

THE GEORGEVILLE ENTERPRISE

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Société d'histoire de Georgeville / Georgeville Historical Society

WITH CHURCH BELLS AND A SMASHING SUCCESS GEORGEVILLE USHERS IN THE BICENTENNIAL

With church bells pealing and fireworks flashing in the cold night sky from the Auberge on Channel Hill, village folk gathered round a roaring bonfire in front of the Murray Memorial Centre. Shortly before midnight, they were joined by revellers who earlier rose from an 18th century feast of smoked salmon and roast beef inside the community hall. From the spacious new deck and stairs adorning the hall, Bernard Drew and Dick Hornby presided over a lusty count down to 1997 as Georgeville ushered in its 200th birthday.

So began Georgeville's year of Bicentennial celebrations, anticipated a few days earlier when the United Church on Bullock Hill was filled for a service of thanksgiving in the Methodist tradition that stretches back to the beginnings of the village. (See page 10)

A full calendar of special events, organized by the Bicentennial Committee of the Community Association led by Bernard Drew, will continue throughout 1997, culminating in a three-day Homecoming Weekend in July. The Community Association's 1997 calendar, to be distributed in February, will list the schedule of events.

As visitors to the Murray Memorial Centre over the New Year could see for themselves, the old year ended on an undoubted high note the smashing success of the Community Association's fund-raising campaign to renovate the centre as the village's main bicentennial project. As of the last day of 1996, Campaign Chairman Toby Rochester reported 361 donations amounting to \$159,511 — within a hairline of the

\$160,000 target.

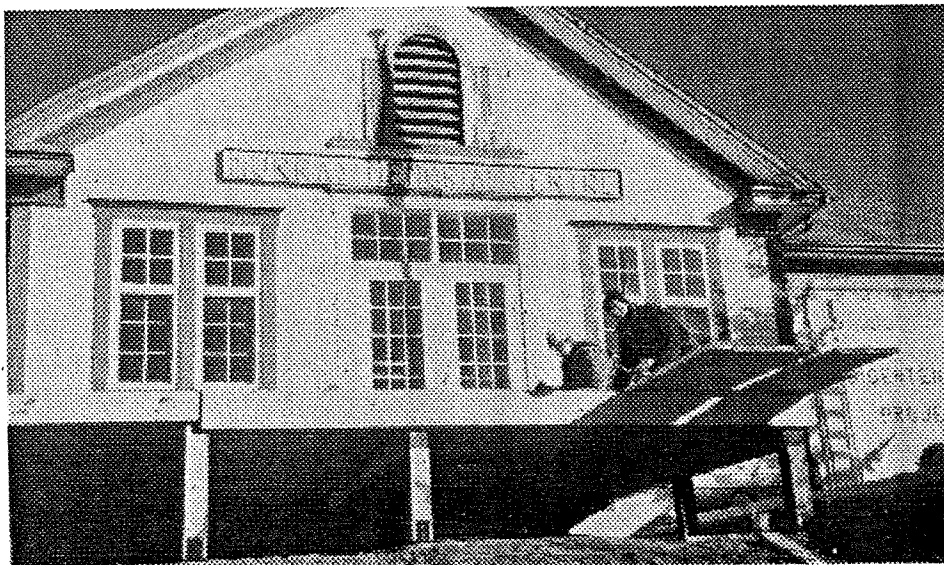
"Georgeville has done itself proud," said Richie Camber, president of the Community Association. "The Bicentennial project has received support throughout the entire community. We will be able to proceed with the full renovations as were proposed last May. We are most grateful to everyone."

Under the direction of building committee members Dick Hornby, Wayne McTavish, John Scott and Richie Camber, the renovations have proceeded in three stages as funds and detailed architectural plans were available, with contracts awarded to the lowest bidders. New perimeter drainage, foundation repairs, the new deck and front steps, have been completed, and David Partington's work on the rear extension is well advanced.

With the third and final phase contract expected to be awarded in January, the work should be completed — and the building freshly painted — by spring.

The renewed Murray Memorial Centre is not

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The new front porch on the Murray Memorial Centre takes shape

Photo: Katherine Mackenzie

THE QUINN STORE TO COME BACK TO LIFE IN TIME FOR HOMECOMING EXHIBITION

The old windows are soon to return to Maggie Quinn's store on Carré Copp.

By arrangement with Alexandre and Dominique Wozniak, who converted the former Village Store to their restaurant "Les Amis de Georges" last year, the Georgeville Historical Society has rented the ground floor of the Quinn store on a ten-year lease for historical and other exhibitions.

The historical society will modestly refurbish the old store, installing an attractive entrance and the front windows. The society will mount its main exhibition for the 1997 bicentennial here. To keep costs down, willing hands will be needed for a painting bee in the spring.

The society borrowed part of the former Village Store for its 1995 exhibition, "Peaceful Invasion: A Century of Log Cabins and Camps," and has presented its other summer exhibitions briefly—in the Murray Memorial Centre.

"Until now, we have been accumulating many fine old photos of the village and other material that has a story to tell," said the society's vice-president Bruno d'Anglejan. "But with the community hall busy with many activities, we've had to take our exhibitions down almost as soon as they were put up. The result is that many people have not had a chance to see them. Now we will have proper space."

