

## A Lost Community and a Lakeside Settlement

At last year's Annual General Meeting, Bob Irvine gave a talk on the community that once thrived at the junction of the Magog and Gendron Roads, known as Oliver's Corners, and the nearby lakeside settlement of Drummond Point. Bob's presentation was followed up a week later with an onsite tour of these two locales, lead by Dr. Maurice Langlois and Bob's wife Karen Smith. Dr. Langlois was able to point out the location of the main features of the former village, such as the cheese factory, saw mill, telephone exchange and various large farms, all now gone.



*One of the stops on the tour was the Oliver's Corners cemetery where a lively discussion of early settlers was held.*

We then walked a short distance north to a small, cemetery, just off the highway, but almost completely hidden from view by a grove of trees. Few of us had even known of its existence. The grass had been mown and we were able to read the inscriptions on the gravestones and listen to stories of some of these early settlers.

The next stop was an isolated lone grave located far from the cemetery just beyond

the fork in the Drummond Point Road. The legendary tale was told of how Francis Peasley, father of one of Georgeville's illustrious merchants, James C. Peasley, died of smallpox in 1802 on the western shore of the Lake but mysteriously ended up in this isolated grave on Drummond Point. A complete explanation may never be known, but the headstone is the oldest surviving stone for miles around.

At Drummond Point, our guide, Karen Smith related how her grandparents established themselves here during the late 1800s, when this stretch of the lakeshore was still a virtual wilderness. She explained how several of her family had constructed summer cottages from lumber and supplies transported by boat from Magog. She showed us around the present-day cottages and buildings of historical significance which make up this pleasant community on the Point. We were then invited to enjoy our picnic lunches on Bob and Karen's deck overlooking the lake.



*Wash Day at the McGowan House*

## An Annual Tradition

For a number of years, the Society has entered a float in the annual Georgeville

Canada Day parade in July. It has become a tradition and 2007 was no exception.. The theme was 'Wash Day at the McGowan House' and Steve Moore constructed an amazing kitchen on the wagon, complete with vintage mangle, washtubs and colourful clothes billowing in the wind. Stuart Martin, as Henry McGown, and Valerie Pasztor, as his wife Kay, entertained the crowds with mops and soapy water. The Society is indebted to John Dickerson for providing the wagon and truck to haul it.



*The Medicinal, Culinary and Biblical plots in the Bigelow Garden.*

### **An Abandoned Cemetery**

This past August, the Society returned for another excursion to Magoon's Point. Having visited the better known burial grounds such as The MacPherson and the Village Cemeteries on previous cemetery tours, it was time to seek out the abandoned plot down on the Point.

Before tramping the short distance from the road across a hay field to the burial ground, Society past-president Stephen Moore spoke briefly of the history of Magoon's Point which has now all but disappeared save for the odd house foundation and other remnants scattered about the area..

At the cemetery John Boynton offered interesting facts and figures about the individuals identified on the markers, most of which dated from the 1800s.

Despite efforts over the past decade to remove the larger trees and brush, the burial plot still exudes a sense of abandonment and most of the markers have fallen down and are in poor condition. Hopefully, endeavors will be mounted sometime soon, either by the Society or private individuals, to clean up the site thoroughly.

### **The Bigelow Garden**

The Bigelow Pioneer Garden was one of the initial projects undertaken by the Society, now 15 years later, its formal herb beds, so well laid out by Katherine Mackenzie and her team, have matured into a peaceful haven, well loved by visitors and locals alike. Some of you may not have been able to visit the Garden for a while, so we include these photos to encourage you to visit soon.

### **The End of an Era**

This past Fall marked the end of an era in Georgeville. Two of our oldest residents passed away, Frances Evans and Joan Murray. Frances was a Taylor from 'cross the lake' whose maternal ancestors trace their roots back to the *Mayflower* of 1620 fame. Frances was a descendant of Daniel Taylor, one of the original Associates of Nicholas Austin, who first settled Bolton Township opposite Georgeville on the other side of the Lake. Following her marriage to Norman Evans, and becoming a busy farm wife and mother, Frances became an invaluable member of the community, serving for more than half a century as church organist, for both the United and Anglican congregations.

The village was also saddened to learn of the death of Joan Murray, the last resident of the community to bear the Murray name. The Murray family has been associated with Georgeville since 1861 when Montrealer William Murray bought the farm immediately south of the village that would become 'Dunkeld'. Our community centre, Murray Hall, was a bequest from the family. Joan was a founding member of the Society, and one of its original benefactors, having for many years provided it with office and

storage space, as well as land for the Bigelow Garden.

Both ladies are sadly missed by everyone.

Last Fall also brought the sale of the Mudge property, better known as 'Wigwam Point'. In April 1864 Montrealer Thomas MacDuff, already a prominent property owner, added the Point to his holdings. He also acquired a cottage that had recently been built on what is now the village parking lot, so he hired teams of oxen to tow it to the Point where it became his family's summer home. Later, a daughter married into the Mudge family which kept the Wigwam for six generations. In recent times, Wigwam cottage has been allowed to fall into disrepair, but it was, nonetheless, with a great deal of sadness that Georgevillians observed its demolition last Fall to make way for new buildings on the site.

#### **A New Archive for Georgeville**

An enduring activity of the society has been the collection of archival materials from the early days of the pioneer settlements in the Georgeville area. This is an ongoing project of John Scott and his team of volunteers. Now we must start making a new collection of materials which illustrate what our life is like today. If it is truly going to be a 'paperless society' we must ensure that we leave both virtual and actual records of life in Georgeville and its institutions for those of our descendents who may have an interest in historical research. A Sub-Committee of the Board of GHS Directors is working on this new project now and hopes to have details available soon. We will probably launch the New Archive sometime in late summer, 2008. In the meantime, if anyone is planning to move house soon or start doing some Spring Cleaning and comes across material that would be of archival interest please contact one of the Committee members (Judy Bachelder, Aileen Desbarats, Lise Godbout, Valerie Pasztor or John Scott). Even if you cannot bear to part with your favorite photos or papers, please consider allowing us to make digital scans for our New Archive.

We are particularly interested in collecting things dating from 1918 to the present day, such as photos of people, buildings and events pertinent to the Georgeville area, as well as documents, flyers, posters, announcements and other papers with Georgeville content. Obviously, we are NOT seeking out baby photos, vague landscapes or unidentified groups of out-of-focus people! Neither will we have space to store any objects such as books, paintings or furniture.

#### **A GHS Logo Contest**

The Society really does need an eye-catching logo for use on its publications and letterheads. So, as an inducement to persuade artists, young or old, to sit down and design us a suitable logo, we decided to hold a contest *with a significant prize*. The ideal logo would be simple, would look good in either black and white or colour and in both small and large formats, and it should readily denote the Society with Georgeville area and/or historical themes. Easy...maybe!

Details of how, and when, to enter will be available shortly.

### **DATES TO REMEMBER SUMMER 2008**

**Sunday July 6th**

*17th Annual General Meeting  
2.30pm*

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**Wednesday July 16<sup>th</sup>**

*Walking Tour of the Village  
7.00pm*

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**Wednesday August 13<sup>th</sup>**

*Historical Walk along the old  
Magoon Point Road. Bring a lunch!*