

WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 45 ISSUE # 1

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again I am pleased to be able to begin my message to you with 'great news' for the Society.

Nora Lynn Williams—an outstanding and highly qualified applicant for the Museum Manager position, has agreed to become our new Executive Director. Nora's unique qualifications allow us to expand the traditional duties of Museum Manager to include additional responsibilities related to grant applications and fundraising, promoting our Endowment Fund, marketing for greater museum visitation and helping the Board implement the Society's strategic plan.

It is the Board's unanimous view that at this stage in our 'evolution' it is in the Soci-

ety's long-term interest to have someone with Nora's experience and qualifications to *assist* and *advise* the Board on the many difficult challenges—especially financial, facing us in this new environment.

Your New Executive Director

...is fully bilingual and has worked with and served on numerous Boards. She has extensive events planning experience (e.g. Walter Gretzky CNIB Golf Classic, Communities in Bloom, Ville Sommet de la Francophonie, etc.) and has built a strong network of multi-level government & community contacts. For over 20 years, in one capacity or another—(e.g. Regional Tourism Officer), she has

worked within or with the heritage community. She has also served on a number of civic committees (NB Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Chamber of Commerce, Moncton SPCA, Conseil Economique, etc.). Most recently, Nora has been responsible for CNIB Special Events & Planned Giving for the Province and has served as the Provincial Coordinator (Health Partners) responsible for partnership with the United Way agencies to conduct the Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign.

Although 'officially' joining us May 19th, Nora had already represented us at

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Annual General Meeting

Saturday, June 20,
5 p. m.

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

Presentation

"Albert County Museum Complex: A Project of Change" by Donald Alward, Manager & Curator, Albert County Museum

Special Buffet

(Sandpiper Catering)

Time: 5:00 p. m.

Cost \$18.00

RSVP by June 18

to

Alice at 379-6620

KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM —SPECIAL EVENTS

Official Opening Ceremony

Saturday, June 13th at Keillor House, 3:00 p.m. after the Parade. Book signing: Eugene Goodrich, *The Intellectual Life of Josiah Wood*.

'Canada Day Hook In'

Wednesday, July 1st 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at St Edwards Hall, 4955 Main St. Dorchester. All Rug Hook-

ers & Visitors welcome! For information, contact Judy at 379-6682

Canada Day Celebration

Wednesday, July 1st 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Keillor House. Entertainment: Ivan & Vivian Hicks. Complimentary Refreshments & Children's Games.

Sandpiper Festival Breakfast

Saturday, July 25th 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Pancakes, Sausages, Baked Beans, Muffins, Tea & Coffee. \$6.00.

'Sheep to Yarn'- Demonstrations

Saturday, July 25th 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Carding, Spinning, Dying & Weaving Demonstrations. Crafts & textiles for sale. Keillor House & St. James Textile Museum.

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THE INTELLECTUAL WORLD OF JOSIAH WOOD

The Wood Library in Keillor House, Dorchester

By W. Eugene Goodrich

ISBN 978-0-9693850-1-1 Westmorland Historical Society 2009

This outstanding annotated Catalogue was originally intended by the author –W. Eugene Goodrich, Professor Emeritus, Mt. Allison University, as simply a useful tool to assist researchers to explore the 250 volume Library of the Josiah Wood (1843-1927) donated in 1977 to the Keillor House Museum by Dr. William Crawford, President of Mt. Allison University. Happily, it is much more, for Professor Goodrich's introduction (*Sec. I*) and Wood family profile (*Sec. II*)— along with his illuminating commentary (*Sec. IV*), give the general reader a vivid sense of the scholarship and high intellectual culture of the late 1800s.

Three sections are of special interest*:-

Introduction (Sec.I) & The Wood Family (Sec.II)

Here Professor Goodrich analyses the composition of the collection(4-5) and then argues the case that the Library *does* reflect the Man (5-10). By retelling the Wood family history and revisiting the scholarship then expected of an undergraduate—'by today's standards truly formidable' (*See Mt Allison Academic Calendar, 1860, in Appendix*) he presses us in a friendly way, to acknowledge that Josiah Wood's library *does* 'reflect the values and culture of the man who assembled it'(6) The quality and scope of the collection(40% Greek & Roman...many in Greek & Latin, 20% Protestant theology, 18% modern literature, etc.) is dazzling to modern eyes, and it invites today's reader to contrast *this* library with his or her own ...a sobering exercise, indeed!

Descriptive Catalogue of the Wood Library (Sec. IV)

This is the heart of the Catalogue.

