



Société d'histoire de Georgeville

Georgeville Historical Society

Newsletter - Fall 2015

SUMMER SUCCESSES

The Georgeville Historical Society sponsored a number of highly successful events this summer.

Scavenger Hunt



Heather Kovacs, a GHS director, points out to a group of children that nearby the Murray Memorial Hall was the site of the Camperdown Hotel, destroyed in the great fire of 1898.

At the request of the Recreation Program leaders, the GHS on July 7 led a nine-point historical scavenger hunt, developed by John Boynton, designed to provide the children who participate in the program with some understanding of village history. Historical

points of interest, included, for example, the site of Georgeville's first church [beside the road up Channel Hill on a small lot which is now part of St. George's Anglican Church parking lot] to its oldest house [the large white house on the west side of Chemin Georgeville, now owned by Pierre Valiquette, built in 1814 by Moses Copp].

Canada Day Parade



The Canada Day Parade float sponsored by the Society featured a rendering of the *Mountain Maid*, a steamboat, built in Georgeville and launched in 1850. The ferry, skippered by the village's own Captain George Washington Fogg, carried up to 250 passengers and sailed from Newport to

Magog with various stops along the way, including Georgeville. It won first prize for the best float in the parade.

Outing to Owl's Head



The Historical Society adventurers take the final trek to the summit of Owl's Head

On Wednesday, July 22, more than forty people were, by special arrangement, whisked by chairlift to a spot near the summit of Owl's Head. The outing was reminiscent of similar adventures undertaken by summer visitors to the lake during the 1800s and early 20th century, when climbing the mountain was a popular seasonal activity. In the lea of the mountain's summit, Hugh Scott presented an account prepared by his father, John, of how how Victorian novelist, Anthony Trollope and his wife, Rose, made the ascent in 1861. (For a detailed account, see the article on page 4).

Tour of Historic Barns

The tour, on August 12, started at the Desmarais properties, both off the Georgeville Road and at the farm on the East Road. The tour was organized and

conducted by Martin Bosch with the assistance of Louise Abbott and Niels Jensen.

The first structure on the itinerary was the E.G.Penny barn built by Nathan Beach in 1887 and situated on the Georgeville Road property.

The second stop on the tour was the family's barn located on the East Road property. Louise Abbott pointed out that the building had been moved from its original site near the roadside, placed on a new foundation and enhanced with a number of additions and modifications. The 270 acre farm is unusual for having remained intact for 200 years. For most of the 19th century, the farm was in the hands of Georgeville's Julius Ives and Laura Drew family.



The tour then moved on to the barn on the property of Aileen Desbarats on Chemin McGowan. The colonial English barn was built in 1879 by Joseph G. Merriman and his son, Frank, for well-known resident and customs officer Sewell Foster Copp, a grandson of Georgeville's founder, Moses Copp

The last barn on the tour was that of Robert Coallier on the Magoon Point Road.

The barn at “Beechwood”, originally the Nathan Beach farm, and more recently, the Evans farm, has been meticulously replicated by the Coaliers. In 2014, they were presented with the Georgeville Historical Society's Nathan Beach Award, created to honour people who have made an outstanding contribution to preserving the built heritage of our community.

The Bigelow Garden



The rejuvenated Bigelow received an attractive new sign and remained in vivacious full bloom all summer.



ST.GEORGE'S TO CELEBRATE 150 YEARS



Georgeville's St. George's Anglican Church will next year celebrate the 150th anniversary of its founding.

As a prelude to that 2016 event, the church this year underwent extensive renovations. The entire exterior of the building was repainted; there was extensive work to strengthen the foundation; and the roof will be reroofed. The work was preceded by a highly successful fund-raising campaign and, of course, the generous funding of 70 percent of the cost by the Quebec Government's Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec.

Next August – coinciding with the anniversary of its founding – the church will host a celebratory concert, followed by a reception. More information on this event and other possible anniversary celebrations will be forthcoming.

A DATE TO REMEMBER

The annual Remembrance Day ceremony will take place at the Georgeville Cenotaph at 10.45 am on Wednesday, November 11.

GHS RECEIVES MARY LANDRY PHOTO COLLECTION LEGACY



The Georgeville Historical Society is both grateful and delighted to accept the gift of more than 100 photos in Mary Landry's "Faces of Georgeville" collection from son, William, and daughter, Anne.

Mary, a professional photographer, was a familiar figure around Georgeville and owned a home, along with husband, Peter, on the Magoon Point Road. She was raised in Sherbrooke and Arvida and received her B.A. in English from McGill University. She developed a passion for photography in the 1960s and used her talent to express her love of people, nature and travel. She exhibited in Montreal and the Eastern Townships and was a founding member of the Georgeville Festival des Arts.

