

WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 47 ISSUE # 3 SEPTEMBER, 2012 ISBN320813

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is always a pleasure to report on WHS projects and activities—since our volunteers and staff *consistently* manage to accomplish so much— and with so few resources!

Keillor House Museum

'First-time' manager—but 'veteran' staffer, Inga Hansen did an outstanding job for us this season. Her leadership, event management—and administrative initiative served us very well. It was largely due to her that we had so successful a season. (It allowed Alice and the Executive Committee to concentrate on 'other than' day-to-day problems.) She has returned to NY to continue her Masters Programme in *Fashion and Textiles: History, Theory and Museum Management*. We are looking to hire her for next season especially in light of the *Keillor House 200th Anniversary* celebration.

Our seasonal guides—Ashley, Rodriguez, and Jordan were enthusiastic about

their experience and received uniform praise in our Visitor Surveys.

Meghan Beaudin, our Assistant Manager, planned the Canada Day activities, added to the Virtual Collections Database—and took over full responsibility for the Gift Shop—a daunting challenge given what can go wrong! Thanks for handling this so well, Meghan.

Another staffer—Lauren Hutchinson, working out of Keillor House but *for* the South-East Heritage Zone developed a marketing survey for Zone members and then helped implement the results. The project was a great success. (As Chair, Alice provided occasional advice.)

So, as you see, it was a busy time!

Historic Properties

(Space allows us only to highlight activities related to the Historic Prop-

erties)

Renovations continue at the Payzant & Card thanks to a grant from Built Heritage (Heritage Branch) and volunteers from Westmorland Institution. *Exterior*: a new front deck, railings, access ramp; repairs to soffits and claps (A deck was added at the side for renters use.) *Interior*: the Costume Collection storage facility was enlarged and a climate control system will be added. (This addition was prompted by a strong recommendation from our Manager who felt the Collection needed better protection.) Preliminary work for a new apartment in the back section of the building has begun.

Reroofing has begun on the front section—and thanks to the grant, we expect to be able to reroof the back section in time.

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KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM —SPECIAL EVENTS

Haunted House Tour

Oct. 19-20; Oct 26-27

7:00-9:00 \$10.00 Adult
\$8.00 Student

For Ghosts and Goblins of All Ages

Victorian Christmas Dinner

Nov. 24 ; Dec. 1

6:30-10:00 \$60

Elegant Four-Course Victorian Dinner with Live Entertainment

Advance Tickets Only

379-6620

Caroling at Keillor House

Dec. 9, 2:00-4:00 \$5.00

Enjoy Live Christmas Music, Hot Cider & Christmas Cookies

Dorchester New Year's Levee

Jan 1 1:00-3:00 Free

Crackling Hearth Fire, Homemade Soup, Rolls & More

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

These activities are only possible because of volunteer labour from Westmorland Institution and grants from Built Heritage.

We appreciate their continuing support and confidence in us.

Congratulations

To celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, four long-time WHS volunteers—Alice Folkins, Gene Goodrich, Vaughn Alward and Jack Lines, received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. This honour acknowledges their outstanding service to the heritage community in NB—and was so well deserved.

Sometimes, the 'right' people *are* recognized for the right reasons! Well done!

Cole Morison

DARRELL BUTLER ON THE KEILLOR HOUSE FURNITURE COLLECTION

Editor's Note: *We are extremely appreciative of the interest Darrell Butler, Manager of Heritage Resources, Chief Curator and Material Heritage at King's Landing, has shown in Keillor House Museum and the light he has shed on the importance of the collection, revealing to us treasures we didn't realize we had. At Past President Gene Goodrich's invitation, he was a most informative guest speaker at our 2011 AGM and this past summer spent two days at Keillor House. On his first visit, he thoroughly examined furniture, crawling under tables and peering into nooks and crannies with a flashlight to see exactly how the pieces were made, as members of the Board of Directors and staff followed him from room to room, making notes and taking photographs. He returned a month later with a slide presentation which he shared with an interested audience which included members of our own association as well as members of Tantramar Heritage Trust and the media. The following news article, written to promote Dorchester's Sandpiper Days Festival, incorporates some of Butler's findings and is reprinted with permission.*

July 27th -29th marks Dorchester's 12th Annual Sandpiper Festival: Festival celebrates the Queen's Diamond Jubilee with activities for everyone

By Margaret Patricia Eaton

Reprinted from 'This Week' July 26, 2012 with permission by Brunswick News Inc.

According to Darrell Butler, Dorchester's Keillor House Museum built in 1813 from local stone and birch wood is one of the finest houses in the entire province. He notes its mansard roof, external symmetry and formal entrance and an interior featuring original crown mouldings, paneled fireplaces and fine reeding in the woodwork. "The

finest house at King's Landing pales in comparison," he says. And since he's the Manager of Heritage Resources, Chief Curator and Material Historian at the historical village near Mactequac he knows whereof he speaks.

Quoting from Alan Gowan's 1964 book, *Images of American Living*, he says, "Architecture and furniture are history in its most tangible form," and goes on to explain how we learn about the past and the way people lived from the objects they left behind.