Each of the 250 volumes has a descriptor (à la McKerrow), anglicized Title and Author (*For Greek & Latin, trans. by Professor Goodrich*), and an illuminating commentary. Professor Goodrich's declared purpose in the commentaries is to 'explain in brief...to the general reader who these authors were, what their works are about and how they reflect the intellectual culture of Josiah Wood'.(3) He succeeds brilliantly—and often in a very amusing way (*See Box below*). Most readers will find themselves addicted to exploring the pages *at random*—just for the pleasure of another unexpected insight!

Cole Morison

(*The Intellectual World of Josiah Wood* is available at the Keillor House Gift shop).

* *The fourth (Sec.III)—The Location of Books on the Shelves*, is directed to museum staff.

Shelf 6, section 2, left [19]

Anonymous (2), *Histoire amoureuse des dames de France par M.* (Brussels, 1713)

Description: In spite of its pretensions to anonymity, this is actually the alternative title of a well-known work of 17th century French literature, the *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules* by **Roger de Rabutin, Count of Bussy**. Bussy-Rabutin (1618-93), to give him his more common name, was a French noble of some military distinction whose rakish adventures (including a failed attempt to abduct a rich widow) put him out of favour at the court of Louis XIV. Ordered to retire to his estates after taking part in an orgy during Holy Week of 1659, he compounded his sin by writing his rather infamous *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules* for the amusement of his mistress. A series of racy sketches detailing the intrigues and amorous adventures of the chief court ladies, it also amused the court, but, unfortunately for Count Roger, not the king when one of the ladies, without the author's permission, added some tales of her own devising which impugned the honour of the royal mistress. This earned Count Roger a year in the Bastille, followed by a seventeen-year exile to his estates. He was allowed to return to court in 1682 but his reception was so cold that he soon retired back to the countryside where he died bitter and shunned by polite society, probably unaware that the work which brought him disgrace during his lifetime would also bring him such literary fame as he was destined to enjoy after his death. It is still read by serious students of 17th century French literature, although what it was doing on the bookshelves of a pious Methodist is another matter. No doubt it was kept well out of sight of the ladies.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

the launch of the Greater South-East Tourism Strategy Initiative.

I know I speak for every member of the Society in heartily welcoming our new Executive Director....

I want to thank the Hiring Committee—(Vanessa Bass, Susan Spence, Judy & Cole Morison, and Alice Folkins) for its hard work and for its success in finding such a highly qualified candidate.

Gene Goodrich

THE SEARCH FOR HEINRICH STIEF: A GENEALOGIST ON THE LOOSE BY LES BOWSER

'The twenty-eight year period between the deportation of the Acadians in 1755 and the coming of the United Empire Loyalists in 1783 saw a great migration of people to the Maritimes from Europe and the American colonies—a movement that would leave a lasting imprint on the history and character of the country. Although the events of that period spanned only one generation, the consequences were profound, setting the stage for the social order of the Maritime provinces today.

The author's ancestors were a part of that migration,

and his background as a genealogist compelled him to examine the conditions under which they lived. But, as he came to discover, looking across the mists of time can be more like gazing into a cloudy crystal ball. A history that had previously seemed matter-of-fact soon became complicated by passion and intrigue.'

To order a copy write to Les at 625 Shamrock Rd., RR # 4, Omeme, Ontario, K0L 2W0.

AMNB 2009 Conference
Annual General Meeting
Fredericton, NB
October 22 to 24
At Fredericton Inn, 1315
Regent St, Fredericton, NB
E3C 1A1

www.frederictoninn.nb.ca

Reservations:

(506) 455-1430

Conference Registration:

Forms available July 15

www.amnb.ca

Contact: Fred White at

(506) 457-0990

MORE BROWSING IN THE WOOD LIBRARY

Readers following the story of the Wood Library at Keillor House in the last few issues of the *Newsletter* will remember that, even as a busy man of affairs, its original owner, Josiah Wood, continued long after his graduation from Mount Allison to read widely in topics appropriate to a Methodist gentleman scholar.

In the last issue, we imagined him enjoying the poetic riches of Virgil's *Aeneid* in the original Latin and then reflecting soberly on the edifying—but tragic, tale of the fair Deidamia and the wicked priest. Perhaps he considered that the besotted and bigoted *padre* would have done well to read attentively in a large work of practical theology that held an honoured place on the Wood shelves.

This was *A Christian Directory or a Body of Practical Divinity and Cases of Conscience* by Richard Baxter (1615-1691), a leading English theologian, scholar, preacher and moralist during the time of John Milton. A multi-volume work of nearly a thousand pages (just one of the 168 books Baxter wrote), the *Christian Directory* was not meant to be

finished in one sitting. It is, rather, a comprehensive guide to righteous Christian living, examining in great detail such topics as the duties ordained by God towards family, friends, Church and State, together with much practical advice on how to avoid the snares of sin.