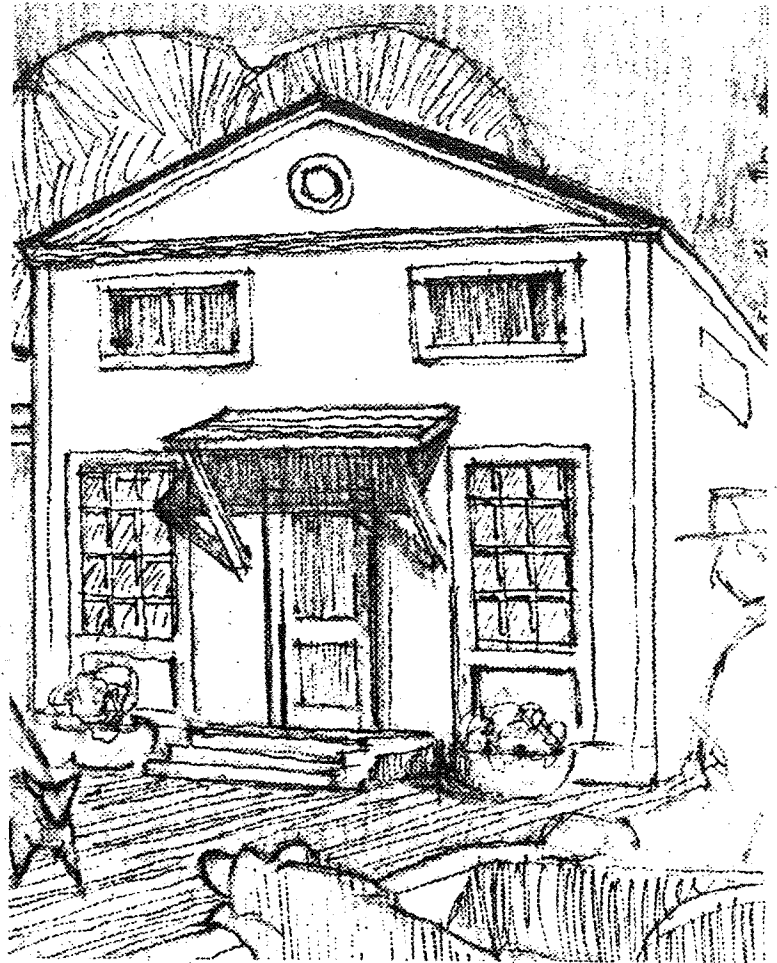
The old store is usually known as "the Quinn Store"—for Miss Maggie Quinn, who ran it as a millinery and dry good shop from 1910 until her death in 1936.

Yet it began life a nearly a century ago under a different name, in a different location. In November 1899 Miss Ellen Chamberlin bought a triangular piece of what is now the Murray Memorial Centre property, and soon after built the store—as a summer boarding house and millinery shop.

A turn-of-the-century photo shows the store with its sign advertising "Miss E. Chamberlin—ROOMS," as well as "Ladies Furnishing, Millinery and Fancy Goods."

With her sister Miss Lucy, Ellen Chamberlin occupied what is now the Armour house from 1875 and 1913, and had earlier operated her shop in Joshua Copp's old store on the site of the present Georgeville General Store.

The Misses Chamberlin were granddaughters of



Artist's conception of new exhibition quarters

Drawing: Philip Mackenzie

David Chamberlin and his wife Polly Hovey, who were part of the first settlement on the lakeshore between Copp's Ferry and the Outlet in 1794.

The Chamberlin—or Quinn—Store was moved to its present location in the 1940s by Max Grainger, the proprietor of the village store, who used it to store bulk goods.

Les Artisans McGowan, who have until now shared space with the diving school in the Maison McGowan's marina building, will rent the space between the two former stores.

Renamed "Les Artisans Georgeville," they will open shop in the spring. "We share the historical society's gratitude to the Wozniaks for their cooperation and for making it possible for us to find a new home," said Dorothy Jeffrey for Les Artisans.

ALL IN THE FAMILY: THE MASTER BUILDERS OF GEORGEVILLE'S RIVAL GRAND HOTELS

At the historical society's 5th annual meeting at the Murray Memorial Hall last summer, Lorne MacPherson recalled the story of his great grandfather, Alexander McPherson, who emigrated from Scotland in 1834 to work as farm manager for the Kilborn family of Stanstead, and in 1843 acquired a lakeshore farm on the Magoon's Point road. Lorne's talk focused in particular on Alexander's son, C.A.K. MacPherson, and his son-in-law, Nathan Beach, who had a good deal to do with the growth and development of Georgeville in the latter half of the 19th century. Excerpts from his talk:

Charles Alexander Kilborn MacPherson—or C.A.K., as he was known to everyone—was named after Col. Alexander Kilborn of Stanstead. The Kilborns were his godparents. As a result, I have always been proud to have had a godmother twice removed with the outrageous name of Thankful Bangs.

C.A.K. remained on the farm until he was 17, when he left to attend the Montreal Business College, graduating in 1875. Having an aptitude for carpentry, he found employment in Boston and New York before returning to Georgeville in 1879. At this time the farm was deeded to him containing the customary "life" clause. It required him to "keep and support" his parents in a comfortable and decent manner, providing them with "a suitable bedroom, properly warmed and ventilated," a sum not exceeding \$25 per annum for spending money and "a sage horse and suitable summer and winter vehicle whenever they may require the same for visiting or business purposes."

C.A.K. got his first important building contract at the age of 22 to build the covered bridge at the Narrows. *The Stanstead Journal* reported on June 23, 1881: "The Narrows bridge is fast approaching completion and is a fine structure. It will likely stand a long time without much repair. If the town had more covered bridges like this, it would be for the interest of the taxpayers."

The quality of construction was evident some 100 years later during the building of the replacement bridge. To avoid making a long detour with his fully

loaded ten wheeler, Tony Houle used the old bridge, then posted with a six ton limit. For a total cost of \$965 this bridge must surely qualify as the best long-term investment in the Township's history.

For the next 23 years, C.A.K. contracted in the Georgeville area, his largest project being the new Camperdown Hotel [built in 1884 on what is now the site of the Murray Memorial Centre].

