

# WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 44 ISSUE # 1 OCTOBER, 2008 ISBN320813

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again I am pleased to begin my 'message' to you by recognizing the outstanding contribution of a key player on our team ... Diane Nicholson.

Unhappily, the occasion is Diane's announced retirement as Museum Manager—after ten years of outstanding service to WHS Diane would like to spend more of our 'too brief' summers with her family.

She has been a 'mother hen'—and a very effective 'mentor', to dozens of students whose skills—and lives, were enriched by working with her. (In the last few years a number of students have written to the Board about their experi-

ence...and Diane's positive influence on them is apparent...)

Over the years, she has also developed an in-depth knowledge of our genealogical material, and especially enjoys assisting visitors to research their family histories—she even does this when the museum is 'officially' closed.

She works hard at the ongoing and often demanding task of managing our collections. (Diane acquired her Level 1 certificate in museum management early on...) In terms of developing policy, she has continued to press the Board for—quite rightly! a more effective policy on acqui-

sitions. (The Board intends to act on this very soon!)

Diane has also played an important role by initiating and staging many special events. She 'invented' our two most popular ones—the Haunted House Tour and the Victorian Christmas Dinner (There had been Christmas dinners before, but not 'Victorian'...) Not only was she on hand 'officially', she often 'volunteered' her time as well!

Diane—and Ted, played an important role overseeing and assisting in the restoration of the Pioneer Cemetery, a joint project of the Westmorland Institute, the United Church of Canada

*(continued on page 3)*

Annual General Meeting  
Sunday, October 19,  
5 p. m.

The Annual General Meeting and Dinner will be held at the Anglican Church Hall, 4 Church St, Dorchester, NB

Presentation

"Stagecoach Days on the Westmorland Road—A Sneak Preview" by Gene Goodrich

Special Buffet

Sweat & Sour Meatballs, Garlic Chicken Legs, Pasta Salad, etc. Choice of 3 deserts with ice-cream

(Sandpiper Catering)

Time: 5:00 p. m.

Cost \$18.00

RSVP by October 17 to

Alice at 379-6620

### KEILOR HOUSE MUSEUM—SPECIAL EVENTS

#### Haunted House Tours

Friday & Saturday, October 24, 25, 7:00-10:00 pm. Ghosts & Goblins of All Ages are welcome (But visiting the Dungeon alone is not advised!)

Cost: \$6.00

#### Victorian Christmas Dinners

Saturday, November 29 & Saturday, December 6. at

the Keillor House. Elegant candle-light Four Course Dinner. Special Entertainment, Victorian Christmas Decorations.

Time: 6:30—10:00 p.m.

Cost: \$55.00

Book your tickets early—last year we had long waiting lists!

For Reservations: contact Alice at 379-6620

#### Dorchester New Year's Levee

Thursday, January 1, 2009

Enjoy the special ambience of Keillor House and 'warm up' around the Crackling Hearth Fire...after the 'Polar Dip'

Homemade Soup, Rolls & more...

Time: 1:00—3:00 p.m.

Cost: Gratis

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## SHIPBUILDING IN WESTMORLAND COUNTY

New Brunswick 1784—1910

Compiled by Charles A. Armour with Additions by Allan D. Smith

ISBN 978-0-9784100-5-6 2008 Tantramar Heritage Trust

## Port Listings

Baie Verte	40
Botsford/Shemogue	21
Cape Tormantine	8
Dorchester	81
Dover	5
Memramcook	2
Moncton	102
Petitcodic	14
Port Elgin	23
Sackville	176
Salisbury	23
Shediac	27
Rockland	34
Rockport	5
Tidnish (NB)	6
Westmorland	13
Grand Total	580

This outstanding publication by Tantramar Heritage Trust (2008) is the authoritative guide for information on the 580 vessels built in Westmorland County during the period 1784 to 1910 and on the great shipbuilders of Westmorland County (Boultenhouse, Chapman, Hickman, Ogden, Palmer, Purdy and Salter). Its great merit is the 'friendly' organization of material—which allows the Reader to safely navigate the oceans of data, and the intriguing sketches of the seven leading builders. The forty-five illustrations include 25 stunning images of ship portraits—one of the special highlights of the book.