It is still in print today—and still popular as a guide to Christian living, but only in circles much narrower than they were in Josiah Wood's time. One modern enthusiast has even called it "the greatest manual on biblical counseling ever produced." Josiah might have wished to direct the priest's attention to passages such as the following:

Know which are evil thoughts, and retain such an odious character of them continually in your minds, as may provoke you still to meet them with abhorrence. Evil thoughts are such as these: ... all thoughts of pride, self exalting ambition, self-seeking covetousness: voluptuous, sensual

MORE BROWSING IN THE WOOD LIBRARY (CONTINUED)

thoughts, proceeding from or tending to the corrupt, inordinate pleasures of the flesh: thoughts which are unjust, and tend to the hurt and wrong of others: envious, malicious, reproachful, injurious, contemptuous, wrathful, revengeful thoughts: lustful, wanton, filthy thoughts: drunken, gluttonous, fleshly thoughts: inordinate, careful, fearful, anxious, vexatious, discomposing thoughts: presumptuous, and secure, despairing, and dejecting thoughts: slothful, delaying, negligent and discouraging thoughts: uncharitable, cruel, false, censorious, unmerciful thoughts: and idle unprofitable thoughts. Hate all these as the devil's spawn.

After a few more pages of such instruction, the point would surely have been well driven home!

Josiah's attention might then have passed to another—equally formidable, volume in his handsome mahogany bookcases that brought back fond memories of his student days at the Mount Allison Wesleyan Academy...

A Greek Gradus or a Greek, Latin and English Prosodial Lexicon: containing the Interpretation, in Latin and English, of all words which occur in the Greek poets, from the earliest period to the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, with the quantities of the syllables verified by authorities etc., by the Reverend John Basse.

Perhaps, he was reminded of the course he took on Homer's *Illiad* "with special attention to Prosody" (the art of versification), which was obligatory in the Freshman Year (1861). Upon opening the *Gradus*, his eyes may have fallen upon this passage that had once enlightened his understanding of the mysteries of Homeric versification: "An Ionic verse *a minore* admits an iambic syzygy promiscuously; and begins sometimes with the *third* paeon; sometimes with a molussus, which is admitted in the odd places. Resolutions of the long syllable are also allowed."

Did he then reflect—with the modest satisfaction becoming a good Methodist, that he was still able to read the Greek poets in the original language and actually

understand what the Reverend Basse was talking about? ...

Gene Goodrich

Crossing From Dorchester to Albert County...1880

(Chignecto Post, July 22, 1880)

'The Impressions of a Stranger'

If you go to Albert County by the way of Dorchester, you should be acquainted with the time of the tide, so as to be on hand at high water. You can go at low water but it is not so convenient either to the ferry man or yourself, unless you start from Dorchester island where the shores are not so decidedly muddy as below, and that you have to land at a less convenient place on the other shore in order to keep tolerably clean.

I went by way of the Cape, and reached there at high water, but owing to unforeseen events, the tide had ebbed some distance before our boat was ready to leave. The craft was high and dry, the flats between it and the water glistened in the early morning sun, and as the river would not go to the boat, it was evident that the boat must go the river. Bare feet and legs were the correct thing for the occasion, and in this uniform, ferryman Cole and his passengers propelled the craft over the flats until the current was reached and the boat launched into the waters of the "red sea" of the Petitcodiac. The distance between the ordinary landing places is called three miles, but a stiff north-west breeze and a strong ebb tide combined to give us the worth of our money by carrying us a mile or so further down river, where we landed on the edge of a wide and suspicious looking expanse of mud flats.

The walking was very muddy. The roads of Sackville and Moncton are muddy enough sometimes, but they are an Appian Way in comparison with these flats. The green fields looked temptingly down, but a bee line to them was out of the question at this place, for between them and the water the mud was a delusion and a snare, in which it was possible for the pedestrian to sink to a depth seriously detrimental to his dignity and comfort. The more devious course did not take one deeper than the knees.

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DORCHESTER MEMORIES—A CHAT WITH ART MCCREADY

In 2007 the Library Committee—with urging from Edith Gillcash and Judy Morison, decided to create a digital archive of 'conversations' with extraordinary people. To date, Charlie McEwan (See *Newsletter*, Oct. 2008), Garfield Spence and now Art McCready have been interviewed and digitally recorded.

In January 2009 Gene Goodrich and Edward Bowes interviewed Art McCready—who is 99 years old! ('If I live until October, I'll be one hundred years old!').

