



# GHS Newsletter

- [Why History Matters \(p.2,3\)](#)
- [GHS: At Work \(p.4\)](#)
- [GHS Trivia Quiz Night \(p.5\)](#)
- [GHS Guest Speaker \(p.5\)](#)
- [The Battles House \(p.6\)](#)
- [GHS Board of Directors \(p.7\)](#)
- [Thank You to Those Having Served \(p.7\)](#)
- [Welcoming Our New Board Member \(p.7\)](#)
- [Photographic Challenge \(p.7\)](#)
- [Membership Renewal \(p.8\)](#)
- [Credits \(p.8\)](#)
- [Biography \(p.8\)](#)



**Editor's Note:** We are proud to announce that for the first time in our history, this Newsletter is being published entirely in both English and French. Our Board recently decided that this and all future newsletters shall appear in Canada's two official languages.

## WHY HISTORY MATTERS

— Keith Wilcox

At an informal meeting held after our last Annual General Meeting (AGM), March 20, 2021, one of the attendees asked the following, "Why should we join the Georgeville Historical Society? What do we get by being a member that we would not get if we weren't?"

Non-members had been invited to attend our AGM in the hope that this introduction to our proceedings would inspire some to become members. The question above was pertinent. Various Board members tried to answer, but I do not know if any of us were satisfied by the answers given.

A simple answer might be that members of the GHS receive our newsletters, have the right to attend our AGM, attend guest lectures, and to participate in tours of historic sites, social events, contests, and other activities. However, a particularly compelling reason to become a GHS member is to have access to our archives, photographs, and expertise to help you learn about

Georgeville's rich history including, potentially, your ancestors' contributions to it. Furthermore, our research may contribute to our knowledge and understanding of your past.

The hope is always that members are *both* recipients and contributors, part of what historian E.H. Carr called an "unending dialogue between the present and the past".

The assumption is that you have a profound enough attachment "to the story of the village of Georgeville and its surrounding area" that you wish to celebrate that narrative by contributing to it. In doing so you come to a better understanding of where we have come from and how we got to where we are today, and maybe just maybe, you help shape our future.

Many of our members contribute artifacts from Georgeville's past such as letters, diaries, paintings done by local artists, photos, family trees, and so on. However, and this is not something we often think of because we see history as what has already happened, but the things we do in the present eventually become part of the documentary

evidence, the primary sources, for future historians. Anyone recording our current challenges living through the first plague of the twenty-first century could contribute artifacts for tomorrow's students of our life and times today. So, keep those tweets, emails, diaries, Facebook and Instagram posts; they tell our future selves who we were.

Author William Faulkner famously wrote in his novel "Requiem for a Nun", "The past is never dead. It's not even past", thereby confirming that history is indeed a dialogue between the present and the past. High School students I taught in the distant past were fond of asking why we studied history. "Who cares what happened long ago", they blurted out trying to throw me off my game. Of course, these same students might have been keen to know who their birth parents were if they had been adopted; students of Greek origin often still harboured resentments towards Turks; while in Quebec, students would ask who or what is being remembered on our license plates.



## **Cemeteries as heritage: Oliver Corner, Hill, and Magoon Point.**

A few weeks back I got an email from our former president Steve Moore. He mentioned a conversation he had had with someone living on Chemin de Georgeville, near the nineteenth-century village of Oliver Corner. This person was very concerned about what was happening to the two hundred-and-eight-year-old cemetery (the earliest burial was in 1813). Trees on a neighbouring property had either been cut down or blown over, completely hiding the tombstones of those buried.

Many of the stones were in awful condition, leaning precipitously or grown over, and some have illegible inscriptions. The Eastern Townships has an unusually large number of these family/community gravesites. They are a relic of another era when the first settlers

arrived and there were no churches. It was common to bury family and extended family members on the property of a significant landowner. The legal status of these gravesites is often tenuous. Some of our members are determined to learn more about their ownership, and our right of access. In the meantime, their upkeep and periodic maintenance depends on the goodwill of nearby neighbours or local historical societies like the GHS.