After a short survey of the period (1784-1910) and a description of the nature and limitation of registry—and other, information sources, the core material appears in two chapters—

The Pre-Eminent Shipbuilders of Westmorland County (Ch. 3)

Only seven builders (out of 220) in Westmorland were responsible for 30% of ship construction in the county—their biographies (2-3 pages) make fascinating reading..

Chronological Listing by Port of Vessel Registration Data (Ch.5)

Here you search for a vessel by the port (or area) of construction, then by name. If you are looking for a specific vessel, you can refer to the alpha listing in Appendix II to determine the port, then scan down the Chronological Listing for the specific vessel.

For a copy of *Shipbuilding in Westmorland County*, contact Tantramar Heritage Trust or the Gift Shop at Keillor House (\$28.00).

Cole Morison

## A Short Quiz on New Brunswick Shipbuilding

'Review Questions' from Chapter 34 of *Our New Brunswick Story*(1945) —a text used in New Brunswick schools for many years...

1. What were known all over the world as 'Bluenoses'?
2. What did the broad arrow mean when marked on a New Brunswick tree?
3. What is a tree-nail? How is it used?
4. Suppose you were the captain of a New Brunswick ship on those early days. Suppose you unloaded a cargo of fish at Liverpool. There is no re turn cargo there for you. Will you go to Norway for lumber? To Spain for fruit? Or to Italy for salt?
5. What was the best New Brunswick wood for shipbuilding?
6. What does 'resourcefulness' mean?

Answers on ...page 4.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

and the Westmorland Historical Society. This project won national recognition with Diane & Ted receiving a well-deserved recognition from the Association Museums New Brunswick (AMNB)..

...(And in retirement?...Diane has already 'volunteered' to ease her successor 'into harness' and to assist the Board in developing a comprehensive collections policy.)

For these contributions—and so much more, we wish you the Happiest of Retirements!

Gene Goodrich

## RELATED WORKS OF INTEREST

*Other works:* Charles Armour & Thomas Lackey's classic *Sailing Ships of the Maritimes, 1750-1925* (1975) the authoritative survey from the 18th to early 20th centuries—remains remarkable for its photography. Interesting earlier works include Esther Clark Wright's *Saint John Ships and Their Builders* (Wolfville), John Parker, *Sails of the Maritimes* (McGraw-Hill) & Stanley Spicer, *Masters of Sail* (Ryerson). Dale E. Alward's *Down Sackville Ways: Shipbuilding in a Nineteenth Century New Brunswick Outport*, (Tantramar Heritage Trust 2003) explores Sackville shipbuild-

ing in the context of Saint John's domination & the emergence of the 'British Connection'.

*Also of general interest:* Robert Cunningham, *Tidewrack-Neglected Facts and Intriguing Stories from the Age of the Wooden Ship* (Lancelot Press), Robert Cunningham & K.R. Mabee, *Tall Ships and Master Mariners* (Breakwater), Robert C. Parsons, *Shipwrecks of New Brunswick* (Pottersfield Press), and Roger Marsters, *Bold Privateers—Terror, Plunder and Profit on Canada's Atlantic Coast* (Formac).

AMNB 2008 Conference  
Annual General Meeting  
Bathurst, NB

October 23 to 25

Danny's Inn and Conference Centre, 1223 Rue Principale, Beresford-Bathurst E8K 1A1.

For information on registration, membership, financial assistance, accommodation & awards program go to...

[www.amnb.ca](http://www.amnb.ca)

Early Registration: Oct. 10

Conference Theme

'Turning Challenges into Opportunities'

## BROWSING IN THE WOOD LIBRARY

In the last issue of the *Newsletter* we learned about Josiah Wood's education at Mount Allison and his impressive range of intellectual interests long after graduation. In this one we take a closer peek into his library to see what he may have been reading during leisure moments away from the press of business. Browsing randomly along the shelves, we select two handsome volumes for speculation.