In the sketch that follows, Edward has selected a few facts & reminiscences that gives us a taste of the interview.

Early Life

Art was born October 24, 1901 in New York city.

His father, a Canadian and a graduate of Dalhousie Law School (though he never practiced law), operated a successful manufacturing business in New York. Art and his sister attended private schools in the city and each kept a horse at the riding stable..

Art remembers that his father's business slowed after the end of the War in 1918 and Art and his sister were given a choice—keep their horses or their schools! His sister chose her horse while Art elected to stay in school since he was already drawn to mechanics and mechanical engineering.

In 1925, at the age of 16, Art moved to New Brunswick—to Johnson's Mills, to take charge of the 105-acre farm his father had purchased from John McFadden. (The original homestead—occupied today by Art's daughter and her husband, stands next to Art's bungalow.) Since Art spent his summers on a farm in New Jersey, he readily

adapted to farm life in New Brunswick. His father had promised to give him the farm, if he made a go of it—and he did eventually marrying and raising five children!

In 1931, Art became the Johnson Mill's postmaster with the post office in his house. (The first postmaster was his neighbour, Gideon McFadden.)

After World War II, he served as a Trustee of the Dorchester District School Board—which ran from Upper Dorchester to Pink Rock and included Taylor Village and Rockland on the other side of the Memramcook River.

Inventor and Innovator

Art was always attracted to mechanics and to mechanical innovation. (He had the first tractor in the area—a 'Fordson' built in Ireland.)

Long before the Power Commission ran any wires to Johnson's Mills, he had an 'electric light' in his kitchen. He built a windmill and improvised a power generator, using a six-volt car generator. (And he built his own batteries using parts from discarded batteries.)

He had his own telephone system. Before New Brunswick Telephone, he used war surplus field phones, running lines to his neighbour's house and to his cottage on the beach across from the farm.

Reminiscences —People & Events

Art has many stories to tell about people and events in Dorchester & Rockport over the years.

Raymond Tower, McCready's hired man, was paranoid about bears. One night, mistaking him for a bear, Ray shot and

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NEWS FROM THE ST. JAMES TEXTILE MUSEUM

This was again a 'construction' year at St. James with approval of an Exhibit Renewal Grant (Heritage Branch) and implementation of Phase III of the St. James Project. (See February 2007, October 2008 *Newsletters*).

New Display Cases

We now have two new display cases (wooden bases with storage, plexi-glass tops) to 'showcase' the extraordinary needlework & lace in the col-

lections.

Another display case in the foyer celebrates *St. James Church* and contains the Bible, church candlesticks and the beautiful communion service. A descriptive panel will provide a description of the church's history.

Information Panels

Research for new information panels in St. James will continue over the summer. In

August, Dr. Judith Rygiel, an expert on antique textiles and the textile industry in this area, will visit and offer advice. Inga Hanson (Fine Arts, Mount Allison)—on staff this summer, will also assist by doing research for the Project.

Repairs to Church Window

The magnificent stained-glass window

(continued on page 10)

DORCHESTER MEMORIES (CONTINUED)

killed Irv King at the Tower place on the Hard Ledge Road. During the trial at the County Courthouse in Dorchester, Ray slipped away and tried to hitch a ride home with Art and his wife. Shortly after he was arrested by Deputy Sheriff Hartman Allen and returned to the Court House. And the sentence? He was sent to the Insane Asylum in Saint John and eventually died there.

Reminiscences—Places

The 'Bottle Grounds' was a clearing on the landward side of the road, a quarter mile down from the Chapman cottage. And the origin of the name? Apparently, "The young blades from Dorchester with their 'fast horses' brought their girlfriends to the clearing.. What they left behind is why it was called 'The Bottle Grounds'."

The road (now Route 935) was built by the local settlers to pay the Road Tax which was due on the road they were building! (At that time there was only a "one-lane track between 'Larry's Bido'—an aboiteau built by Larry Gillis near Tom Johnson's present-day cottage, and Ralph Stile's place.")

For some readers, the location of residences & cottages no longer standing may be of interest.

Rufus Seaman's fine house (built for his wife Liz Kitt) at the corner of Hard Ledge Road and the road to Pink Rock, was eventually torn down—without having been finished. The first cottage on the shore was Magistrate Cy Chapman's at Bucks Flats.



Gene Goodrich & Art McCready

Hugh Dysert's summer house—with a two-car garage, was built on the shore opposite 'The Bottle Grounds' on land that has since eroded away. ("Erosion has left the guardrails at the side of the road dangling over a fifty-foot cliff.")

Edward Bowes

Gene & Edward intend to conduct at least one more interview with Art—perhaps on his 100th birthday in October, 2009!