The earliest furniture which he identified at Keillor House dating from around 1770 was a ladder back chair constructed from solid birch with a reed seat of twisted and woven cattails. "This chair tells us the people who used it were frugal and hardworking and didn't have great wealth," he says. As later generations became prosperous and more concerned with appearances and maintaining a façade of gentility, he noted a change in furniture styles and type of wood used. By the mid-1800's neoclassical motifs embellished imported mahogany wood veneers and indicated the homeowner's refined tastes.

There were several outstanding furniture makers working in the early 1800's in Westmorland County, including George Evans, Silas Black and Harmon Trueman of Pointe de Bute, who operated a running sawmill and produced amazing design and workmanship with local wood. Some of his pieces are among the collection at King's Landing and Butler is hopeful he's identified more at Keillor House, including two tables in the butler's pantry. They are both drop leaf tables, constructed from quarter-sawn birch which results in a rich diagonal tiger-stripe

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A TALE OF TWO CHURCHES: THE PRESBYTERIANS OF ROCKLAND AND DORCHESTER

Editor's Note: Most readers will know that the St. James Textile Museum was once a Presbyterian church, but how many know anything about its origins and history? **Eldon Hay**, a long time member of WHS and Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies (Mount Allison), kindly offered to enlighten us on that head, and also to tell us something about the Presbyterians of Rockland—the subject of the following article, the first of a two-part series.

First some background: it will be helpful to know that the 'Covenanters' were a small dissenting group within the Scottish-Irish Presbyterian tradition that claimed to represent the theology of its founders, Jean Calvin in Geneva and his disciple, John Knox, in Scotland, in its purest—and only valid—form. Among their principles and practices: 1. Virulent rejection of episcopacy (rule by bishops, as in the Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran churches) in favour of governance by a select group of lay elders or 'presbyters' (the Greek word for 'elder'). 2. Simplicity of church architecture and church services (no musical instruments and no hymns, only unaccompanied (a capella) singing of the Psalms, long prayer and even longer sermons). 3. Daily family worship led by the father. 4. Strict Sabbatarianism, reserving the Lord's Day to public worship while forbidding all unnecessary labour and frivolous entertainment. 5. An annual communion service spread over four days, organized to renew members' faith in much the same way as revival meetings among Methodists and Baptists. 5. Insistence that Christ is the only legitimate head of both church and state. The state is to be separate from the church, but must govern according to strict Christian principles (as taught by the church); any state that does not do so is illegitimate and must be resisted.

Covenanters harked back to a solemn agreement (called a 'covenant') made in 1650 with Prince Charles Stuart, then in exile during the dictatorship of Oliver Cromwell, to establish Presbyterianism as the exclusive religion of England, Ireland and Scotland when he became king. An earlier (1643) "Solemn League and Covenant" with the English Parliament against Charles' martyred father, King Charles I, had promised the same, but it came to naught as Cromwell favoured a broadly-based Protestant church and crushed the Covenanters by military force. When, in spite of the covenant he had made as pretender, King Charles II (1660-85) imposed the episcopacy he had always believed in (moments of political opportunism aside), and the majority of Scots went along with it, many Covenanters took to holding illegal Presbyterian-style services in the countryside and were duly rewarded with persecution and even martyrdom, long remembered as "The Killing Time." During it, numbers of refugees fled to Northern Ireland to sow the seeds of a Covenanter movement there. Following the deposition of Charles' Roman Catholic brother, James II, and the accession of his thoroughly Protestant daughter, Mary, and her equally Protestant husband, William of Orange, in the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688, the Presbyterian form of church govern-

ance and worship was restored in Scotland except for the official recognition of Christ as head of the state as well as the church. (De facto, it was now the king-in-Parliament). This time, most Covenanters, including the ministers, went along with the settlement, but a few diehards continued to resist, organizing themselves into separate cells called "United Societies" and carrying on the struggle. In the more tolerant atmosphere of the 18th century these cells reunited in both Scotland and Ireland to form what was now called the 'Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland/Ireland.' Among other things, its members refused to hold public office or vote in elections on the grounds that the uncovenanted state was an illegal abomination. Their traditions were brought to the New World with Scottish and Irish immigrants. The most important founder and leader of the Covenanter/Reformed Presbyterian movement in New Brunswick, and especially the Chignecto region, was the charismatic Irish missionary, Rev. Alexander Clarke. Eldon told us something about him and his unfortunate son, William James, in the last issue of the Newsletter.

Small in numbers, Covenanters found it increasingly difficult to maintain their narrow doctrines in the face of growing toleration and ecumenism (at least among Protestants) and pressures to join the mainstream Presbyterians, already well established in Canada, finally proved overwhelming. Rev. Clarke himself took one of the first steps by voting in a provincial election, and at least one other leader in the Chignecto region served as a justice of the peace. In 1876 much of the Little Shemogue Covenanter congregation, including the minister, defected to the mainstream church. Not surprisingly, the much smaller Rockland congregation soon followed.