The services he offered in the '80s, described on an invoice form, are quite encompassing:

C.A.K. MacPHERSON
CARRIAGES, SLEIGHS, SLEDS,
PLEASURE BOATS, &c, &c.
Proprietor of Georgeville Steam Sawmill
and Dealer in Lumber of all kinds.

In the 1880s Georgeville, with its hotels and boarding houses, was a popular summer resort for Montrealers. Grandfather could not have been totally occupied with business, certainly not after having met Marguerite Ann Brown, a summer visitor. They were married on Sept. 11, 1888.

Maggie was an out and out city girl, so we can appreciate what a change in lifestyle living here must have been for her. In Montreal she had worked as a hairdresser specialising in the theatrical trade. She often spoke of having "made up" such celebrities as the Mesdames Albani, Melba, Patti, Russel and Lind.

In 1902 C.A.K. bought the sawmill of John Taylor and Son in Magog, disregarding the advice of those who saw the move as a potential



Charles Alexander Kilborn MacPherson and family ca. 1897

disaster, the Magog area having been "logged out." A bit premature on their part—the mill operated continuously until 1962 when it was closed by myself for precisely that reason.

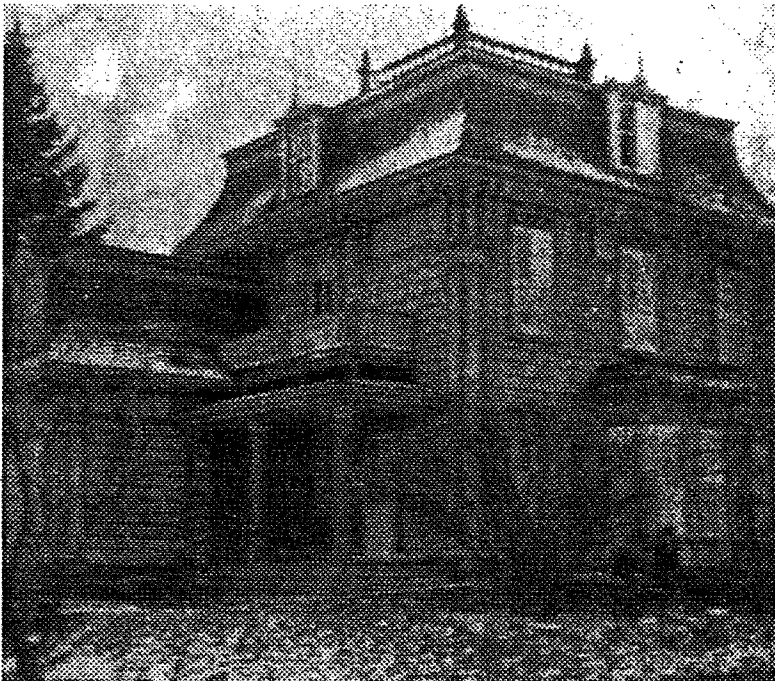
C.A.K.'s brother-in-law, Nathan Beach, was born in West Berkshire Vt., a small village near the Canadian border. He left home in his early teens and travelled to New Orleans where he worked in a pattern shop and learned the carpentry trade. He then signed onto a sailing ship as a ship's carpenter for a voyage around Cape Horn where they lost their sails and most of the rigging. After a refitting in the Falkland Islands, the ship made it to San Francisco.

California supported the Union in the Civil War and the people of San Francisco raised money to equip and send one hundred men to fight for the North. A thousand men volunteered and Nathan was one of the hundred chosen. They went east by way of Panama, including a walk across the isthmus. They were made a cavalry troop and became a part of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry. Most of his war stories were of cavalry patrols and chasing Mosby, the famous Southern cavalry and raiding regiment. Finally, in a crossroads skirmish, his horse was shot and fell on his leg. He was injured so badly that he was discharged.

Nathan made his way to Georgeville, where by the 1860s his mother, a formidable personage with the daunting name of Caroline America Everett Davidson, was living in the Quinn Bay area with her second husband, William Davidson. Here Nathan met C.A.K.'s older sister, Elsie Ann MacPherson, "the



Nathan Allen Beech



"Beechwood" on Magoon Point Road

most beautiful girl in town," according to her grandson, Beach Bly. They were married on Oct. 5, 1864.

As a builder, Nathan Beach had no equal in the area. From the time of his arrival until the end of the century he built—to mention the best known—the MacPherson farm house, possibly his first project, the Anglican Church, the Revere House at Chateau brook, the Murrays' "Dunkeld," the United Church and the Elephantis Hotel [across the road from C.A.K.'s new Camperdown].

Our "energetic Mr. Beach," as he was referred to by the Stanstead Journal, was involved in just about every activity possible save politics. Along with Elsie, he ran hotels (the Elephantis and the Revere House), made bricks on the Merriman farm, ran a ferry to Magog, built a sawmill on Taylor

Brook, was in business with the Rider family in Fitch Bay, bought and sold farms, cut and sold firewood and much more. He also had time to take part in productions of the Georgeville Dramatic Club. All of this hectic activity brought an exclamation from his mother, Caroline: "Nathan, you should stick to your construction business. It isn't fair to Elsie for you to invest in hotels, sawmills, steamboats and goodness knows what else."

In 1870, he bought the present Evans farm from his father-in-law, Alexander MacPherson, and in 1870

built "Beechwood." According to his grandson Beach Bly, "the house was enlarged from time to time until it became the showplace of the area. 'Beechwood' and a good free meal were known by ladies, gentlemen and every tramp in the area."

Disaster struck in 1898 when Georgeville had its own version of the great Chicago fire when Elsie Beach dropped her kerosene lantern, which set the Elephantis Hotel ablaze and eventually destroyed nine other buildings.