More on Charlie McEwen

Readers wanting to know more about Charlie's McEwen's life & talents should see the very interesting profile written by Sandra Devlin in 2000—'Charlie's Wings Touch Many Lives' (I) and 'Charlie: A Born Mechanic' (II) appeared in the *Times & Transcript*, Friday & Saturday, December 21 & 22, 2000, D2.

Contributed by Edward Bowes

Charlie McEwen passes away...

'Charles L. McEwen, 92, of Moncton, with his loving family at his side, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, May 19, 2009.' *Times & Transcript*, Wednesday, May 20, 2009 A5

Gene's popular interview with Charlie (See *Newsletter* October 2008) gave readers an idea of the originality and talents of this outstanding New Brunswicker. Pilot, builder, inventor, conservationist and entrepreneur—Charlie McEwen did it all.

Our sincerest sympathy goes to his wife Connie and to his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

The Editors

KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM—LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Board of Directors Report

The Board expects the Keillor House and St. James to have a great year in 2009 with many exciting events & programs planned. (See 2009 Special Events Calendar enclosed.)

The Board has worked on a number of projects over the last few months to strengthen the Society and to improve our management & our financial position. We have engaged a professional accounting service, hired an employee (part-time) to help with the tenants & properties, and engaged an Executive Director who will be able to help us to implement a new set of initiatives (See *President's Message*, p.1)

The Board's key priority for 2009-2010 is to further develop our Strategic Plan with the goal of securing the Society's financial future.

Building a Dedicated Endowment Fund

In response to the *Premier's Task Force on Non-Profits* the Association Museums New Brunswick has encouraged Historical Societies (and community museums) to adopt a new funding model in order to guarantee their survival in

the 21st century (See *Building a New Foundation for the Museum Community*, AMNB 2007; www.amnb.ca)

This model includes adoption of our current policy of preserving Historic Properties & Museums as much as possible through self-financing and the establishment of dedicated Endowment Funds. Of course, most museums *do* undertake fund-raising to cover programs or special capital projects but few have a strategic plan to meet their increasing operating costs or long-term capital requirements. (For the most part, as non-profit organizations, we are happy if we can keep the doors open day-to-day!)

However, if we are to survive, we need to have a Strategic Plan which includes establishing one or more dedicated Endowment Funds to meet these increasing costs in the future. The Board will be developing this Plan over the next year, and will eventually undertake an Endowment Funds Campaign with help from our new Executive Director.

If you have any suggestions or would like to help, contact me at (506) 379-6682 or morc@rogers.com.

Cole Morison
Chair Finance Committee

STAGE COACH DAYS ON THE WESTMORLAND GREAT ROAD

At last years AGM, I delivered a "sneak preview" of the research I am doing on the 'Stagecoach Era' in this area. Since it seemed to be well received—even after a full meal! I decided to deliver on an earlier promise to publish excerpts in the *Newsletter*. The following is a shorter version of that 'sneak preview'—"Stagecoach Days on the Westmorland Road."

The Dorchester Lines

Three main stagecoach lines came through Dorchester. One ran between Dorchester and the Miramich—and later Bathurst, but I found very little information on it. The other two I have focused on (so far) operated between St. John and either Dorchester or Amherst, over the "Westmorland Great Road", surveyed in the 1790s but not completed until the mid-1830s, owing to the poverty of the province.

The Miramichi line branched off from the Westmorland Great Road at Memramcook, and would have followed what is now called the "Old Shediack Road."

The St. John Stage Coach Company

The first of the two main lines was the *St. John Stage Coach Company*, owned largely by a prominent Sussex gentleman, John C. Vail, with other investors from Sackville and St. John. It began operating in the summer of 1836, running a small two-horse coach—probably with only two or three passengers, once a week between St. John and Amherst. The 148 mile trip took two full days. The coach left St. John at 7:00 a.m. on Mondays and arrived in Amherst about 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays (weather and road conditions permitting), with an overnight stay in Petitcodiac, about 74 miles from St. John. There were stops along the way for meals and/or a change of horses at Hammond River, Hampton, Norton, Sussex, Portage Vale, Petitcodiac, and Moncton—called the Bend in those days. The average speed over the road was 5-6 mph!

During the winter season, from October to May, there was a different schedule. The coach spent Monday night in Sussex and Tuesday night in Dorchester at Hickman's

STAGE COACH DAYS ON THE WESTMORLAND GREAT ROAD

Inn. It went to Amherst on Wednesday, returning to Dorchester the same evening to spend another night at Hickman's.