Gene Goodrich

The Covenanter—or Reformed Presbyterian—was not Rockland's first church, nor was it destined to a long duration. Today, the church site and its nearby cemetery are largely overgrown by encroaching trees, but it was once very briefly the heart of a vibrant congregation.

The man most responsible for its foundation was Thomas MacKelvie (1836-1904), a Scottish Covenanter who as a young man emigrated to Saint John where he married Sarah Jane Armstrong, most likely also a Covenanter, in 1863. Shortly after their wedding, the couple moved to Sackville where MacKelvie managed a shoe store and quickly became secretary of the building committee that erected a new Covenanter church in Middle Sackville in 1870. Soon thereafter the MacKelvies moved again, this time to Rockland.

Here Thomas spread his wings as an entrepreneur in a variety of undertakings. Besides building an ample home with a fireplace in each room, he bought a farm and opened a large general store, which for a time housed the post office. He was also a partner in the Smith and MacKelvie shipbuilding and stone quarrying enterprises. The latter was located between the

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Petitcodiac and Memramcook rivers off the Beaumont Road. Most of its excellent building stones were exported to the United States and are said to be in some of the finest buildings in New York City (Edith Gillcash, *Taylor Village*, p.33).

Although there was as yet no Reformed Presbyterian church in Rockland, the MacKelvies were still firm in their Covenanter faith. In 1871, Rev. Samuel Moffett, a visiting American Covenanter minister hosted by the Chignecto's Covenanter patriarch, Rev. Alexander Clarke of Amherst, made a trip to Rockland. Besides the stone quarries and shipyards, he noted that MacKelvie was "still a member of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Saint John, of which Rev. A.M. Stavelly is pastor" and that there were also other Covenanters in the area, notably Thomas and Marion Adams. Delighted, he conducted a Sabbath Covenanter service, probably in the already existing Union Church.

Inspired by this experience, MacKelvie took the initiative in building a Covenanter church in Rockland. Of course, building a church was not a novel idea in the region. The Baptists had been in Taylor Village since 1849; the Methodists came only somewhat later. There was more than one church, although the Union Church at Taylor Village came to be utilized by both Baptists and Methodists. As Edith Gillcash informs us: "Many residents attended church every Sunday ... The people supported 'the church' rather than just going alternate Sundays to their own denominational service" (*Taylor Village*, 104). Covenanters probably also used it occasionally; there is evidence that Rev. Clarke held services there in the early 1870s, not long before his death in 1874.

Rockland Covenanters petitioned the presbytery (the governing board) for recognition as a congregation and, in July 1876, Rev. S.D. Yates (Clarke's successor), together with two other presbytery officers, came to Rockland and "organized a new congregation of thirty three members." The minutes of the meeting are signed, "Thomas MacKelvie, Clerk." Most likely MacKelvie was elected as an elder in order for the Rockland congregation to be regularly constituted. It may, however, have already been acting informally as a congregation for some time. In 1870, one of the MacKelvies' eight children died and was buried in what later became the cemetery, although it may at the time have been simply part of a field close to where the church was later erected. In December of 1877 a nine-year-old boy, Robert A. Gunn, was also buried there, leaving us with the intriguing question: which came first—the congregation, the church building, or the cemetery?

The building of the church appears to have been financed largely by MacKel-

vie, probably from surplus income generated by the general store and stone quarries. His daughter, Grace MacKelvie Estabrooks, wrote: "my father sold a boat load of potatoes to South America. When he received more money for the potatoes than he expected, he built a church on his property" (*Memories of Rockland* [1992], p.2). Although MacKelvie was the chief donor, another prominent figure was John Armstrong, a bachelor brother of Mrs. MacKelvie, and also the church's precentor (the person who led the singing of the Psalms *a capella*). Although this seems like a small number of donors, the cost of building a Covenanter church was less than for other denominations, as fancy church buildings and elaborate decorations, and especially the expensive organ, were strictly forbidden by Covenanter doctrine. Grace described it as "of quaint Gothic style with family box pews having doors, or gates, to keep the children from roaming." The building was up and the roof on sometime in 1877—the *Chignecto Post* announced in its October 4th, 1876 edition that, "the Rev. Mr. Yates is organizing a Presbyterian Church at Rockland. They are arranging for a place to worship in the spring"—but it may have been some time yet before it was completely furnished. Rev. Yates informed the presbytery in March of 1878 that the Rockland congregation did not desire the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper "dispensed among them until the new church would be [completely] ready."

Ironically perhaps, it was completed at a critical juncture in Covenanter affairs. The efforts of Rev. Yates, Reverend Clarke's successor as leader of the Chignecto Covenanters, were expended over a wide area, but his health was failing. Attempts to find interim substitutes came to naught. Already frail, Covenanter forces became steadily weaker. At the same time, the newly formed (in 1875) Presbyterian Church in Canada—in which Covenanters had no voice and took no part—was expanding its proselytizing efforts into the region. By 1880, Moncton Presbyterian minister Rev. Joseph Hogg was actively encouraging Covenanters to attend mainline Presbyterian services. Writing in 1881, he reported on a communion service in Dorchester with considerable satisfaction: "Five were admitted for the first time... Mr. And Mrs. MacKelvie, Mr. And Mrs. Adams [joined us]. I have no doubt but that the Rockland people will cast in their lot with us." When Rev. Samuel Crothers Murray of Murray Corner, also a former Covenanter, was serving in the summer of 1884, the congregation at Rockland was firmly in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, although at Dorchester, "there was [as yet] no Presbyterian church building."