Since nearly forty percent of his collection comprised works in Greek and Roman history and literature, perhaps he reached for one of the several editions he owned of Virgil's famous *Aeneid*. Virgil was not on the curriculum at Mount Allison when Josiah was a student, but he would certainly have heard about him from his earliest introduction to Latin, and perhaps he now wanted to make his acquaintance first hand. Probably the most famous work of Roman literature, the *Aeneid* became the founding myth of the Roman Empire. It is also a rattling good yarn that has delighted generations of adventure lovers. In elegant, though difficult, Latin verse it tells how the Trojan hero, Aeneas, escaped the

destruction of Troy by the Greeks (as described in Homer's even more famous *Iliad*) and after years of tortuous wandering eventually founded Rome. Driven by a storm to Carthage, he is distracted from his mission by its beautiful Queen Dido until sternly recalled to his duty by Jupiter. Reluctantly, he abandons the impassioned queen, prompting her to commit suicide, and to curse him with her dying breath. All readers recognized this as an allusion to Rome's bitter wars with Carthage (Hannibal and all that), and the beginnings of her rise to empire. On finally reaching Italy, Aeneas consults a prophetess who conducts him through the Underworld and reveals his destiny: It is to found a new people, the Romans, who in turn will establish a universal empire based on peace, justice and the rule of law (later apologists for the British Empire loved these passages). However, like all great empires, it cannot be built without bloodshed and suffering. Aeneas is betrothed to a daughter of King Latinus (the 'Latin') even though she was earlier promised to King Turnus of the Rutulians. The inevitable happens, with Aeneas killing Turnus in single combat, and



## BROWSING THE WOOD LIBRARY(CONTINUED)

the poem ends leaving the reader to anticipate the numerous future wars, familiar to every Roman schoolboy long before Virgil's time, to subdue Rome's neighbours and establish the mighty republic on the Tiber.

As a good Methodist and staunch Protestant, Josiah Wood also gladly turned to religious literature. There are many volumes on theology and Christian ethics in his library, but they are often densely argued and difficult to read. No doubt he read them anyway, but perhaps after struggling with Virgil's Latin, he was ready for some lighter fare that was mildly entertaining (it would not want to be *too* entertaining) as well as edifying. He may then have taken out an anonymous work entitled *The French Convert: Being a true relation of The Happy Conversion of a Noble French Lady from the errors and Superstitions of Popery to the Reformed Religion, by means of a Protestant Gardener, her Servant.*

A good deal of uncertainty surrounds both the authorship and original date of publication of this work. Its publishers always claimed it was written by a French Protestant minister named D'Aubon and first printed in London in 1696, but modern scholars have suggested it was probably written by an Englishman, or even an American, in which case it may have first appeared in Boston. In any case, it was very popular in both England and America in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, reflecting the common anti-Catholicism of the Protestant elite as well as the melodramatic qualities of the book itself. It tells the tale of how Deidamia, a beautiful, intelligent and noble French Catholic lady whose only flaw was ignorance of the "true religion", was brought to spiritual perfection by her Huguenot (Protestant) gardener, Bernard, while her husband was away in the military. This happens in spite of the machinations of a malicious priest who, unlike the chaste and noble Bernard, "burns with lustful desires" for the fair Deidamia. Unable to catch the innocent couple in anything more compromising than prayerful and pious conversation, he informs her parents of her conversion to Protestantism and recommends she be put in a nunnery. They hire kidnappers to do just that, but the kidnappers decide instead to rape and murder her. She escapes when they fall to fighting over who will rape her first and the kidnappers meet their just deserts. The priest commits suicide, dying as convinced as is the reader that he will suffer the pangs of Hell for his sins. Like most editions, the volume in the Wood Library begins with a covering letter from the same supposed French Huguenot minister to an English friend describing the religious persecutions suffered by the Protestants in France and calling for the conversion of all Roman Catholics to Protestantism. The book would certainly not be deemed 'politically correct' today!

Gene Goodrich

### *Answers to Quiz...page 2*

1. All the ships of the Maritime Provinces were known as Bluenoses.
2. Reserved for the King's navy.
3. A 'wooden bolt' used to secure planks, frame & ceiling. The inside ends were split and wedged so as not to come out.
4. *You are on your own!*
5. Tamarack (also called hackmatack or larch)
6. *I suppose you could look it up!*



