

Georgeville Historical Society/ Société d'histoire de Georgeville

Newsletter – Summer 2007

All about Oliver Corner and the 'Point'

The Society's Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, July 8th at 2:30 pm at the Murray Memorial Centre.

This year's guest speaker is Robert Irvine who will relate the story of Drummond Point and the once self-reliant nearby hamlet of Oliver Corner.

Bob and his wife Karen are residents of Ottawa, with a summer residence on Lake Memphremagog at Drummond Point. Bob will be drawing on information provided by Karen, whose ancestors, the Smiths, were one of two families who first settled 'the Point' and Dr. Maurice Langois, the Magog historian and neighbour, who is descended from the second family, the Donigans.

In addition to the story as to how the Point received its name, Bob will also tell us of the history of Oliver Corner, the sizable community which existed at the junction of Gendron Road and the highway to Magog. Today, people drive past this locale with no idea that this former settlement once had its own cemetery, post office, school, library, saw mill, and connection to the same independent telephone company that served Georgeville. It even had its own social notes column in the *Stanstead Journal*.

Although Drummond Point and Oliver Corner are a few miles from Georgeville, they were closely linked to our village. So join us for this interesting presentation and learn the history behind these two well-known Memphremagog place names. Everyone is cordially invited to attend, members and non-members alike.

And while you're with us, please take the opportunity to renew your membership... or become a member if you haven't already!

News of the Bigelow Garden

In recent years, Society director Valerie Pasztor has produced a lively newsletter each spring devoted to the Bigelow Garden. Filled with interesting information on the various activities related to the garden and the problems associated with its upkeep, the newsletter has mainly been distributed to Valerie's dedicated team of eager volunteers who have helped to maintain this lovely garden plot.

However, Valerie has been persuaded to broaden her readership and the Society is pleased to include a copy of her spring newsletter with this mailing.

Annual General Meeting
Sunday, July 8, 2007
2:30 PM
Murray Memorial Centre

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Guest Speaker:
Robert Irvine

Vital Preservation and Renewal

Returning summer residents and visitors will hardly fail to be struck by several imaginative initiatives to preserve the historic character of Georgeville while bringing vital renewal to the heart of our village.

The Georgeville General Store reopens on the Canada Day weekend. Its purchase by Paul Desmarais, Jr. in January saved the aging structure from possible demolition, with the irreparable loss to the community this would have meant. Thanks to Mr. Desmarais, the old store, magnificently rebuilt and restored, has a new lease on life as one of Georgeville's most important heritage buildings.

Its builder was Wolfred Nelson Ives, born in 1838 on his father Julius' farm on the Chemin de l'Est and named for Louis Josef Papineau's anglophone lieutenant in the Lower Canada rebellion of that year.

Wolfred Nelson succeeded his father on the farm until 1897, when he bought the store of Georgeville's first storekeeper, Joshua Copp, on the site of the present store.

That store – the first Ives' store – was burned to the ground in Georgeville's Great Fire of July, 1898. Undeterred, Wolfred Nelson immediately rebuilt. As the *Stanstead Journal* reported three months later: The store will be ready for occupancy this week. The show windows will all be of plate glass, the first of the kind ever seen here, the counter will be glass-topped, and the store throughout will be neat and commodious." Ives also installed "an acetylene gas machine" to light the store and his family's apartment upstairs, and continued to operate the store until his death in 1918.

Succeeding owners included the Keet family, Ernest Bolduc, Heather Patterson, and more recently, Marie Albert and her daughter Lise Godbout. Now, under its new ownership, Georgeville is welcoming new

storekeepers – Robert and Linda Davidson and their family.

At the same time, along Carre Copp, the old Quinn and Bullock stores – dating from 1899 and 1906, respectively - have also been beautifully renovated by Alex Bernais for Derek Price, including a new apartment in the Quinn store formerly occupied by the Historical Society's exhibition gallery and archives. Until the Society finds new quarters, its archives and modest collection of artefacts are safely in storage.

For the Bullock store, above the windows fronting on Carre Copp, Derek Price commissioned a delightful set of stained-glassed windows, portraying 19th century scenes of the village. Don't miss them after nightfall, when they are lit from behind. Such generous initiatives give us much to be thankful for, and inspired by, in caring for this historic village.

A Walking Tour into the Past

In conjunction with the theme of the presentation at this year's AGM, Bob and Karen Irvine, along with Dr. Maurice Langois, will lead a tour of the former village site of Oliver Corner and Drummond Point.

The tour will be on the Wednesday following the AGM (July 11th) when the highlights of Bob's presentation are still fresh in our minds!

Everyone is invited to join us for the tour. Please bring a light lunch, appropriate footwear, and a sense of history for this trip back in time.

Participants are requested to meet at 10:00 am at the Murray Memorial Centre in Georgeville. We will car pool from there. In case of rain, the tour will be rescheduled for the following day.

Tombstones and Grave Markers

This summer the Society's cemetery tour will focus on the Magoon Point graveyard.

The tour is scheduled for Wednesday evening, the 8th of August.

Located down on the Point of the same name, this particular burying ground is no longer in use and is for the most part, overgrown and abandoned.

The cemetery fell out of use when the village also known as Magoon's Point became a ghost-town with the collapse of the lime industry over a century ago.

Join director John Boynton as he leads a tour of the cemetery and Society president Stephen Moore as he describes the history of the once vibrant community.

The tour will commence at 7:00 pm and participants are asked to meet in Georgeville at the Murray Memorial Centre.

In case of rain, the tour will be rescheduled for the following evening.

Artefacts, Prints and Water Plants

For those of you who are fresh out of reading material, have a blank wall space to fill and/or have a lack of adequate foliage and colour for your water gardens or ponds, do we have a bargain for you!

One dollar will get you an original copy of the *Stanstead Journal* from the early 1900s (circa 1908 to 1940). The Historical Society has hundreds of duplicate copies available for sale. Buy one or several. Requests for specific issues will be addressed. All proceeds go to support the Society's activities.

Ten dollars will get you an original print of a Katherine MacKenzie water colour.

There is a choice of three prints, each depicting a different wild flower. The prints are mounted and each is from a limited edition of approximately 125 copies. Buy one print, two, or a set of three.

Also available for \$10 apiece, are water lilies from a local source. These are hardy plants with palm-size blooms, white in colour with a pinkish hue.

Proceeds from the sale of water colour prints and water lilies go directly to the maintenance of the Bigelow Pioneer Garden, the Society's oldest on-going project.

To place an order or for more information, please contact Society president, Stephen Moore at 562-8036 or 876-7426.

Important Dates to Remember:

**Annual General Meeting – Sunday,
July 8th, at 2:30 pm**

**Drummond Point and Oliver Corner
excursion – Wednesday, July 11th
at 10:00 am**

**Magoon's Point Cemetery tour –
Wednesday, August 8th at 7:00 pm**