Almost imperceptibly, within a few years after it

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was built, the Rockland Covenanter church was absorbed into the Presbyterian Church in Canada, but without any property transfer. For a time, monthly Presbyterian services were held there. Still, there was no organ until 1917. By that time, the Dorchester Presbyterians had long since had one, and in fact were endowing St. James with a new one. It was duly reported that the old organ "was presented to the church at Rockland on condition that the church building become the property of the Presbyterian Church of Canada."

Life proceeded in the MacKelvie household, sometimes with more than a touch of tragedy. Two more of their children died in 1879 (of diphtheria), followed by an infant daughter in 1883. All were buried in the Rockland Cemetery. Of the four who attained adulthood, two sons left for the west, while their sister married a Presbyterian minister, Rev. L. W. Parker and moved to Milford, Nova Scotia. Only one of the children, son Norman, stayed in Rockland. Thomas continued for a while in the shipbuilding and stone quarrying business, but by the mid to late 1880s both were in full decline as steel ships replaced wooden sailing vessels and the Americans slapped a crippling tax on imported stone. When these industries collapsed many Rockland families moved away.

Perhaps anticipating this, Thomas MacKelvie made a significant career shift as early as 1877 when he was appointed general agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society for both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. He traveled widely in both provinces and received a yearly salary of \$400 from each of the provincial auxiliaries. His devotion to Christianity as well as his business experience and his many other talents assured him of success in this career, which he pursued for seventeen years. His annual reports are the chief body of writings he left, and from them we learn that some of his travels were not without adventure. He tells of one memorable occasion after he had "addressed a good audience at Kingston, New Brunswick, on the 11th of January (1888):"

The 12th was bitterly cold and my ear was frozen while walking to the station. Owing to the heavy snow drifts, no passenger car was attached to the locomotive on the "Kent Northern," and I had a two hours ride on the tender to Weldford (near Harcourt, NB) with feet as cold as ice, and seated on a heap of coal, enveloped alternately in clouds of snow and steam. The locomotive, snorting and furiously struggling like a mechanical maniac and bouncing spasmodically ahead, made one momentarily expect a crash or at least an upset in a

snow bank; but I reached Welsford unscathed (*Sixty -Eighth Report of the NB Auxiliary Bible Society [1888]*, 44).

Still traveling as an agent for the British and Foreign Bible Society, MacKelvie was staying over with his daughter and son-in-law in Milford one night in 1904 when he died, at the age of sixty-eight. His funeral was held in the Rockland church and he was buried in the Rockland Presbyterian Cemetery. Among the mourners were Rev. Dr. Charles Stewart, Dean of Theology at Mount Allison University, and representatives of the Bible Society from Saint John and Halifax. One of the ministers "spoke in terms of warm affection and highest appreciation of Mr. MacKelvie and his work, dwelling upon his large interest in the [Bible] Society, his generous disposition and his uprightness" (*Presbyterian Witness*, 6 August 1904). Mrs. MacKelvie and her brother, John Armstrong, continued to live in the Rockland home for some time. Mrs. MacKelvie died in 1910, John in 1918. They, too, were buried in the Rockland Presbyterian Cemetery.

Norman MacKelvie took over the general store as well as the farm, and added another farm on top of that. In 1908 he married Maude Letitia Farrer in the Rockland Presbyterian Church, a union that would be blessed by seven children, but also touched by tragedy. The two large farms required a good deal of help, and to secure it MacKelvie engaged a family from Scotland, providing them with a home right on the farm. One of their small children was very ill when they arrived in 1914, but Maude patiently nursed it back to health. Unfortunately, her own small children caught the disease and the three of them joined their grandparents in the cemetery established by her father-in-law. Maude herself fell critically ill and the Board of Health quarantined the home. Nurses came from Moncton and lived in part of the Presbyterian church during her long illness. Mr. George Shannon took care of the farm animals, living in the hay barn. He milked the large herd of cows, pouring the milk into the brook, as it could not leave the farm.

Even by the time of Norman and Maude's marriage, the Rockland congregation had shrunk considerably and so it made more regular use of the St. James Presbyterian Church in Dorchester, built in 1884. Norman was elected a trustee there in 1905 and later became one of its most respected elders. By the time of his children's deaths, the Rockland church had ceased to be a place of worship, even occasionally. Sometime after 1919/20 it was abandoned entirely, the door fastened shut. A family member recalls the time the door somehow got opened and sheep found shelter in it for a couple of nights. The

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memory of this invasion haunted Norman MacKelvie for a long time thereafter.