The inn was owned by John Hickman from 1825 to 1850 and later replaced by the Windsor Hotel which stood until the early 1960s. John's son, William—later famous as a shipbuilder, also ran it for a while before selling it to a man named Wilbur, and then buying the Bell Inn, which he soon turned into his residence. The Bell Inn is also supposed to have been a stagecoach stop, and it may very well have been, especially during the few years when William Hickman ran it as an inn. But there is no mention of it in any of the records I have seen, which is a bit of a disappointment.

The Harvey Stage Line

In the summer of 1838 a competitor appeared. David Caldwell—a large landowner from Norton, started the *Harvey Stage Line* (probably named after Sir John Harvey, the Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick 1838-41) and began running once a week between St. John and Dorchester with a small two-horse coach. He was able to make the trip in significantly less time, most likely because he had invested in more horses in order to change them more often. The *Harvey* coach left St. John at 1:00 p.m. on Saturdays and stayed overnight at an inn near Norton that seems to have been owned by Caldwell himself. Leaving early Sunday morning, it made the 85 miles to Dorchester by 6:00 p.m. the same evening and headed back to St. John as soon as the mail wagon arrived from Amherst, probably spending Sunday night at The Bend. By 6:00 p.m. Monday evening it was back in St. John, having made 100 miles in a single day.

Passengers on the *Harvey Line* were dropped at the Weldon Hotel, which is still standing—unlike Hickman's Inn. It is today called the Payzant-Card Building. It had just been built and was owned by Andrew Weldon who, for a time at least, was also part owner of the *Harvey Line*. So now, there were two happy innkeepers in Dorchester.

Competition Heats Up

After only three months, the *Harvey* line fur-

ther challenged the *St. John Stage Coach Company* by acquiring a larger coach—pulled by four-horse teams it ran twice a week between St. John and Dorchester. Soon after it extended the line to Amherst and announced that the coach would arrive there on the "night of the same day," for an astonishing 148 mile run. (It arrived about 1:30 a.m.).

The new *Harvey* coach left St. John at 6:00 a.m. and was in Dorchester, 121 miles away, by 10:00 p.m.. Taking into account stops for meals and changing of horses, it must have been going over the road at more than 9 mph—in other words, at a full trot much of the time. The horses were changed about every twelve miles (ca. 1 hr 20 min), or about nine times between St. John and Dorchester and eleven times to Amherst. (Earlier, there would have been only four or five changes.)

The *St. John Stage Coach Company* responded almost immediately with its own "comfortable nine passenger stage coach", with four-horse teams and bi-weekly same-day service between St. John and Dorchester. For a while, it dropped the leg between Dorchester and Amherst but 'salved its wounded pride' by renaming itself the *Victoria Coach* in honour of Queen Victoria who came to the throne that year (1838). It probably gave John C. Vail—a staunch Loyalist, considerable satisfaction to have his line named after the Queen, and not a mere Lieutenant-Governor!

Of course all this competition required a much larger outlay of capital. With two-horse teams and five changes, it would be theoretically possible to run a stagecoach operation with twelve coach horses. (In reality extras would be needed in case of injury, as well as draft horses for hauling feed etc.). Four-horse teams with eleven changes would require a minimum of 52 head, to say nothing of the expensive larger coaches, which were imported from the United States, or all the extra feed, harness, stable hands, etc. etc. that went with them. Good coach horses cost about £25 a head—almost a year's wages for a working man.

To recoup their investments, both companies tried to augment their earnings with mail contracts and government subsidies. The *St. John Stage Coach Company* was given a start-up subsidy in 1836, but by 1838 it was already petitioning the government for more.

STAGE COACH DAYS ON THE WESTMORLAND GREAT ROAD

As the *Victoria Coach*, it continued to get operating grants varying from £100 to £250 every year until 1844, after which all subsidies to stagecoach companies dried up. In fact, it was one of the most consistently and generously subsidized stagecoach companies in the province. John C. Vail seems to have had some pretty good friends in the legislature. He was himself a member for King's County until 1835 and ran several times again after being defeated. The right connections were useful, then as now!