At our last board meeting, we put out a call for volunteers to clean up this cemetery. The response was overwhelming (see pictures of this endeavour below). The same has been true in the past when we helped maintain the Hill Cemetery near Georgeville and

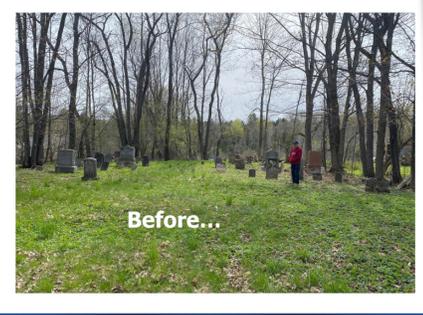
the Magoon Point Cemetery near the old, now abandoned village of Magoon Point. Regarding the latter, when we were there for a visit a few years back, descendants of the Magoon family, who are now living in the United States, approached us looking for the cemetery! Luckily for them, we were right there on the very spot, and could answer questions about their ancestors. Our roots are important to almost everyone, even those not related to dukes and earls, and especially when it comes to the origins of the communities we have come to care about. The stories of those who have come before us, their intrigues, their foibles, and the mysteries, remind us of what makes us human.

On the same day that I visited the Oliver Corner Cemetery, I met with someone who related that she cared enough about the 1802 tombstone of Francis Peasley (one of the oldest on this side of the lake) to purchase the land it was on so the site could be properly cared for. It is incredible what some people will do to honour the lives of those who have come before us. Of course, it's true: the past is not even past. Maybe that is why it matters so much.



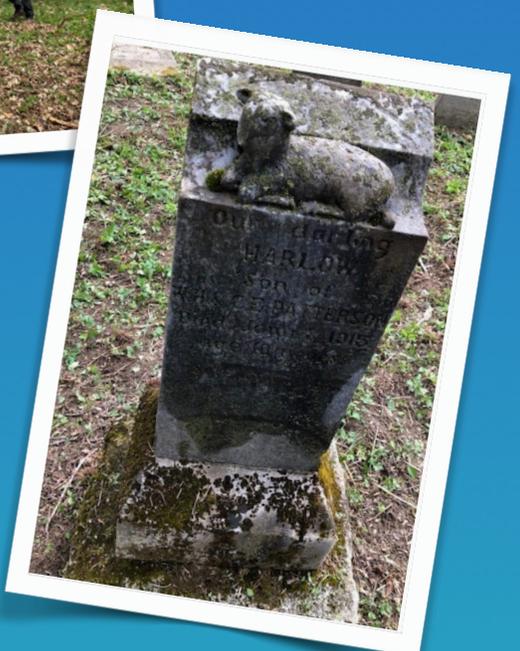
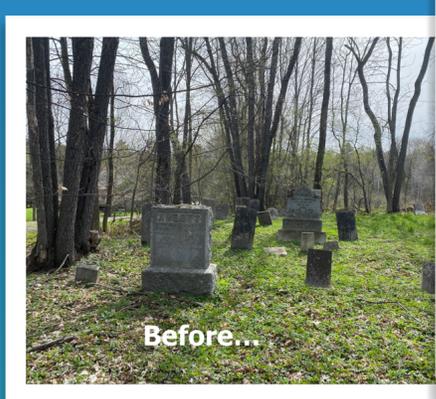
# GHS: AT WORK

— SuzAnne Tremblay



On Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, a special GHS task team met at the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Oliver Cemetery to perform a much-needed cleanup.

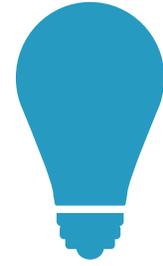
Armed with the spirit of protecting this historic site we brought chainsaws, leaf blowers, rakes, pruning tools, and good ole fashioned elbow grease. The job got done! This special group included GHS Board members, spouses, siblings, and new neighbourhood friends. The careful work brought to light many unexpected treasures and helped give these pioneer settlers the dignity they deserve. You can learn more about this early cemetery in the newsletter's "Why History Matters" article. If you have questions about the cemetery or information to share, please contact the Georgeville Historical Society.



# GHS TRIVIA QUIZ NIGHT



*Yes, the GHS can have fun!*



## Greetings friends and neighbours.

After over a year living under the cloud of **COVID**, the GHS finally bit the bullet and had a good ole go at hosting a **Virtual Quiz Night** for its members to put faces to names, share a drink, have some laughs and foster some friendly competition.