There was, however, an afterlife for the forsaken building. In November of 1925, the United (formerly Presbyterian) Church in Riverside burned to the ground. Fortunately, Alonzo Stiles, a prominent member of the Riverside congregation, was a good friend of the MacKelvies, themselves now prominent members of the Dorchester Presbyterian congregation. Negotiations followed and the Rockland church was dismantled, loaded on a large scow, and floated down the Memramcook River and across Shepody Bay, landing close to Riverside. There it was unloaded, reassembled and, with some alterations, rebuilt on the spot where the former Riverside United Church had stood. "The new edifice, especially the interior, presents a handsome appearance, the gothic windows of leaded stained glass being particularly pleasing" (*United Churchman*, 17 November 1926, p.8). It remained a United Church until 1975 when it was purchased by the Masonic Order and the Order of Eastern Star and refurbished as a lodge, opening in 1977. In 2002 the Riverside Masons joined the Howard Lodge in Hillsborough. Today, perhaps as a sign of the times, it is occupied by the Winston Churchill Chapter No. 19 Order of the Eastern Star.

Although continuing to farm and run the store into the mid-1920s, by 1929 Norman and Maude found it necessary to close the store and sell their two farms to the Wartime Settlement Board. They moved to Moncton to better educate their four remaining children. Norman kept the deed to the right of way to the Rockland Cemetery as well as to the land where the Rockland Presbyterian Church had stood. As long as he lived in Rockland, he kept the cemetery trimmed and cared for, but he found it increasingly difficult to interest others in it, as many folks had moved away. Finally, the family grown and gone, Norman and Maude moved to Sackville in 1935. Here Norman died in 1937 and was buried in the Sackville Rural Cemetery. After his death, Maude, feeling it a shame that the senior MacKelvies' stones were being lost to the forest, arranged for them to be moved to Sackville as a lasting memorial to Thomas and Sarah Jane MacKelvie and their infant children, as well as to John Armstrong. The tombstone of Norman and Maude MacKelvie, also in the Sackville Rural Cemetery, is inscribed with the names of their three infant children. Maude MacKelvie died in 1966.

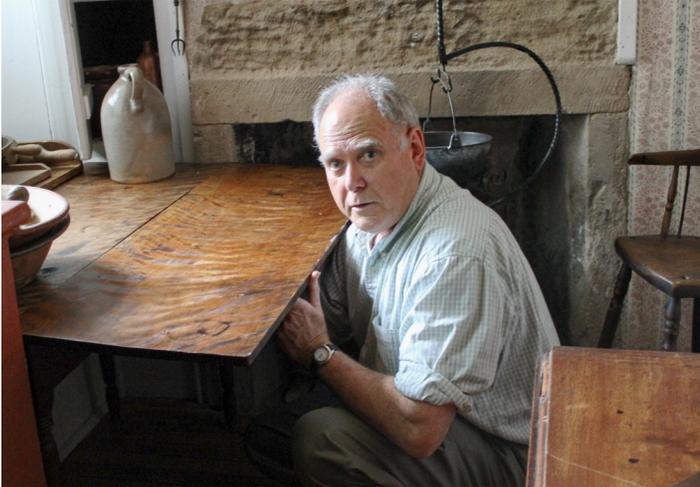
In the next issue: the history of St. James Presbyterian Church in Dorchester.



Eldon Hay and Edith Gillcash at the Rocklyn Cemetery

DARRELL BUTLER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

pattern of wood grain. “The man who made these pieces had an eye equivalent to Thomas Nesbitt, Canada’s top cabinet maker,” he says, noting the ring turning on the slender tapered legs. “This is top quality furniture.”



Darrell Butler, Manager of Heritage Resources, Chief Curator and Material Historian at King's Landing was impressed by the furniture collection at Keillor House Museum. These two tables in the butler's pantry are made of quarter sawn birch which results in a rich diagonal tiger-stripe pattern of wood grain, were donated by the Trueman family and are likely the work of Harmon Trueman in the early 1800's.

With such a rich material history for inspiration, Inga Hansen, Museum Manager at Keillor House has put together a Heritage Fair where people are invited to watch timber framers and masons, bakers and spinners at work on Saturday, July 28th from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. following the Sandpiper Breakfast. “We really want to promote heritage skills, which are in danger of being lost. The public doesn’t always realize it but there is a history and an importance to these skills and we’re passionate about keeping them alive,” she says.

Throughout the fair, both on the grounds and inside Keillor House, a wide variety of crafts and skills will be demonstrated by knowledgeable practitioners willing to volunteer their time and expertise. One of them is Genie (Trueman) Coates, a descendant of the aforementioned Trueman family of cabinet makers Butler admires, although she’ll be braiding a rug and not building furniture. Farrier Justin Daniels will shoe

Inga’s horse, Bay Boy, while mason Scott Morris will demonstrate stone work and Daimen Hardie will talk about timber framing. Kaeli Cook will be working at her potter’s wheel, Betty Adams will quilt, Meredith Fisher will spin and Marsha Lemos who owns Aliper’s Hearth in Sackville will use the fire-place oven in the kitchen to demonstrate heritage baking and provide free samples. Inga’s mother, Gay Hansen, will demonstrate willow basket weaving. Digital photographers will have an opportunity to learn about view cameras and banquet cameras from Thaddeus Holownia, a photographer with an international reputation for producing stunning images through traditional techniques.