The Role of Subsidies

David Caldwell was less lucky in the subsidy game. After getting only a measly £100 in 1839, he was turned down flat in 1840 and didn't ask again. But he didn't need subsidies as badly as his rival because he won out in the competition for carrying the mails. In 1839 both lines seem to have been picking up the Halifax mails, which came to Dorchester from Truro in a simple two-horse "mail wagon" that sometimes carried the odd passenger. They probably also brought mail from St. John and Fredericton to Dorchester, as it was the main post office in this region until 1849, when Sackville became the distributing point. But, sometime around 1840, Caldwell won a bid to run a two-horse stagecoach between Amherst and Truro, and soon afterwards the Halifax post office awarded him an exclusive contract, which he hung onto for many years, to carry the Queen's mails between Truro and St. John for the handsome sum of £1170 a year. This was more than four times any subsidy Vail's company ever got from the New Brunswick government. To celebrate, Caldwell renamed his line the *Harvey Royal Eastern Mail Stage*. But this triumph didn't stop him from trying to do Vail down even further. In 1842 he actually petitioned the legislature to stop the annual grant to the *Victoria Coach* on the grounds that the *Harvey* line had been doing a great job and the subsidy was unfair and injurious to his company. But Vail's friends came to the rescue and the House rejected the petition. Vail got his grant for that year, but he seems to have been financially squeezed. Evidentially, there was not enough travel on the Westmorland Great Road at this time to sustain two stagecoach companies on passenger revenues alone. The fare from St. John to Dorchester was 30 shillings, about a month's wages for a working man; apparently this amount, as well as the rigours of the trip, gave pause

even to the well-to-do. Two years later, in 1844, Vail petitioned the legislature for a grant to "reimburse him in part for loss sustained in running a stage on the road between the city of St. John and Dorchester." By this time hardly any grants were going to stagecoach companies, as the government had fallen on hard times, but the request was referred to a special committee. It discovered that Vail had indeed sustained considerable losses, and on its recommendation the House (only narrowly) voted him £125, almost as a "charity case."

I am unable to determine whether the *Victoria Coach* went out of business, as the meager evidence I have found so far is ambiguous, but Vail himself seems to have done all right. He was again elected to a seat in the legislature in 1846 and held an impressive number of public offices during his later years, including Registrar of Deeds as well as judge on the Inferior Court of Common Pleas for King's County. When he died at the age of 81 after a full and active life, his prestige was such that when the Governor General, the Marquis of Lorne, and his wife, Princess Louise (who gave her name to the famous lake), made an official visit to New Brunswick in 1879, his widow was invited to a personal meeting with the Princess. Her Highness afterwards expressed great pleasure in meeting Mrs. Vail, even favouring her with a gift of her photograph upon returning to Ottawa.

David Caldwell was in the stagecoach business right up to the coming of the railroad in 1860, when he sold his equipment and opened a tannery in St. John. After a few years, he retired and lived to the ripe old age of 89, dying in 1889 and leaving a large inheritance to his family. It is inconceivable that the two rivals in the stagecoach business on the Westmorland Road did not know each other personally. Their conversation is not recorded, but it would probably have been rather strained, as they also had political differences. Of proud Loyalist stock, Vail was a strong supporter of the Conservative party, while Caldwell, who was originally from Halifax, was a personal friend of Joseph Howe, the great Nova Scotia reformer who championed "responsible government" (essentially, the idea that the government must have the confidence of the majority of the legislature). He was probably also

STAGE COACH DAYS ON THE WESTMORLAND GREAT ROAD

very sympathetic to Albert J. Smith's "Smasher" movement, which campaigned relentlessly and not always politely against the "Family Compact" of old Loyalist families who—according to their enemies, at least, had tried to monopolize power in New Brunswick from the beginning. He was also against Confederation.

Besides researching the stagecoach lines themselves, I gathered quite a bit of material on stagecoach travel and managed to find a few good stories. I will share some of them with you in the next issue.

Gene Goodrich

ST. JAMES TEXTILE MUSEUM (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

on the road-side of the church needed to be repaired this year. The first panel (of three) was taken to Halifax, repaired and reinstalled. The other two panels will be reinstalled in the next week. (*Atlantic Stained Glass* in Halifax has done excellent work and will also undertake a number of smaller repairs *in situ*.)

The cost of these repairs will be covered by Royal Bank grants accumulated over a number of years for this purpose. (*Thanks to Alice, Moe & Joanne for their initiative in applying for this help.*)

Restoring Church Wainscoting

All the wainscoting in the church has been repainted to restore (close to) the traditional colour and display the artifacts to better effect. (*Thanks to Judy Morison for doing all of the taping and painting after artifact removal.*)

Needlework Exhibit for 2010

An Exhibit of Needlework planned for 2010 will incorporate items from the Beechkirk and Keillor House collections and include antique needlework donated to the Society by Genie Coates and Marion Wells. Inga Hanson will begin the research and planning for the Exhibit and will catalogue the new items. She also plans to interview Betty Adams via video this summer. This record should be an important archive for St. James & the local community.

The Editors

Crossing From Dorchester...in 1880

(continued from page 4)

The tramp took a little longer, but we didn't begrudge the time; and we at least reached terra firma at a place where a fresh water stream enabled us to dispose of our adhesive real estate and assume a more conventional appearance."

