803, is the name of a man who never lived in Stanstead Township at all. Captain John Boynton, in fact, settled on Lot No, 3, Range 12, a Clergy Reserve lot in Windsor Township (which lies considerably further north than Stanstead Township.) This we know from the deed of sale of his "betterments" to his son Abraham in 1822. We can only wonder whether the omission of that significant geographical detail was an oversight of the family member who provided the information to the writers of "Forests and Clearings" or if it occurred during the editorial process of that book.

What has all this got to do with the history of Georgeville? Abraham Boynton, born in Wheelock, Vermont and raised in Windsor Township, bought Lot 19 in Range 1 on Magoon's Point in 1839 and the property remained in the Boynton family for 90 years.

John Boynton

## Notes from the Bigelow Garden

Bigelow Garden looks enchanting in Spring with daffodils and white bloodroot in full bloom everywhere, but it is also a very busy time. Even in a well-established, small garden like Bigelow there many jobs that need doing: removing the winter debris, raking the paths and adding more cedar mulch, trimming back those perennials which are too unruly and encouraging the shy ones, loosening bare patches of soil ready for some colourful annuals and tender herb plants.

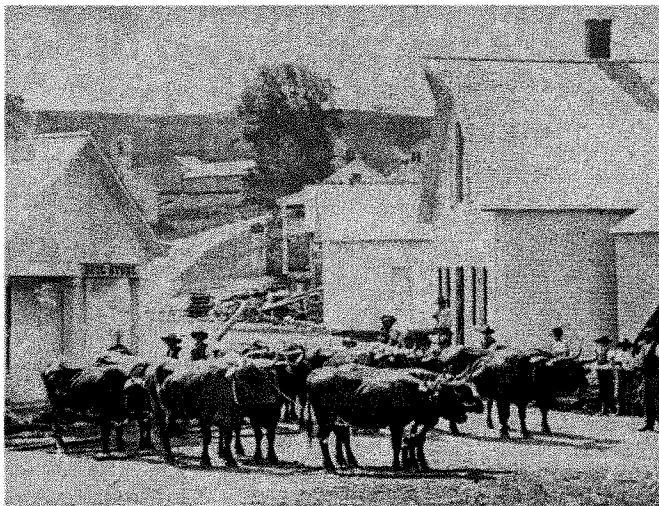
"But" I hear all you gardeners saying "what about the weeding?" That comes later. The design of those fenced herb gardens, beloved by the pioneer women, does a lot to minimise the spread of weeds. The fence helps keep out wind blown seeds and the small isolated beds, separated by gravel or mulch paths helps control the spread of aggressive weed roots. I try to garden there in the ways used by the women who settled Copp's Ferry (Georgeville) when planting and tending their herb gardens, but I must admit I use some modern short cuts: I only bring in sterile sacs of topsoil and peat from a respectable garden centre and I use granulated fertilizer in place of farmyard manure. I am also very careful about transplanting plants into the garden to avoid bringing in roots of Georgeville's pernicious Bishop's Goutweed.

We had a good Spring Clean-up on Saturday afternoon, May 6<sup>th</sup>, when Betty and David Stanger, Judy Bachelder and I made a start on getting the fences, arbours, herb beds and paths ship-shape for the growing season. We have our experienced team of volunteers ready to maintain the garden all summer long. Unfortunately, we are all getting older and stiffer year by year, so we are keen to recruit some younger folk. Any ideas?

Valerie Pasztor  
Bigelow Garden Coordinator  
819-868-4314

## The story of the Wigwam

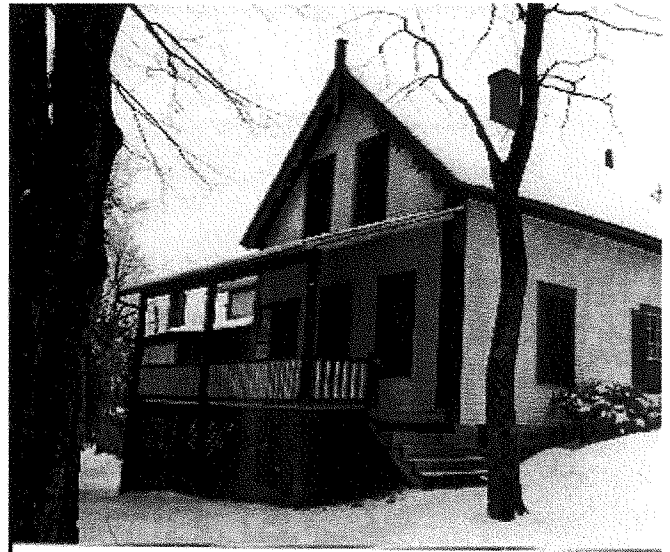
In volume two of William Bryant Bullock's "Beautiful Waters", Reginald Mudge wrote that his grandfather Thomas Macduff had, in 1864, bought a house on Channel Street, formerly occupied by Thomas McVey, a customs officer, and during the winter Macduff moved it to the point on the lakeshore where Joshua Copp's pearlsh factory once stood. Mudge added "...tradition has it that the total expense involved in the operation was a keg of whiskey for purposes of lubrication." That is the house shown in Matthew Farfan's recent publication being towed by a team of 12 oxen which he entitled "Moving the Drug Store, Georgeville."



*1860s photograph of the oxen towing the house across Georgeville*

The Gray map of Georgeville shows the residence of T.H.McVey immediately to the west of that of N.Cheney on the street referred to in early deeds a Channel's by-road, now the south side of Carré Copp. Land records show that in 1860 Dr. Cheney had purchased the house in which he was living, and which had been built by his predecessor Dr. Scott, together with the vacant lot to the west of it. There Cheney built a second residence in which he must have planned to live, hold his consultations and sell his medications. Hence the sign "Drug Store" Before he could move in however, McVey had arrived in the village seeking accommodation so Cheney rented his new house to him, without removing the sign. When McVey was transferred to Beebe, Macduff bought the property, and moved the house

(clearly not in winter as Mudge believed). In its new location, the house was known for the next 163 years as the "Wigwam"



*Contemporary photograph of the same small house on Wigwam Point*

Thomas Macduff spent his summers at the Wigwam until his death there in 1890. He was buried in the Village Cemetery. Three years earlier he had transferred title to his daughter Katherine, the wife of Henry Mudge, and it remained with the Mudges until purchased by the McNaughtons in 2007. In recent years, either rented to summer visitors or left vacant, the house had deteriorated to the point it was not considered worthy of preservation, so it was demolished and replaced by the prestigious dwelling located on the same footprint on Wigwam Point.

John Boynton

### PIIA update

Francine Markwell, GHS director and municipal councillor, informs us that Stanstead Municipal Council has formally passed a motion favoring the preparation of a set of planning guidelines under the provincial rubric of Plans d'implantation et d'integration architectural (PIIA). GHS continues to be actively involved in this project.

The GHS Newsletter is prepared by Valerie Pasztor. Historical stories about our region are always welcome.