The event was held **February 20<sup>th</sup>** on Zoom and was enthusiastically attended by **33 GHS members**.

The evening was hosted by GHS President Keith "DJ" Wilcox who warmly welcomed the brave attendees and outlined the game rules. The 33 participants were assigned to six teams, each with a designated leader. There were three Quiz categories with ten questions per category (five English and five French). The categories were: **2020 Events, Georgeville History and General Knowledge**.

The winners were as follows:

**1<sup>ère</sup> place:** Tara Cope\*, Christ Wright et Angus Wright

**2<sup>e</sup> place:** Cindy Rigault-Horsfall\*, Katrina Rigaud, Brenda Parsons et Sue Brooks

**3<sup>e</sup> place:** Adam Swatton\*, Patsy et Wally Moffat, Doreen Moffat, Linda Bachelder et Terry Higgins

\*responsable désigné

Many thanks are owed to Keith Wilcox, Judy Bachelder, Deanne Cyr, Judy Macarthur, Tara Cope, Cindy Rigault, Tracy Taylor, and Erin Swatton for their support as we climbed the "Zoom Gaming" learning curve. A special shout out goes to Adam Swatton who taught me some amusing new PowerPoint skills!

It was heart-warming to see people have a bit of fun and there was some lovely feedback after the event. Despite some dodgy internet connectivity and Zoom technical hurdles, the evening was a success. Feedback on improvements,

suggestions for categories or other games is certainly welcome.

We hope to host another virtual quiz soon. We welcome anyone who would like to join a "**GHS Games Committee**" to help plan future events to please contact Keith Wilcox, [wkwilco46@gmail.com](mailto:wkwilco46@gmail.com), Judy Bachelder, [judy.bachelder@gmail.com](mailto:judy.bachelder@gmail.com) or Denise Cyr, [dcyr1@outlook.com](mailto:dcyr1@outlook.com) Who knows? 2021 may be the year we can gather in person for a game's night!

*(NB: Any GHS member who did not receive an invitation, kindly contact Judy Bachelder, [judy.bachelder@gmail.com](mailto:judy.bachelder@gmail.com), and she will update her contact list. We will endeavour to send out future invites earlier to allow more time for RSVP responses.*

Denise Cyr has been a GHS Board Member since July 2020 and is our new Treasurer. It should also be noted that without Denise there would not have been a Trivia Quiz Night.

## GHS GUEST SPEAKER

Our featured guest speaker this year will be Board Member, **Martin Bosch**. He has been spending a considerable amount of time researching the work of the Thomas Merton Center. He will be focusing on their years in Georgeville.

The talk will be virtual done using Zoom, on **Saturday July 3 at 10 am**. More information regarding registration will be available on Judy Bachelder's "What's On".



## GHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2021-2022, APPROVED AT OUR MARCH 20, 2021, VIRTUAL AGM

## OFFICERS

Keith Wilcox, President  
 Judy Bachelder, Vice president  
 Christian Hurlow, Secretary  
 Denise Cyr, Treasurer

## DIRECTORS

John Atkin  
 Martin Bosch  
 Maureen Cameron  
 Deanne Cyr  
 Cindy Horsfall-Rigaud

Judy Land  
 Doreen Moffat  
 Stephen Moore  
 SuzAnne Tremblay  
 Jacques Valiquette  
 Tara Wright

We would like to welcome **Judy Land** to our Board. She is not new to our community; her roots go back to the early days of Georgeville's history. We look forward to having her wisdom and good humour in our midst.

THANK YOU  
 TO THOSE  
 HAVING SERVED



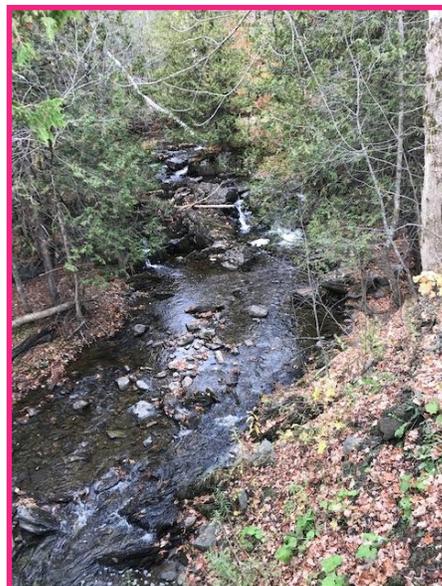
**D**iane Partington, our Treasurer since 2015, has stepped down. Thank you so much Diane for serving as GHS Treasurer for the last six years. You have done an excellent job keeping track of our finances, especially during a particularly challenging time, when, to our surprise, and well before your time, we learned that a GIC investment had disappeared from our financial records. You worked tirelessly to have that money returned to us.