By the late 1800s Beach had extended his activities

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

THE LADY WITH THE WONDERFUL NAME

Few residents of Georgeville in the last century personified more of the village's history than a remarkable woman named Caroline America Everett Beach Davidson.

She was born just north of Copp's Ferry in 1815, the daughter of James Everett, a pioneer school teacher and tanner. She first married a Vermont farmer-innkeeper named Nathan (or David) Beach who took her away from the village; they were living in West Berkshire, Vt, when their son Nathan, Jr. was born in 1841.

Widowed after the birth of four children, she returned to Lower Canada and, at age 43, married widower William Davidson, who had emigrated from County Tyrone, in 1858. They were living near Farnham, where two years later their son, James Everett Davidson was born.

In the winter of 1861 William Davidson, with Caroline and their infant son James Everett, pulled up stakes and moved to Georgeville. "They had trouble crossing the lake and help went out from the village," their grandson James Arlington (Arlie) Davidson recalled. "The next day they proceeded to their lot [near Quinn Bay] on which I believe there was a log cabin."

When Nathan, Jr. was discharged from the union

forces in the U.S. Civil War, he rejoined his mother in Georgeville. His marriage to Elsie Ann MacPherson give Caroline four grandchildren: Gertrude Ella, who married Charles Sewell Copp, a great-grandson of the village's founder, Moses Copp; Nathan Alexander, who joined his father Nathan's contracting business; Lillian Elsie, who married a school teacher turned farmer, John A. Bly; and Martha Eva.

Still another link between long-time Georgeville families was formed when Caroline's daughter (and Nathan's older sister), Martha Beach, married butcher and baker Oliver Hutchins in Farnham. In 1867 Oliver and Martha followed Caroline to Georgeville and founded the village's Hutchins line. He and Martha gave her five Hutchins grandchildren: Carrie, Lena, Kenneth, Henry and Harry.

James Everett Davidson, like his half-brother Nathan Beach, also became a leading Georgeville builder. He married Annie Brevoort, and they gave Caroline four Davidson grandchildren: Bruce, Arlington, Marion and Vera.

Small wonder that when Caroline America Everett Beach Davison died, at 94, in 1908, the *Stanstead Journal* paid her tribute — a trifle inelegantly — as one of "the old landmarks" of Georgeville.



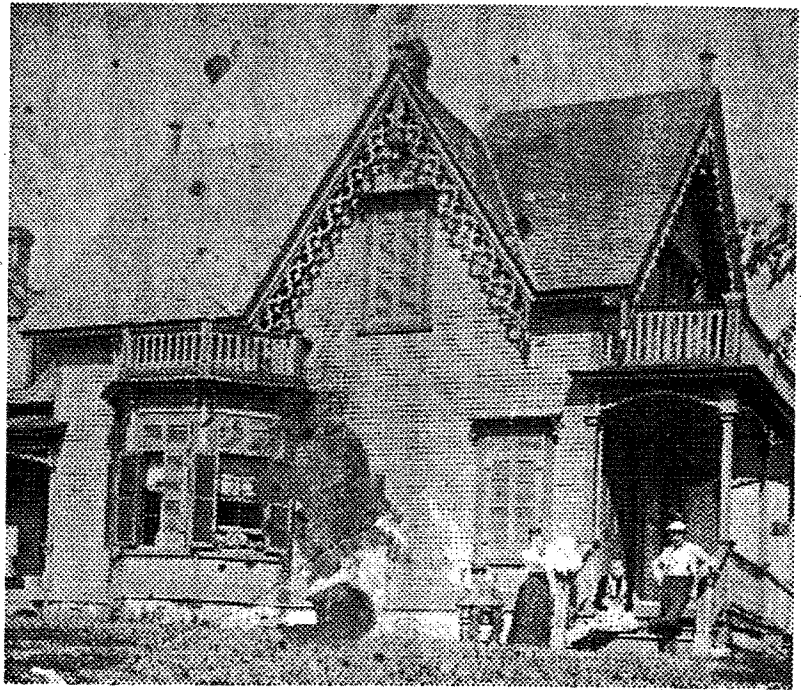
Caroline America Everett Beach Davidson

to the Rock Island, Derby Line area, still maintaining his residence at "Beechwood." His major achievement was undoubtedly the Haskell Opera House and Library, opened in 1904.

By 1906 Beach seems to have put much of his capital and energies into operating a sawmill in North Derby, Vt., probably on Derby Bay since his logs were boomed from Magoon's Point. In 1910 the mill burned down along with his inventory. Being near 70, he never recovered from the loss, little insurance having been carried in the mill and lumber. Lest he be faulted for this omission, it should be noted that sawmills were for all practical purposes uninsurable.

At the opposite end of Stanstead County, C.A.K. MacPherson was more fortunate than Beach when it came to mill fires. The old mill in Magog stood proud and tall, refusing to burn. Two fires, in 1964 and '65 levelled every building surrounding the sawmill but it and the boiler house survived intact.