Contributed by Marlene Hickman

NEEDLEWORK AT THE KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM

In the last of her three-part series on needlework at the Keillor House Museum (*A Needle Pulling Thread*, festive 2008, 84-85), Sheila Horseman designed a schoolgirl sampler based on motifs from the sampler stitched by Mary Keillor in 1837, when she was nine years old. (This is one of several at the museum.)

Mary Keillor's sampler is typical of those used to educate girls during the 1700s to mid-1800s. It taught them a variety of stitches as well as the alphabet, numerals, a moral verse, several border designs and traditional pictorial motifs.

"The [original] sampler includes cross-stitch over two threads along with several other stitches, but [the kit] chart is designed to be stitched completely in cross-stitch. The motifs chosen...are based on those in the original sampler, including colour choices and 'errors'... The moral verse stitched over one thread with uneven spacing on the Mary Keillor sampler is stitched over one thread and placed under the tree. Irregularities in children's samplers add charm and individualism to the work.' (84)

For more background on this and other needlework at Keillor House, see Parts 1 & 2 (*A Needle Pulling Thread*, Summer, Fall 2008).

The Keillor Sampler Kit will be available at the Gift Shop in Keillor House June 2009. Contact: Nora Williams at (506) 379-6633 for information.

The Editors

MEMORIES FROM THE PAST

No Comfort to Their Souls in the Whirling and Running and Jumping... (Ex. *Chignecto Post*, December 7, 1876)

The following Letter regarding the new Skating Rink in Sackville appeared in the November 30, 1875 issue of the Post—

“Those whose thoughts are raised above the trumpery affairs of today and whose minds are occupied with the great concerns of ‘Eternity’ and take heed of their ways, will find no comfort to their souls in the whirling and running and jumping and confusion and vain babble of a Skating Rink.”

Signed A Deacon

On December 7, 1876 this answering letter appeared...

“The Deacon brought home the Post last week and put on his specs and read to me what he thought of the rink. I told him at once I thought he was an old fool and I was ashamed of him, and the very idea of his trying to stop the innocent fun of the boys and girls! I think Mr. Beckwith is a real nice man and I do hope he will do well with the Rink. I just told the Deacon he was glad enough fifty years ago to go down to the pond with me and put on my skates and how he used to carry me around...I am not so young as I used to be and I can only now take pleasure in the enjoyment of others and say to the young folks, sip the honey while it lasts because the cares and responsibilities of life will come soon enough and crush out all the gaiety and spirit of youth.”

Signed The Deacon’s Wife

Contributed by Marlene Hickman

Disgraceful Scene at Dorchester Cape..
(Ex. *Chignecto Post*, August. 17, 1876)

“A correspondent informs us that on Sunday he witnessed a most disgraceful scene at Dorchester Cape. He observed quite a number of men and boys gathered about a small coaster laid upon the shore. They were swearing and fighting in a most beastly manner generally. On closer inspection, he discovered the cause. The crew of the vessel were

engaged in the laudable work of vending rum wholesale and retail to the people. There appeared to be no check or guard whatsoever; no temperance men to enter a protest against the lawless and unchristian display; no Custom House officer to interfere with the open violation of the law. The consequence was the work went on in a most lively manner throughout the Sabbath, making the day hideous with profanity and rioting.”

(Ex. *Chignecto Post*, August. 17, 1876)

“I need not refer to the abominable rascality of those heartless scoundrels before referred to in your columns who coast up and down our shores and make use of the Sabbath day to violate the law, and distribute “liquid hell fire” to the fathers and sons and brothers of our families who they can on that day entice to their vessel.”

Signed “Merchant”

Contributed by Marlene Hickman

Dendroarchaeology: A Case Study of A Dorchester House

For a fascinating account of dendrochronological methods applied to a local building, see Nigel Selig, Colin Laroque & Sterling Marsh, ‘Dendroarchaeological Investigations in the Maritimes: A Case Study of Dorchester House, New Brunswick’ *Material Culture Review*, (No. 66 Fall 2007, pps. 42-49).

The house (owned by Brady Jones—Sterling Marsh is his brother-in-law) is located on Highway 106 between Dorchester & Dieppe at the top of the gently sloping hill overlooking the Memramcook River.

‘The Dorchester House provides a good example of how dendroarchaeology works in the Maritimes and what types of valuable information can be gleaned as a result of such a study. Not only was the original year of construction [1821] clarified, but the renovations—which are typically troublesome for historians and social scientists—were resolved as well’ (48)

Contributed by Edith Gillcash