We have greatly appreciated the work you have done serving as Treasurer, and we wish you well in the future. You have spent time tending to the books of a number of organizations over the last few years, and we hope that you get to do the things you enjoy now that you have more time to relax.

Mary Partington has audited our books, also since 2015. Thank you, Mary, for taking the time to do this for the GHS. We are so lucky to have such skilled people in our community who are willing to volunteer for the various organizations we have.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC

The scene depicted in the accompanying photo, below, is of a watercourse located in the municipality of Stanstead. The individual who can name the watercourse, most accurately describe the location from a geographic and historical perspective, and identify the directional orientation will win a free one-year membership to the Georgeville Historical Society.



## CHALLENGE

Please submit your answer to either of the following email or postal addresses:  
[historicalgeorgeville@gmail.com](mailto:historicalgeorgeville@gmail.com) or  
[judy.bachelder@gmail.com](mailto:judy.bachelder@gmail.com) or  
 Georgeville Historical Society  
 4600, chemin Georgeville  
 Georgeville, QC J0B 1T0

## How to best renew your membership or donate to the GHS...

We have two types of membership, individual at \$15 a year and \$20 for a family membership. If you do an e-transfer, kindly indicate your name/names and which type of membership you wish to have. There are two ways to do this:

Interac e-transfer using online banking.  
Payee name is **Georgeville Historical Society**.  
Email address is [gville.hist.soc20@gmail.com](mailto:gville.hist.soc20@gmail.com)

Send a cheque payable to **Georgeville Historical Society** addressed to:  
**Judy Bachelder**  
4600, chemin Georgeville  
Georgeville Québec  
JOB1T0

We are endeavouring to set up an account with **Canada Helps**. We will have more information, as it becomes available, in "What's On".

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS: *Stephen Moore, Keith Wilcox, Denise Cyr, SuzAnne Tremblay and Sylvia Miller*

PHOTOS: *Stephen Moore, Keith Wilcox, Deanne Cyr, SuzAnne Tremblay*

GHS ARCHIVES: *Judy Bachelder*

TRANSLATIONS: *DeepL Program; validation by SuzAnne Tremblay*

EDITOR: *Keith Wilcox*

EDITOR-AT-LARGE: *Sylvia Miller*

LAYOUT AND DESIGN: *Linda Bachelder*

C R E D I T S

## OUR EDITOR, SYLVIA MILLER'S UPDATED BIOGRAPHY

In the last issue of the newsletter, Sylvia Miller's biographical sketch created the impression that her father-in-law, W.J. Miller was born in Austria. Sylvia wanted that corrected in this issue.

Below is her new bio:

*I was raised in a rural area near Ingersoll, in south western Ontario, by parents who were only-children. My father was a recent immigrant from England — in short, I have relatively few close relatives.*

*However, I was introduced to Georgeville and environs as the girlfriend of a young man, Stephen James Miller (later to become my husband), who I had met at the University of Guelph in the early 70's. Stephen's parents were Willard James [Jim] Miller of Beebe, and Bessie M. Bachelder of Georgeville. We visited Georgeville and Beebe, Ayer's Cliff and Graniteville, and Griffin and Applegrove, where I was introduced to extended family, maternal and paternal, with deep roots in community and in the very landscape. Over the years, there were reunions, memorial services, housewarmings, planned (and unplanned) visits with family — it was always a "homecoming". The extended family: Bachelders, Millers, Parkhills, and Packards included farmers, quarrymen, postmasters, beekeepers, syrup producers, woodsmen and dairymen. I have been blessed to be able to share the strong sense of family, and of connection and belonging in this beautiful area with such a rich heritage.*

Sylvia Miller lives in Clayton, Ontario.