## DORCHESTER MEMORIES—CHARLIE MCEWEN

Some time ago Edith Gillcash, together with Judy and Cole Morison, decided to begin an oral history project by tapping interviews with some of the older people from the Dorchester area who still remember what life was like in this remarkable village in days gone by. Several of these interviews have been conducted and more are planned with a view to building up a useful archive for local history. But that is rather far in the future, and it occurred to me that one way of making more immediate use of them would be to offer some selected vignettes from time to time in the *Newsletter*. What follows is based on two interviews recorded in June 2006 and March 2007, together with an article by Sandra Devlin published in the *Times & Transcript* (December 22 and 23, 2000), with Dorchester native, Charlie McEwen, inventor, builder, businessman, prominent citizen of Moncton and life member of the Westmorland Historical Society. Charlie may be best known for building McEwen's airfield on the Irishtown Road, but a full description of his other accomplishments would fill a large volume. Here we will only mention a few, as the main purpose is to share a few of his boyhood memories of Dorchester that I hope you will find interesting and evocative. Besides McEwen's Airfield, another of Moncton's landmarks that resulted from Charlie's construction business is Jones Lake, built for developer Fred Jones in the late 1940s. As a member of the provincial water commission he was instrumental in the construction of the Riverview Causeway. He holds an international patent for an overhead tractor loader. He designed and built a drone missile launcher for the Canadian Armed Forces. He was for many years the head of a volunteer fire brigade. Enthralled with flight from an early age, he refurbished a damaged Gypsy Moth to win his wings in 1937 and over the next 30 or so years he owned and flew and bought and sold many a flying machine, living fully the romance and daring, as well as

the dangers, of aviation. Together with civil engineer Geoff Blackbeard, he developed a revolutionary building system called *Thermalwall* that may be the last word in energy efficiency, fire safety and ease of construction. In 1992 the American Purple Martin Conservation Association acclaimed this lifelong bird lover its first-ever "Purple Martin Landlord of the Year" for his ingenious design of a starling-proof martin house. At 93 years young he is still busy improving the solar heating system that he designed and installed in his Moncton home; indeed he is enough of an expert on alternative sources of energy to have been invited to teach a course on the subject at a college in Florida. And the list goes on, as long as it is varied. And all this had its start in Dorchester.

Born in 1915, Charlie grew up on a farm in Upper Dorchester. The farmhouse still stands, commanding a lovely view of the Memramcook Valley from its hillside position just above the Rockland Bridge, unfortunately no longer with us. And remarkably enough, the beautiful elm tree that Charlie can remember as little more than a sapling is still flourishing, having somehow escaped the ravages of Dutch Elm disease, perhaps because of the salubrious winds that blow up the valley. In his youth Charlie could still see remnants of the old Post Road which ran just in front of the farmhouse and heard old timers talk about the days when stagecoaches ran over it. This fired his romantic imagination, and for a number of years he has had it in mind to build a replica of a stagecoach for the Westmorland Historical Society. This in turn has inspired a research project, now well underway, on the stagecoach era in Dorchester, which was an important stopping point on the route between Saint John and Halifax. Look for excerpts and reports on its progress in future issues of the

## NEWS FROM THE ST. JAMES CHURCH TEXTILE MUSEUM

This was a 'construction' year at St. James (May to July) with implementation of Phase II of the St. James project. (See Feb. *Newsletter*).

We now have new—and secure, storage areas, dedicated task lighting for spinning and weaving and a repainted/redesigned entryway.

A dry stone wall creating a flower bed surrounds the base of the new sign put in last year.

An application for an Exhibit Renewal Grant (2008) for Phase III of the Project has been submitted to build display cases for needlework/lace and further develop the Beachkirk 'theme' with new labeling and small storyboards.

Thanks again to Betty Adams, Denyse Milliken and our students—for a great year in spite of our late opening..

Judy Morison

### Quilt Raffle

Double—Dresden Plate Pattern

In support of the Exhibit  
Renewal Grant  
for

St. James Church Textile  
Museum

Contact Alice: 379-6620

Draw on December 1, 2008



## DORCHESTER MEMORIES—CHARLIE McEWEN

### Newsletter.

Besides the stagecoach era, some of Charlie's early memories also touch on Dorchester's historic link with the sea. His Uncle Fred Palmer (1850-1945) was connected to the prominent ship-building family and served for a while as cabin boy aboard one of the Palmer ships before taking over a much-loved store, and he told some rattling good sea yarns. One particular hair-raiser involved the skeleton of a black boy found by a local farmer in a West Indian molasses barrel that he had sawed in half to make a watering trough. Charlie also remembers a certain Captain Cole, the master of a large sailing vessel plying the West Indies trade, "a very stout person with a big moustache, dressed with a vest and a very respectable set of clothes." The five year old was particularly fascinated with Captain Cole's golden pocket watch and chain that reached across his vest, and the memory later inspired him to begin his own collection. He was also impressed by the Captain's habit of coming out of Uncle Fred's store, walking over to the end of the platform to get clear of his cud of tobacco, walking back to pull his watch out under the light of the store and saying "well it's nine o'clock; I've got to be going."