C.A.K. successfully operated the mill until 1914



The MacPherson House on Magoon Point Road ca. 1881

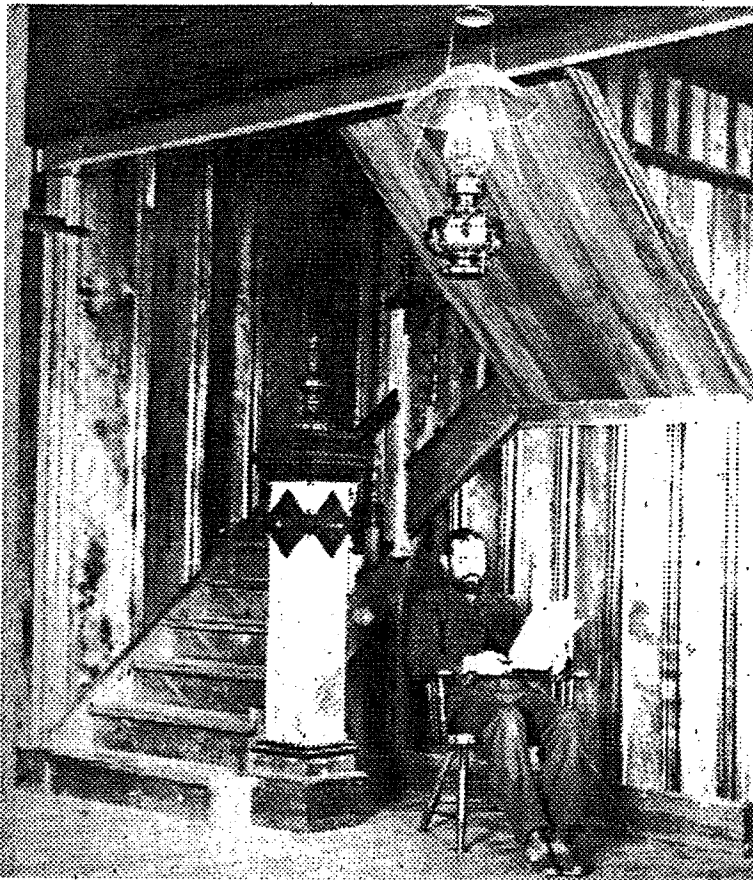
when he suffered a serious mill accident. As a consequence, he sold the business to his son Colin in 1915. Except for three years from 1909 to 1912 when the farm was rented, the family always returned to stay there during the summer months.

In 1906 C.A.K. built Magog's first covered ice rink, roughly behind St. Paul's United Church. A couple of years later James N. Connors was a spokesman for a group representing a newly organized hockey team that called on grandfather to discuss the division of gate receipts. Connors did most of the talking and this is how it went, according to my father Colin:

"After long silences, finger drumming on the kitchen table and discussions of the weather, Connors rose and said: 'Mr. MacPherson, you have heard my proposition, what do you think of it?'

"My father, following a well ingrained habit, rubbed his nose for many silent moments and then replied: 'Connors, you have made no proposition. Your utterance was but a bungling and futile attempt at an imposition on my good nature.'

Both Beach and C.A.K. did not, in a familiar phrase, 'suffer fools gladly.' They were serious personalities. There is no photograph of my grandfather with even a trace of a smile on his face. I would not be surprised if this was not also the case with



C.S. Copp in the lobby of the Elefantis Hotel

Nathan Beach. It is interesting how similar were their careers, with the possible notable exception of C.A.K. being involved in municipal politics, serving as mayor of Magog in 1913.

When my grandmother died in 1933, someone thought it would be a good idea for me to stay with grandfather for a few weeks. My time was mostly spent down at the Haig cottage where Murray Haig's cousin was building a sailboat which fascinated me. Or I went to the McEwen's farm nearby — now the Lynch-Staunton's — where the fascination was Ruth McEwen. Unfortunately, I was a mere 10 while Ruth was probably 18.

On rainy days, I spent many hours in the south bay music room of the MacPherson house, playing an old handwound Victrola, listening to records of Harry

Lauder and a minstrel group that probably had grandfather climbing the walls. I did not see him again, for he spent the rest of his days in Florida. He died there in 1942.

Typical of the kind of advice he would give his son Colin is the following: "Keep your mouth shut and people will think you are smart."

As to the quality of living here at the turn of the century, my father probably said it best in a letter to my grandfather shortly before he died. After touching on many remembered pleasures of life on the farm in the old days, the sound of the whistle of the Lady of the Lake in the distance and so on, he ended with: "You know, Pa, we lived in Paradise and didn't know it."

GUESTS WERE EXPECTED TO BE USEFUL ON THE HOME FRONT AT BELMERE

At 96, Virginia Holbrook has memories of Georgeville that reach back before the First World War when Sir Hugh Allan's daughter, Edythe Routledge, was mistress of the Allan estate, Belmere. As a summer visitor from Boston, the eleven-year-old Virginia was a friend of Mrs. Routledge's sons, Allan and Jim, and a frequent guest at Belmere. Virginia lives in Derby Line.

By Virginia Holbrook

Sir Hugh Allan chose one of the most picturesque parts of the lake and shore for his summer home. The "Belmere" estate comprised about one thousand acres. Since it was on a peninsula, it was somewhat tempered by the lake. Its garden produced melons and asparagus and other delicacies and early crops not easily grown on nearby farms.

The more than mile-long driveway, known as "the avenue," was lined by sugar maples and flanked by hayfields and woodland. Offshore towards the south was Molson's Island, wild and tree-clad, dark with its growth of big timber.

The avenue's upper end was protected by an iron gate hung on fieldstone posts, where the gatekeeper lived in a little lodge. A perpetual spring supplied pure, cold water to all the buildings. Bridle paths wound through the property; the old fences had rustic gates with loop-shaped iron hooks which could be lifted by riding crops without a rider's dismounting.

A rustic gate opened onto the long, gravel path leading to the garden, with thick hedges of cedar and borders of trimmed grass growing at either side. Beyond the raspberry canes and flower beds, a large vegetable garden grew on a southerly slope, with an

orchard and small fruits nearby. The gardener's cottage overlooked the garden from a height, and well below lay the tree-lined shore of Quinn Bay.

My first memory of Mrs. Routledge is with me still. My mother had fallen seriously ill at our cottage on the lakeshore. A friend set out by rowboat — it was a black midnight brightened by vivid flashes of lightning — to find a telephone and send a message to a doctor. He noticed a boathouse, and after beaching the rowboat found a gravel path leading steeply uphill. His footsteps aroused a St. Bernard and three Yorkshire terriers, and all started barking.