Meanwhile, Hailey Wells who is organizing the three day festival, on behalf of the Village of Dorchester, and of which the Heritage Fair is part says, “We have lots of new and returning events, there’s something for everyone and we’re really looking forward to seeing everyone come out to enjoy the festival.”

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Below: *Darrell examines a table that came from the library of Sackville’s Josiah Wood, along with the magnificent book case and collection of books annotated by Gene Goodrich in The Intellectual World of Josiah Wood, a WHS publication. The table top has a frame that can be raised in order to insert a sheet of blotting paper or felt to avoid scratching while working on it.*



DARREL BUTLER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

Editor's note: Eaton's article concluded with the full Shiretown Days Festival schedule, omitted here, as it has now passed. It should be noted, however, that Keillor House played a major role in the festivities. In addition to the Heritage Fair, which was a huge success with over 100 people in attendance, we hosted the Sandpiper Breakfast (pancakes, sausages and baked beans) on Saturday morning, WHS member Cheryl Feindel gave an informative and entertaining presentation on the history of shoes at the Jubilee Tea at Trinity Anglican Church Hall and Bernie Melanson conducted an Historic Garden Tour that included lunch at Keillor House.

Betty Adams says this Bear Foot pattern quilt began with 1,875 pattern pieces, sewn together with seams pressed flat to create 25 blocks for the quilt top. Betty estimates it will take over 800 hours to complete.



All photo captions by M.P. Eaton

BEYOND THE 'BEGATS' I FOUND POLITICS

Editor's note: Following a suggestion from Edith Gillcash, **Althea Douglas** kindly offered to write the following piece for the Newsletter. From it we can glean some interesting insights into politics and family rivalries in 19th century Westmorland County. A certified genealogist and archivist with many publications to her credit, Althea will be known to many members of the WHS for her work on the Chapman family, from which she descends.

"Don't make it all begats" said my cousin, "find out what they were doing and thinking." I had told him I was trying to write something about our Chapman ancestors. 'Alright, I will tell something of what they were thinking,' I said to myself. I knew my grandfather, Cavour Chapman (1860-1943), thought Confederation was the worst thing ever to afflict the Maritimes. When I was a child he gave me detailed examples and told me all about his hero, Joseph Howe's, attempt to prevent it from happening. What I didn't realize was that his father, Robert Andrew Chapman (1835-1919), was enthusiastically pro-Confederation. Then it dawned on me that Cavour was not yet seven years old on that first Dominion Day in 1867. I started to wonder whether his grandfather had biased his later thinking just as my granddad was influencing mine.

Getting beyond the 'begats' is the fun part of family history, and I've always tried to push readers in that direction. "Read the newspapers your ancestors read!" Thanks to microfilm, I was able to read contemporary New Brunswick newspapers such as the *Chignecto Post* and I was surprised at what I found. The Shediac-born barrister, Albert J. Smith (1822-1882), became one of the four members of the provincial legislature representing Westmorland County in 1852 and by 1865 he was premier of the province. This local politician fought as fiercely against Confederation as did the famous Nova Scotia reformer, Joseph Howe, so why was he not Granddad's hero? I think the answer is politics.

The Chapmans were descended from Yorkshiremen who had settled in the Memramcook valley and prospered. By tradition they served their community, so when the New Brunswick General Assembly was dissolved at the end of May, 1850, and an election was called, Robert Barry Chapman (1801-1887), then age fifty, stood for one of the four Westmorland seats, just as his father had done before him. When the voting was over, William Crane had polled 876 votes, Daniel Hanington 851, Bliss Botsford 756 and Robert Barry Chapman 749. Fifth on the slate of twelve was a bitterly disappointed Robert Gilbert with 738, and he demanded a scrutiny of the Botsford and Chapman votes.

Chapman took his seat, spoke on several bills, and even introduced one he had promised in his campaign. Meanwhile

BEYOND THE 'BEGATS' (CONTINUED)

a special committee of the Legislature was struck to investigate the alleged irregularities. Although it heard evidence for more than a year, in the end it could not verify the voting lists because so many Acadian farmers had the same or similar names. The fourth seat was declared vacant and when a by-election was called for 18 May 1852, a new candidate entered the lists: a young lawyer named Albert J. Smith.

On May 19, the *New Brunswick Courier* announced: "A telegraphic despatch from Shediac received at the news room this morning, states that Albert J. Smith, Esquire, Barrister, of Dorchester, had duly been elected by a majority of 114 votes. Numbers as follows: Smith 610, Chapman 496, Gilbert 474". Thus began Albert J. Smith's political career.

As a result of this disappointment, Robert Barry Chapman not only retired from the political arena; he also gave up his farm on the outskirts of Dorchester where so many of his Acadian neighbours had similar names and moved across the river. With him went a younger son, Robert Andrew Chapman, who soon established a shipyard at nearby Rockland and, in the next quarter century, built more than thirty vessels. Today we can find the names of the registered owners of these vessels in Charles Armour's *Shipbuilding in Westmorland County* (Sackville NB: Tantramar Heritage Trust, 2008). Those names point to neighbourly encouragement, family feuds and, above all, political rivalry.