A born mechanic, Charlie began his building and tinkering career at an early age. He was not yet a teenager when he built his first martin house from a butter box that he had acquired from his Uncle Fred Palmer's store. And then there was his

first airplane. In 1929 he went with his mother and brother to an air show at Leger's Corner (now called Dieppe). Badly bitten by the flying bug, he decided to build his own airplane out of cheese boxes and flour bags, again procured from Uncle Fred's store. Unable to get suitable lumber for the wings, he would ride the fuselage down the steep hill behind the house until he could save up \$12 to buy a used motorcycle engine to power the contraption. "It didn't have enough power, thank goodness, or otherwise I might have been killed", he reminisces. A more successful tinkering adventure was a propeller-driven snowmobile he built at age sixteen, inspired by an illustration in *The Boy Mechanic*, a once popular "how-to-do" book for boys, which Charlie received as a Christmas present. The first version, built in 1931, seven years before the first Bombardiers appeared, was not powerful enough to get up hills, but in 1967 he outfitted it with a larger engine, making it capable of 70 mph. It still works fine today.

Windmills to generate electric power were another of Charlie's early interests, and a practical one too, as the farms in those days were still without electricity. One day he found plans for making a wind powered generator in the *Family Herald*. After whittling the propeller out of a board that he had surreptitiously removed from the old carriage house, he borrowed the generator from a neighbor's Model T Ford that was up on blocks for the winter and was able to produce current as long as the wind was 20 miles an hour or more. A slight embarrassment occurred when one of the neighbors, Dave Crossman, asked him to charge up a battery one windy March morning. On that occasion Charlie's apparatus worked rather too well in the high wind and boiled the battery over. However, his experience with windmills stood him in good stead a few years later when he got his first job at Lounsbury's in Moncton repairing radios. By that time Lounsbury's was selling an American-made wind charger in kit form and Charlie

was tapped to install them for the customers. This occasionally led to some amusing incidents. One happy farmer was using his charger to run the radio so he could listen to the hockey games when his wife asked if she couldn't also have a light from it. Charlie rigged her up a light over the kitchen table and there she worked happily away through the evening until it was discovered that by the time the hockey game came on the battery was getting too weak to run the radio. "And there was a tussle in the household over that", Charlie remembers. Another time he sold a wind charger to Ned Buck in Dorchester Cape and went down by bobsled in the dead of winter to put it up. Ned's house wasn't tall enough to catch a lot of wind and so Charlie crafted an extension that was rather dangerous to install, especially in the bitter cold. Concerned for Charlie's safety but perhaps even more for his own comfort, Ned said to his wife "Now Rita, you stay there and watch him and if he falls let me know right away". Charlie can still see Rita down there with Ned's big fur coat on, sitting in a chair watching him up on that pole. "Well, I'll admit that 20 feet above the tower, me hanging on trying to put the thing together, was a little bit... but you know young people..."

In this age of technological wonders it can be difficult to imagine a time when electricity seemed little short of miraculous to ordinary people, but Charlie remembers an old man who during his last years was staying in a



## KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM—MANAGER'S REPORT

"Not as bad as it could have been, but not great either" describes the summer of 2008 at our museums.

Once again, a combination of unfavorable factors made this a forgettable season. High gas prices, bad weather, and the strong Canadian dollar all came into play, resulting in an eight percent decrease in visitation at Keillor House, and a fifty-two percent decrease at St. James Textile Museum. To be fair, St. James was closed until the middle of July which would account for some of the decrease. And our Quebec visitors were up twenty-five percent overall!

Perhaps that bodes well for next year.

Our staff was excellent and gave exceptional tours, kept the museum in tip-top shape, made some very useful suggestions, and were entertaining as well. Rebecca, Josh, Nick, Stephanie, and Julie fulfilled their duties as tour guides satisfactorily, and Jamie accessioned over 250 artifacts as well as encapsulating and storing them. The exit surveys showed that visitors were well-impressed with our staff, museum, and exhibits. All marks were in the four-and-five out of five category. This is the third year for the survey and we have done extremely well each

year. You might even notice a slight rearranging of furniture on your next visit. Josh and Jamie took it upon themselves to try their hands at interior design and their ideas worked surprisingly well.