A woman dressed in night clothes, and carrying a light, responded. It was Mrs. Routledge. She telephoned to the doctor, put a raincoat over her nightgown, rubber boots on her feet, went to the stable and harnessed a horse. She then drove two miles in a buggy to get a practical nurse.

The doctor came and so did Mrs. Routledge with the nurse. Mrs. Routledge stayed all night and fanned my mother with a palm leaf fan. When my mother regained consciousness, she became aware of a face peering at her intently. Mrs. Routledge leaned down and kissed her. And the doctor said, "You are all right now."

The Routledge's motorboat "Vesper" came from Belmere frequently, bringing the boys and taking me over to their place. My mother's health improved and she became well enough to travel. It was arranged for us to get on the Boston and Maine teamboat [The Lady of the Lake] at Belmere's big wharf. Mrs. Routledge was mounted on her restless mare, Jim was holding a big bouquet of sweet peas which he gave to my mother, and Allan was there with a camera.

I had an affinity for Belmere. I loved it for itself and in summer used to spend a week there every now and then. Usually I had the guest room. A coal-oil hand lamp stood upon a little table at the foot of the carpeted staircase; a Sheffield candlestick with lighted candle was my bedside light, safety matches within reach; the bed had real linen sheets.

The stable bell was rung at seven and breakfast was ready in the cool dining room at seven-thirty. The bell was rung again at twelve and at five-thirty for the workmen.

Guests were expected to be useful. During the morning I usually cut fresh flowers for the vases, dipped water out of a rain barrel to put on the border of annuals in front of the house; then I saddled the pinto pony at the mounting block, rode to the padlocked mailbox beyond the lodge gate and carried the mail back in a little knapsack. In haying season I tumbled hay and drove the horse rake.

When I became old enough I drove the McLaughlin Buick and ran the motor canoe. For recreation, we played tennis on a grass court and went swimming from the beach or the boathouse. The bathhouse had a long pier running out to fairly deep water; the boathouse wharf had a springboard.

A smoke-blackened tea kettle was kept in the bathhouse; when we had a picnic on the beach, the kettle was filled with lake water and set on stones over a little fire of driftwood. The beach was kept tidy by using up the driftwood.

Meals at the house were delicious. Invariably there was afternoon tea; high tea was at seven. The cool dairy-icehouse next to the kitchen fascinated me. It had thick walls of granite. Pans were set on the broad shelf as soon as the Jersey cows were milked, cream rose to the top, so thick it had to be ladled, never poured, at table. A huge tumbler of milk stood beside my plate,



Edythe Routledge riding at "Belmere"

and it was the only milk I ever have liked, so sweet and rich.

I was accustomed to Grandpa, Cocoa and Susie — Mrs. Routledge's Yorkshire terriers — and to seeing hummingbirds, hearing the hermit thrush in the grove beside the stable, and having house wrens nearby. Allan joined the Black Watch regiment in the early days of World War I and was killed in France; Jim trained with the Royal Air Force.

Usually the estate employed three couples who lived in separate houses there, besides a cook and her husband who lived in the main house. Various helpers were needed during the war to replace enlisted men; most of them came out from England, all cultivated persons who came one at a time and became part of the household, treated as guests but helping with the outside work.

The youngest of these was a college boy from Ontario. He did chores during the morning, but in the afternoon Mrs. Routledge and he and I would go in the motor canoe and pay social calls on friends near the village or across the lake, and have afternoon tea. Oh, yes, I used to drink tea; I felt very grown up at 15.

Years later, the big house, as it was called, was torn down and parts of it, such as marble fireplaces and front steps, were used in a much smaller house Jim Routledge built on the same site. Some of the big trees which obstructed the view were cut down, and from a picture window one could see a panorama of the lake and the mountains.

Jim Routledge thought there was no grander scenery anywhere in the world.

the only improvement underway as the village prepares for what promises to be a busy year of celebrations, including a Winter Carnival on Feb. 22. New playground equipment set and park benches are being installed on the village green, the generous gift of a private donor. The Georgeville Historical Society will modestly refurbish the ground floor of the old Chamberlain (Quinn) Store for its Bicentennial Exhibition. (see page 2)

Red oak saplings grown and donated by Maurey Devlen have been planted on the village green and the grounds of the Murray Memorial Centre. When Wayne McTavish, Tony Straessle and John Boynton were planting the oaks in late fall, they struck an intriguing reminder of Georgeville's rich heritage—the original road-side foundations of the first Camperdown Hotel, torn down in 1884.

SHG/GHS 6th ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, July 19, 1997

2:30 pm

**Murray Memorial Centre
Georgeville**

**HOMECOMING WEEKEND RECEIVES
ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE**

The Bicentennial Committee reports a great response to their November mailing regarding the Homecoming Weekend, Friday through Sunday, July 11-13. The Homecoming Weekend is going to be packed full of activities—bicentennial pomp and ceremony, a barbeque, old fashioned games for children, 19th century skills demonstrations, band concert, and a dinner dance for all to be held in a tent in the park.

Be forewarned: Seating for the dinner on Saturday night, July 12, is limited to approximately 660. From the response to the November mailing, we will easily surpass this number. Music and dancing after dinner will be open to all homecoming guests. The next bicentennial mailing will be sent out the beginning of May. At that time you will be asked to confirm your dinner reservation.