Whatever her size or cost, every British-registered vessel was held in sixty-four shares. An owner might keep all sixty-four but more commonly a group of investors would take up a few shares in a number of ventures to spread their risk. As one of the local members of the legislature, Albert J. Smith at first encouraged all the county shipyards, and, as a token of this, bought eight shares in the 177-ton brigantine *Village Belle* launched on 3 July 1860, the first vessel for which "Robert Andrew Chapman, Shipbuilder" was a registered owner. Smith also held eight shares of the *Gideon Palmer*, launched in 1863 by Gideon Palmer and, as might be expected, eight in the *A.J. Smith*, built the same year at Hillsborough by Dorchester hotel-keeper William Hickman.

As each of these shipbuilders prospered in the booming 1860s, the names of registered investors confirm political divisions. A.J. Smith opposed Confederation, Robert Andrew Chapman supported it, as did Edward Barron Chandler, albeit with some reservations. The last Chapman ship in which A.J. Smith invested was the *Cavour*, a brig built in 1864 and named for the nobleman who helped unite Italy, though the name had also been given to Chapman's eldest son, born in 1860. Thereafter the Smith name is found only in the registers under Hickman ships while the Chandler family owned

shares in most Chapman vessels.

In those profitable years surrounding Confederation, ever-larger Maritime-built vessels sailed across the world. However, iron ships under steam-power were changing the economy of shipping and a worldwide depression beginning in the early 1870s made cargoes harder to find. Chapman's financial situation became precarious. In 1875 he mortgaged his shares in most of his fleet and, although the mortgages would not be called until the spring of 1879, rumours must have been circulating much earlier. One story has it that Chapman saw the end coming and in 1878 used his stock of timber and his experienced workforce to build one last ship, the largest that any Dorchester yard had seen, or would see. The *S.B. Weldon* was registered at 1,530 tons, but when she was launched secretly on the dark night of 4 December 1878, well ahead of schedule, Chapman owned not a single share in her. Once afloat she belonged to her registered owners; her builder's enemies could not touch her.

Politics probably played a part. Elections cost money and Chapman had been a candidate in two. In 1872 he lost to John Humphrey of Moncton in a provincial election fought largely on the question of segregated schools. Then in 1878 he dared to challenge the "Lion of Westmorland" himself for his seat in Parliament at Ottawa. A former provincial premier, and now federal Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Sir Albert J. Smith was also the first native-born New Brunswicker to be knighted by a British monarch. His investments in shipping and trade had made him a wealthy man, well able to bear the cost of elections, even though the price of a vote had risen from 25 cents before 1850 to \$5 or more. However, the Mackenzie government had introduced the secret ballot and made it illegal to influence voters with money or liquor, so his opponents were not going to let Sir Albert keep his seat without a fight.

Nomination day at Dorchester was exceptionally orderly. "There was less rum-drinking, fighting, and excitement generally than on former occasions", wrote the thoroughly partisan *Chignecto Post* of 12 September 1878. "Mr. Chapman was prevailed upon to take the nomination, knowing the odds were all against him." In the same issue it ran a cartoon of a young man on horseback racing ahead of a fat, old, be-robed knight with sacks of money, captioned: "The Knight Distanced by Chapman in the Race for Ottawa." Below was a very bad doggerel poem that read in part:

This is the Parliament House at Ottawa
 This is the forty-five thousand dollars,
 That came from the Parliament House at Ottawa;
 This is the Knight who wanted the dollars

BEYOND THE 'BEGATS' (CONTINUED)

That came from the Parliament House at Ottawa;

This is the canal he promised to build,
Like the rest of his promises never fulfilled,
And after election so ruthlessly killed,
By raising objections in which he was skilled,
When once he'd secured the forty-five thousand dollars,
That came from the Parliament House at Ottawa.

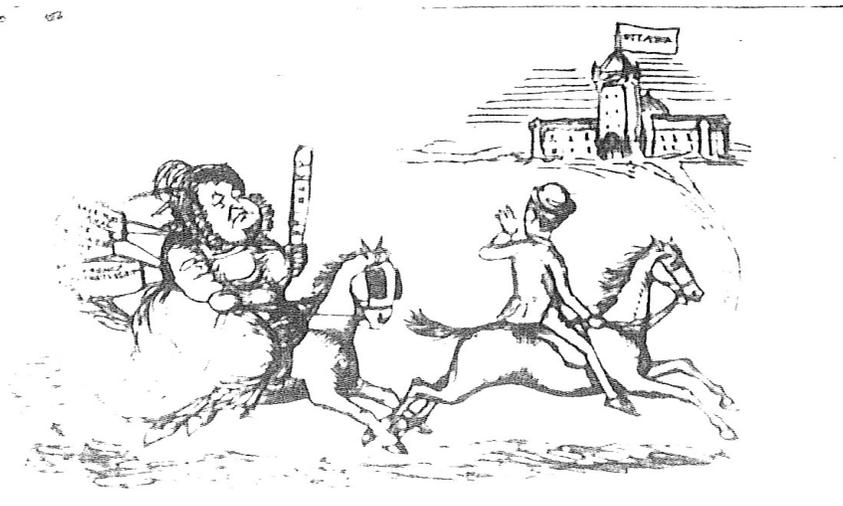
This is the boat called the "Northern Light"
That ploughed through the ice with power and might,
And took thousands of dollars to keep water tight,
But yet was declared a success by the Knight,
Who wasted the forty-five thousand dollars,
That came from the Parliament House at Ottawa.