We had no big tour groups call on us this year and only one fund-raising event so far, that being the pancake breakfast during the Sandpiper Festival. We did host several small groups such as the Riverview seniors, the Dorchester Access Center, and two groups doing orientation tours for their tourist bureaus. Canada Day was very well-attended and enjoyed by all. Overall, a rather quiet summer.

Since this will be my last managerial report, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Westmorland Historical Society and the Board of Directors for their support over the last ten years. I have enjoyed myself immensely and learned much in the process, initiated some new events, changed a few things, and depart with many good memories. I intend to remain involved with various areas of particular interest to me.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Nicholson

## DORCHESTER MEMORIES—CHARLIE McEWEN

house where the power had just been put in. He was simply amazed at being able to flip the switch in the hallway and find the light on by the time he could get to the room.

Life on the farm was hard. Charlie's father died when Charlie was 11 and his older brother, Bill, only 15. In spite of his youth, Bill took on the task of running the farm and in doing so drove Charlie as hard as he drove himself. "I had to do a man's work, which I couldn't do... and I remember working in the hayfields and the muscles under my shoulder blades... were burning so bad it would almost make you cry. But when Bill died and I did the eulogy, I said I owed that man a great debt for holding the family together and keeping us fed. He was under a lot of strain..."

School was also an ordeal at times, especially after he left grade school at Middleton to attend high school in Dorchester. It was a 3 1/2 mile walk, which, together with the farm chores, often left him with little time or energy for homework. He especially remembers the humiliating experience of being forced to repeat a grade on the grounds that the country schools were not up to standard. To add insult to injury, on the first day of class in the new school, a stern and unsympathetic teacher ordered him to go up to the blackboard in front of thirty-five smirking strangers and multiply a long string of numbers. Charlie was so mortified by that experience that instead of going home he spent the evening telling his troubles to his pet rooster. But there were good experiences as well. The hard-nosed schoolmarm gradually softened as Charlie's natural abilities soon put him at the top of the class. Eventually they brought him to the notice of a kindly paragon of the teacher's art who encouraged him in a way that probably changed his life. His name was Ralph March and Charlie remembers that he came from Sackville and had a wonderful singing voice. But his real specialty was mechanical and electrical engineering. Seeing Charlie's potential and determination in spite of the difficulties under which he laboured, especially in winter when, already tired from the farm chores, he had to do his homework in the poor light of the old oil lamps, Ralph Marsh made a generous offer. One day, after Charlie had written a particularly brilliant series of papers, he said to him "I know your dad is gone and your mother is



## DORCHESTER MEMORIES—CHARLIE McEWEN

not in a position to give you a formal education, but it's a shame with your brain that you can't have it. But I will take the time and whenever you feel you can come down, let me know and I will tutor you." Mr. March was as good as his word and Charlie did his part by saving up nine dollars to buy an old motorcycle which made it possible to take advantage of the offer. When his snowmobile didn't work quite as well as planned, he also carved himself a pair of skis to make the trip faster in winter. And he never forgot his beloved mentor's words: "if you know the laws of physics and abide by them, you will do well." They became one of the guiding principles of his life.

Interesting insights into Dorchester social life in the 1920s and 30s are also part of Charlie's store of memories. On Saturday night everyone from the surrounding countryside came to town to buy groceries, go to a dance and/or commune with the "spirits", of whose existence there was "proof" enough for all. There was a pool room just outside of Uncle Fred's store which every right thinking mother considered a den of iniquity. Charlie can still see the lights and haze of tobacco smoke over the pool tables, though only from a peek through the door as he was forbidden by his mother to enter the premises. Fistfights were frequent, hardly surprising given the amount of drinking that went on, but they were generally conducted with manly honour and a sense of fair play and were essentially harmless in comparison to the cowardly and vicious gang beatings that seem to be in fashion today. Besides dancing, milder entertainments included the weekly movie in Palmer's or Hickman's Hall, put on by people who travelled from place to place showing them. Charlie remembers a certain Mr. Nelson and his two sons. They would sometimes come to his house for supper and one of the boys would slip him a quarter and invite him to come down for the show, as they knew the family had very little money.