Some other bicentennial events to look forward to include:

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| Winter Carnival | February 22 |
| Welcome to Spring Fling | March 29 |
| SHG/GHS Exhibition opens | July 9 |
| Children's Softball Tournament | August 2 |
| Antique Boat Show | August 16 |

**A PERSONAL JOURNEY FROM
INDIAN WAYS TO STAGECOACH
DAYS**

For one of her bicentennial projects, Georgeville author Katherine Mackenzie has published her latest book, *Indian Ways to Stagecoach Days*. Katherine and her husband Philip developed a great interest in searching out the old Indian trails and stagecoach routes that led from the northeastern coast of America to Canada. They traveled throughout New England and Quebec searching out the old routes and the old inns along the way. From Boston to Montreal footpaths became wagon roads, and the history and adventures that occurred in this process are vividly related by Katherine.

Readers interested in the history of the Eastern Townships can satisfy their curiosity and supplement their knowledge of the times spanning *Indian Ways to Stagecoach Days*. The book is soft cover, 128 pages, and is available from Katherine Mackenzie, 10 chemin McGowan, Georgeville, QC J0B 1T0 or at the Georgeville General Store.

Rosalyn Smith.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Thanks for the latest publication of *The Georgeville Enterprise*. It is always so interesting and informative to read. You are all doing a wonderful job for the community; I wish I was there to help.

Sincerely,
Evelyn Glass

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The Georgeville Enterprise

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A TRADITION STRETCHING UP FROM TIMELONG AGO USHERS IN THE BICENTENNIAL

On the last Sunday of 1996, Georgeville's United Church was filled for the first event on the village's Bicentennial calendar – a service of celebration and thanksgiving conducted by the Rev. Wayne Beamer, recently arrived as the new minister of the Magog-Georgeville pastoral charge. The historical society's president, John M. Scott, introduced the service with this account of Georgeville's Methodist tradition:

We are gathered together this morning, on the eve of the 200th anniversary of the settlement of Georgeville, to celebrate and give thanks – to celebrate the lives and labours of those who have built and shaped our village, and to give thanks for their values and traditions, which are woven into the life of the community we are fortunate to share.

This community and this church, like each of us as individuals, come from the past. It is thus appropriate that our Bicentennial celebration should begin with a service reflecting the Methodist tradition that stretches back to the beginnings of the village. By joining together in a form of worship that was familiar and of great comfort to our forebears, we remind ourselves, in words of the writer Russell Baker, that "life is a braided cord of humanity stretching up from time long ago."

It also also fitting that we have the pleasure of welcoming the choir and congregation of St. Paul's in Magog to this morning's service. Incoming to Georgeville for spiritual sustenance (or so we hope), our guests are following a trail blazed by another visitor from the Outlet one hundred and eighty-seven years ago.

Georgeville is the oldest, and for some years remained the only, village on the lakeshore between Duncansborough, as

Newport was originally known, and the Outlet. Our trail-blazing visitor of 187 years ago was Ralph Merry, a son of the first settler at the Outlet. He has left the only contemporary account we have of an early Methodist class meeting in Copp's Ferry. In his diary for September 17, in the year 1809, he laments that there was, as he put it, "no meeting this side of Copp's." Because he was suffering from a cold, he was not well enough to go. He was not so ill, however, that he was not mightily offended by the sort of behaviour we may assume would have provoked many God-fearing

homesteaders: "Several here today," he wrote, "some visiting, some fishing and hunting; [I] feel resolved to reprove them if they continue to come here to break the Lord's day."

His health recovered, two Sundays later Ralph Merry saddled his horse and rode to a class meeting at Jeremiah Lord's homestead a little over a mile north of Georgeville. He described the meeting this way: "A love feast at 9 o'clock A.M. in J. Lord's house; elder Stearns preacher – I give a short exhortation and tell what God has done for my soul; being the first time that I have declared it in public. Ride home." The meeting at Jeremiah Lord's was clearly not without impact on young Ralph Merry, for he was soon writing in his diary: "I think the Methodist persuasion agrees with the Scriptures the best of any that I know of and that the Methodists feel more of the



Drawing: Sonia Locke

power of Religion and live nearer the life of a true Christian than any other religious people (the [Baptist] Freewillers excepted with whom I am not so well acquainted)."

According to tradition, the first Methodist class meeting had been organized in Copp's Ferry a few years earlier, in 1804, under the leadership of Richard Packard. With his family, Richard Packard settled on the East Road, clearing the property that is still farmed by his three times great-grandson, Bernard Drew.

The Methodists were so called for their resolve to conduct their lives and religious study by "the rule and method" of John Wesley's teachings. This morning's order of worship is based on The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America, published in London just 13 years before the settlement of Georgeville.

This was the form of service familiar to the early Methodists of New England. It would have been brought to Copp's Ferry by the pioneers who migrated into this empty country from the farms and villages of New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Vermont. John Wesley remained a clergyman of the Church of England to the end of his life. So the service will also be familiar to those accustomed to the Church of England's Book of Common Prayer.

According to *Forest and Clearings*, an account of the history of Stanstead County drawn together not long after the middle of the last century, the other charter members of that first class in Copp's Ferry were Richard Packard's near neighbours. They included his daughter, Sally, and his son, John A., who would himself become a Methodist preacher; William Bullock's wife Artemisia, and their daughter Miriam and son William, Jr.; and three Lords — Jeremiah, his wife Lois and daughter Nancy.

Looking back, we can see those early Methodist meetings, conducted in the homes or barns of the founding families of Copp's Ferry, as a beginning of "the braided cord" that stretches up to us from long ago. Perhaps it may be said of them, in Emerson's words, that "they builded better than they knew." Richard Packard's children would marry Copps and Bullocks and Perkins and Rexfords. His later descendants would include Heaths and McGowans and Bachelers. William Bullock's children would marry Ives and Blakes and Merrimans and Abbotts; and his descendants would include Bigelows and Channels and Magoons. All of these family names are

intimately woven into the history of our community — all strands in the braided cord we celebrate today.