The series of portraits she took of local personalities to celebrate the bicentennial of Georgeville in 1997, and contained in the "Faces of Georgeville" collection, is considered her finest artistic achievement. The collection of 108 photos has now been indexed and digitalized. Eighteen of the portraits are currently on display in the Murray Memorial Hall.

HISTORIC CLIMB OF OWL'S HEAD

Hugh Scott presented this account of Anthony and Rose Trollope's ascent of Owl's Head at an outing of the Georgeville Historical Society to the mountain on July 22, 2015.

The Historical Society has asked me to tell you about the first recorded account of a climb of Owl's Head. The climber was the prolific Victorian novelist Anthony Trollope, who was second in popularity only to Charles Dickens. This year is the 200th anniversary of Trollope's birth (that's the sort of thing the historical society likes you to know) and he and his wife Rose made the ascent in 1861.

What was it that brought such a celebrated writer to the remote wilderness of Lake

Memphremagog 154 years ago? It all came about because Sir Edmund Walker Head, the Governor General, visited Georgeville and the lake in September 1861. No sooner had Sir Edmund returned to Quebec City than Anthony Trollope, a fellow old boy of Winchester School, paid him a call.

The novelist was on a reporting trip for a non-fiction book to be called North America. Sir Edmund advised him that he should no account leave Lower Canada until he had “seen the lake and the mountains of Memphra-Magog.”

Trollope took the Governor General up on his recommendation. The author and his wife travelled by rail from Quebec City to Sherbrooke, and then by wagon with the mail to the village of Magog. There they took Capt. George Washington Fogg’s new steamer, the *Mountain Maid* – Trollope wrote -- “up the lake to a solitary hotel called the Mountain House, which is built at the foot of the mountain on the shore, and which is surrounded on every side by thick forest.

“The lake is therefore the only highway. I have seldom been in a house which seemed so remote from the world, and so little within reach of doctors, parsons or butchers. Bakers in this country are not required, as all persons make their own bread. But in spite of its position the hotel is well kept, and on the whole we were more comfortable there than at any other in in Lower Canada.”

Trollope’s account continues: “The one thing to be done at the Mountain House is the ascent of the mountain called Owl’s Head. ‘I doubt if the lady can do it,’ one man said to me. I asked if ladies sometimes did go up. ‘Yes, young women do at times,’ he said. After that my wife resolved that she would see the top of Owl’s Head, or die in

the attempt. “The path was indicated to us and off we started with high hopes.

“I have been up many mountains, and have climbed some that were perhaps somewhat dangerous. In climbing the Owl’s Head there is no danger. One is closed in by thick trees the whole way. But I doubt if I ever went up a steeper ascent. It was very hard work but we were not beaten. We reached the top, and there sitting down thoroughly enjoyed our victory.

“The view down the lakes and the forests around, and on the wooded hills below, is wonderfully lovely. I never was on a mountain which gave me a more perfect command of all the country round. But as we arose to descend we saw a little cloud coming towards us from over Newport.

“The little cloud came on with speed, and we had hardly freed ourselves from the rocks of the summit before we were surrounded by rain. As the rain became thicker, we were surrounded by darkness also... I may confess now that I became much frightened. At last I did utterly lose the track. We had succeeded in getting down the steepest and worst part of the mountain, but we were still among dense forest trees, and up to our knees in mud.

“But the people at the Mountain House were Christians and men with lanterns were sent halooing after us through the dark night. When we were thus found, we were not many yards from the path, but unfortunately on the wrong side of a stream. Through that we waded and then made our way to safety in the inn. In spite of which misadventure I advise all travellers in Lower Canada to go up Owl’s Head.”

The Trollopes’ adventure demonstrates how thoughtful the historical society has been in arranging the chair lift not only to deliver us up the mountain today, but to take us safely

down. On your behalf, I would thank the president of the society, Deane Moffat, and the directors for a splendid outing.

FORGOT TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

You can join the Georgeville Historical Society or renew your membership -- \$10 for an individual, \$15 for a family -- by sending a cheque to Judy Bachelder at 4600 Ch. Georgeville, Canton de Stanstead, JOB 1T0.

Stories and photos for future newsletters are always welcome.

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This Newsletter was prepared by David R. Cox. Photographs by Judy Bachelder, Christian Hurlow and Charlie Scott.

GHS WEBSITE

Have you visited the GHS Website? Simply go to <historicgeorgeville.wix.com> or just type in “Georgeville Historical Society” and chose the address with Wix in it.

The Website is evolving quickly. New stories and pictures will be found. Our Webmaster, Lorne Waid Jr., has been working with his team of advisors and the results are impressive. Enjoy!

BIGELOW GARDEN ENCORE