Charlie also has a vivid memory of the fire that wiped out a number of stores and other historic buildings between the Bell Inn and "The Maples" (Landry House) in 1926. Apparently it started in a fish store owned by one of the Chapmans and the only thing that saved the Bell Inn was a chemical fire truck sent down by the penitentiary, a sad reminder of how fragile our architectural heritage really is.

For most of us the memories that make up our being are as often sad as they are sweet, and Charlie's are no exception. A particularly poignant one is the loss of his friend, Joe Anderson, during the war. A superb pilot and mechanic who worked for Canadian Airways, Joe helped Charlie rebuild his Gypsy Moth, and was a wonderful friend in other ways as well. He was taken from his job and put on Ferry Command flying bombers across the Atlantic. The captain of the returning night flight apparently made a navigational error and collided with a rocky promontory on an island just off the British coast. There was nothing left; the only thing they found of Joe was his wristwatch.

"That was an awful blow to me," Charlie reminisced sadly. "He was everything a person could be to me. He comforted me through a good many bad times."

But there were good times, too. Charlie remembers the Saturday night square dances in the living rooms of his British immigrant neighbours, the Gubbs and Fowlers. And the times he landed his Gypsy Moth on the Dorchester Marsh, down by the station, when all the kids would come out of school to marvel at the daring young man in his flying machine; simple pleasures of a simpler time, and no less worthy for that. A Dorchester boyhood in tough times was not the worst of worlds, particularly not for those with talent and ambition. "My boyhood dreams all came true," says Charlie. "I was a very persistent person, I would work at something until it beat me or I'd get it done." Not a bad formula for success in any age.

*Eugene Goodrich*



## LIBRARY AND GENEALOGY CENTRE

*Publications*

The charming volume *Painted Poems* (2008) by Margaret Eaton (WHS) and Angelica DeBenedetti had a very successful launch at the Owens Art Gallery at Mt Allison in June.

A signed presentation copy was given to the Society at this year's opening ceremony at Keillor House—the Society had provided some financial support for the project.

Thank you & Congratulations...Margaret & Angelica

(If you wish to purchase *Painted Poems* it is available at the Keillor House Gift Shop)

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Margaret has also found time to finish the first major editing of Bob Cunningham's manuscript "At the Head of Fundy" with final editing expected during the winter.

Gene Goodrich's descriptive catalogue of the Wood Library received final editing and is in the process of being printed under the very suitable title *The Intellectual World of Josiah Wood: The Wood Library in Keillor House, Dorchester*.

*Research Projects*

Gene's major research project, now entitled "Stagecoach Days on the Westmorland Great Road" is proceeding apace. With the discovery of new material its scope has expanded beyond the original intention and will result in a substantial volume. The first draft is nearing completion and will probably be ready for publication in the spring.

Gene's Presentation at the AGM on October 19th will give us a 'sneak preview' of what he has discovered...

*'Living Conversations'*

In the spring we interviewed *Garfield Spence* who shared many a colourful tale and many poignant memories of life in Dorchester over the past forty plus years...

This record—along with the interviews with Charlie McEwen in this *Newsletter*, form an important archive for the community & museum. (As most of you know Garfield died not long after these interviews ...and we are providing the family with a copy of the recording.)

If you have someone you think should be interviewed contact Edith, Gene or Judy...

Gene/Cole

## HISTORIC PROPERTIES REPORT— 2008

For several years the objective of the Board has been to undertake proper maintenance and capital repairs on the Historic Properties. This year the Bell Inn and the Sir Pierre Landry House have undergone extensive maintenance or renovation.

**Bell Inn** This summer the stonework and brickwork was 'pointed' and repaired and the 'concrete' wall (Cape Road) replaced by a stone dry wall. The 'facing' wall has been resurfaced & painted, the patio resurfaced and a proper drainage system installed on the Cape Road side.

On the top floor four dormers were repaired and painted and a new wooden eve trough with wooden downspouts was installed. The trim & siding on Cape Road were repaired, scraped & repainted. (The white paint on the wall facing the square will be sandblasted to reveal the original stone.)