We should return, just for a moment, to Ralph Merry, because, riding out from the Outlet, he provides a glimpse of another religious attachment among the early settlers. Coming from New England, and its background of religious fervour and factions, they brought with them a variety of non-conformist experiences. Even before the Methodists took root, the first religious society on the lakeshore between Copp's Ferry and the Outlet was a Baptist group that included, as early as the year 1799, the Jewetts, Abbotts, Merrimans and Chamberlins. Georgeville's traditional generosity of spirit goes a long way back, since Jeremiah Lord welcomed his Baptist neighbours to the homestead as well. For in September 1809 Ralph Merry records that he — in his words — "rode to J. Lord's. Quarterly Meeting in his barn, 2 elders, 4 ministers in all... go to the Lake after meeting, see Joseph Randall and Goram Page baptised."

Georgeville's traditional generosity of spirit goes a long way back

Along with Methodists and Baptists, a third stream of our heritage is that of the Congregationalists, who arrived on the shores of Massachusetts with the Pilgrims. Congregationalism also came to Georgeville with our pioneers, but apparently did not take organized form until the arrival of the Rev. Levi Adams, of Vermont. He became, in 1854, the first ordained minister authorized to register births, deaths

and marriages in this community. (Until then, at least for the latter activity, people had to cross the lake to Potton or nip down to the border). Living on Magoon's Point, Mr. Adams continued his ministry in Georgeville and Fitch Bay for the next 34 years.

As you have probably noted, all that has been missing, up to this point, is a church. In 1829 the people of the village built a two-story brick school house, evidently a fine structure, where the old red school house now stands. Before it burned in the 1840s, village folk gathered in this structure to hear itinerant evangelical preachers. Writing of his boyhood memories of the village, Hazen Increase Bullock, a grandson of William Bullock, recalled the appearance of William Miller, a Second Day Adventist who foretold the imminent end of the world: "It was in the large window at the rear of the building that Miller stood and preached to the multitude that filled the capacious interior, and common outside, his doctrine of the early conclusion of their mundane existence."

Fortunately, these tidings were premature, and

not long after, in the 1860s, the village erected not one but two churches. First, in 1860, came the original Methodist church, on Channel Hill, which served its congregation for 30 years, and then, in 1866, the jewel that is St. George's Anglican Church.

This morning we have reason to recall the contributions of pastors who have ministered to this community.

We think of the village's first Methodist parson, Edwin Peake, who with much local help built the Methodist church on Channel Hill – and persuaded his father back in England to carry the mortgage.

We think of James Thornloe, who served first the Methodist congregation and then, whether in a burst of ecumenical spirit or not, founded and became the first minister of St. George's.

We think of his successor, the Rev. F.A. Smith, who later confessed that "though surrounded by beautiful scenery, I found the work at Georgeville decidedly of a rugged nature. It was hard soil to till. Within a few miles of the American line, there was an abundance of that indifference to spiritual things which is so characteristic of the border districts. However, even there, I found that faithful work would not fail of its promised reward."

We think of our Congregationalist, Levi Adams, who, if necessary, would cover his circuit from Magoon's Point on foot. His granddaughter recalled that "when roads were too bad for a team or to go on horseback, he would walk. Starting on Saturday and going over Brown's Hill to Ayer's Flat, then home by Boynton on Monday, holding services along the way."

We think of the Scotsman, James Hepburn, who after enduring the rigors of a Labrador mission, put that experience to good use when he arrived, in 1876, as the Anglican parson serving in both Magog and Georgeville. When the road was bad, he (on at least one occasion) strapped on his snowshoes to get from Magog to Georgeville.

We might think of the Baptist William Wright, who, when a clergyman was not easy to come by, combined preaching with his trade as the village tailor. In his well-thumbed and underlined bible, which survived the burning of his house in the great fire of Georgeville in 1898, we read, from the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy, verse 7: "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations."

And we might think of the Rev. George Wood, whose determination inspired the construction, one hundred and five years ago, of the church in which we meet this morning.

Most of all, we think of the quiet devotion of the generations who have gone before. I came across a recollection the other day of a guest in the home of

Robert and Nellie Merrill, descendants both of pioneer families. This recollection, of three quarters of a century ago, may evoke family memories of times past for many here today.

"As nearly as possible," the Merrills's guest wrote, "Nellie tried to make every Sunday a day of partial rest. On Saturday beans and salt pork simmered in a big kettle on a back corner of the wood stove. Sunday morning dark maple sugar was added to the contents and all transferred to a large tin pan, covered over and put in a hot oven for baking. Then the family drove to church.

"When the church-goers returned about 12:30, the beans were ready. There were no frivolous games on Sunday, no knitting or sewing. Later the family gathered near the piano which stood in the little back parlor. Someone played hymns, while everyone sang, or tried to. Thus the Lord's Day had been conscientiously observed."

And so we thank God for the lives of those whose strength and spirit, over the span of 200 years, have enriched our community and brought us to this occasion. We give thanks for our churches and for those who have sustained them. In the strands of the braided cord that stretch up to us from time long ago, we have much to celebrate and be thankful for.

HISTORICAL PLAQUES AVAILABLE FOR GEORGEVILLE HOUSES

Georgeville is full of houses that have a history which has been researched and brought out by the five *The Heart of the Village* books that have been published biennially since 1987. For a bicentennial project, Peter Smith has arranged with The Sign Center in Fitch Bay to produce handsome plaques that can be placed outside one's house. A number of Georgeville houses already have the plaques on their faces. The plaques bear the name of the original owner of the house and its date of construction. They are aluminum with black vinyl exterior grade covering with cream coloured lettering and cost \$42.25 plus tax. Everyone who has seen the plaques has found them quite handsome. Anyone wishing to purchase a plaque can get in touch with Peter Smith or with the Sign Center directly.

**The Enterprise welcomes your letters.
Please send them to**

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