*Thanks to Ron LeBlanc—our professional mason, for his great work, and to Gene Goodrich who spent many weeks scraping, painting & repairing the building! (Without his drive & determination the project would not have been completed this summer.)*

**Sir Pierre Landry House.** A grant from Built Heritage and Corrections Canada, allowed us to proceed with extensive capital repairs and painting. (The extent of the work will be fully described in the next *Newsletter*.) But it is important for WHS Members to know that this major reconstruction would have been impossible (financially) without the co-operation of our partners at Corrections Canada and Heritage Branch...

*Thanks to Supervisor Francis Leger and his crew from the Westmorland Institution—Wayne, Kho & Isaac, for doing such a great job...and thanks to Alice for acting as WHS Project Manager*

The Eds.





Donations, Memberships and Newsletter  
Submissions to:  
4974 Main Street, Dorchester, NB  
E4L 2Z1

Keillor House Museum  
Manager: Diane Nicholson  
Tel.: (506) 379-6633  
Fax: (506) 379-3418  
E-mail: keillorhouse@nb.aibn.com  
www.keillorhousemuseum.com

### Museum Hours

After September 15th, 2007

Open by appointment

Tel. (506) 379-6633

## PRESERVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

The Westmorland Historical Society is a non-profit charitable organization founded in 1965 with the mandate to collect, preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of Westmorland County, NB. For four decades the WHS has worked with local partners to apply this mandate in a unique *entrepreneurial way* by encouraging *self-financing historic sites* attracting visitors from across North America. The historic Sir Pierre Landry House, the Bell Inn, and the Payzant & Card Building, contain apartments or businesses that help off-set the costs of preserving these historic buildings.

The Society's stellar museums—the Keillor House Museum (1813) housing the Graydon Milton Library and Genealogical Centre— and the St. James Textile Museum, contain remarkable collections attracting genealogists, researchers and visitors from across North America.

### How to become a WHS Member?

Contact Judy Morison, our Secretary at 4974 Main Street, Dorchester, NB, E4L 2Z1. Tel: (506) 379-2747.

### Annual Fees (2007)

(Includes Newsletter)

Individual: \$7.00

Couples: \$10.00

Sustaining: \$25.00

Life: \$100.00

### Board of Directors

<i>President</i>	Eugene Goodrich
<i>Past President</i>	Alice Folkins
<i>Vice-President</i>	Greg Partridge
<i>Secretary</i>	Judy Morison
<i>Treasurer</i>	Vacant
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Joanne Corey	Susan Spence
Pat Estabrooks	Karen Trueman
Cheryl Feindel	Nancy Vogan

## SALUTING OUR OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS AND DONORS

Volunteers and donors are the very backbone of an organization such as the WHS

*For acting as guides this fall:* Mr. & Mrs. Eddie Bowes, Helen & Jean Cole, Dienna Crossman, Claudette Shea, Joyce Ferguson, and Annie Henrikson

*For volunteering for the whole summer at the St. James Church Museum:* Betty Adams & Denyse Milliken

*For spending many days scraping, painting and repairing siding at The Bell Inn:* Gene Goodrich

*For making so many of our special events so successful:* Amy Cormier; Betty Adams, Wendell Anderson, Joanne Corey, Maryann Crossman, Ginette Glew, Lori Crosssthaite, Cheryl Feindel, Alice & Ritchie Folkins, Wendy & Warren Folkins, Edith Gillcash, Joanne & Gene Goodrich, Greg Partridge, Diane & Ted Nicholson, Susan Spence, Janet & Steven Ward, Karen Mills, Helen & Jean Cole, Cody Wheaton

*For looking after the lawns, repairing driveways and furnaces and making numerous*

*plumbing repairs:* Ritchie Folkins

*For acting as project manager for the St. James Church Project May-July:* Judy Morison

*For acting as project manager and chief 'cookie-maker' all summer for the Landry House construction team:* Alice Folkins.

*For developing a 'Traveling Trunk' for schools:* Cheryl Feindel

*For designing, planting & maintaining the gardens at Keillor House (including the lower rose garden):* Bernie Melanson

### Diane Nicholson Retires

The Board of Directors hosted a

Retirement Tea for Diane on September 26

Friends, Staff and Board Members attended with Gifts for Diane..

### Thanking Our Donors...

*For her very generous donation of textiles, lace & other items:* Marion Wells

*For their generous donation of a hand-loomed blanket:* Angele & Mutean-Pierre LeBlanc