This is the railway held out as a lure,
When he wanted to make his election secure,
And withdrawn when he thought it was perfectly sure,
This is the money the pure Knight has spent,
In bribing the voters wherever he went;
He's made up his mind to get back every cent,
Paid for debauching the county he'd then represent,
Out of another forty-five thousand dollars,
He'd get from the Parliament House at Ottawa.

This doggerel was only one of the *Chignecto Post's* attacks. It also claimed that the Liberal government of the day had "squandered reckless millions of money, and has violated every promise it ever made." Sir Albert, once the champion of reform, had developed "all the instincts of an aristocrat of the first water, serving his own interests and those of his particular friends at the expense of the people". To other newspapers, however, Smith was the "gallant knight" and Chapman a mere satellite of the "virulent Hon. D.L. Hanington" and "sophistical" Pierre-Amand Landry. To modern readers it may sound much like current attack ads, so we should remember that both candidates were honest, honourable men—however much Smith's supporters might try to break down Chapman's financial credit and ruin his business, or the editors of the *Post* call Sir Albert "corrupt" and accuse him of buying votes.

On election day, September 17, Sir Albert was returned to Ottawa but not to power. He held his seat, polling slightly under fifty-seven per cent of the vote, but his party lost and he was relegated to the opposition benches. The cost of an election campaign, a worldwide depression, and technological changes had combined to destroy Robert A. Chapman's small shipping empire, but his friends saw to it that he was made High Sheriff of Westmorland County within a year.

Althea Douglas



The Knight Distanced by Chapman in the Race for Ottawa

NOTES FROM MARLENE'S SCRAPBOOK

In the course of her researches into the history of the Hickman family, Marlene Hickman has collected many interesting items pertaining to Dorchester and the surrounding area. Several of these have appeared in previous issues of the Newsletter, and we intend to bring you more from time to time. Thanks for sharing them with us, Marlene. The following items illustrate some aspects of Dorchester's busy economic life during its heyday.

November 25, 1880 - Chignecto Post

Local & Other Matters – Shipments of stone from Boudreau Quarries, Dorchester (including two vessels now loading) for 1880 are as follows: to New York 2550 tons; Fredericton & Saint John 1550 tons – total 4100 tons. Also about 110 tons of refuse stone were supplied for the sugar refinery and local sales.

December 23, 1880 - Chignecto Post

Shipment from the Port of Dorchester from May 1st 1880 to December 20th, 1880 as follows:-

Building stone	3622 tons	\$18,110
Coal	11,676 tons	\$11,676
Gypson	315 tons	\$315
Lumber	314 m.feet	\$1,599
Piling		\$2,890
Scrap Iron		<u>\$221</u>
		\$34,504

December 15, 1881 - Chignecto Post

Dorchester Shipping - The Whereabouts and Cargoes of the Ships of the **Hickman Fleet** -

Thomas Keillor (just sailed) from Trieste for New York, cargo of oil barrels and prunes.

rah M Smith - from Liverpool to New York - at Queenstown in distress, leaking but not disabled; general cargo.

Bark **John Rutherford** at New York, loading refined oil for Antwerp.

Bark **Sarah Chambers** en route from New York to Havre: cargo Naphtha.

Bark **William Cochrane** en route from New York to France with refined oil.

Ship **J I Smith**, loading at Liverpool for New York, general cargo.

Bark **Bertha Anderson** en route from New York to Gibraltar with general cargo.

Bark **John Hickman** enrouten from Philadelphia to Bremen with refined oil.

Bark **Maggie L Carvell** en route from Havre to New York in ballast.

Bark **Harriett Hickman**, Capt Locke, sailed 21st ult. from Hamburg to New York with general cargo.

Bark **William K Chapman** is at London with a cargo of refined oil from New York.

Bark **Charlie Hickman**, thirty four days from Trieste for New York, with prunes and empty barrels.

Sa-



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

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

Museum Hours

June 9 to Sept. 15 2012
Tuesday to Saturday
10:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday
12:00 to 5:00 p.m.

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 Membership Secretary, at 4974 Main Street, Dorchester, NB, E4L 2Z1. (506) 379-6682. morc@rogers.com

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Annual Fees

(Includes *Newsletter*)

Individual:	\$10.00
Family:	\$15.00
Sustaining:	\$25.00
Life:	\$150.00

SALUTING OUR OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

As always, it's a pleasure to thank our many volunteers for their unstinting devotion to WHS and its work in the community. Again, we have the "usual suspects" in mind, but we really can't thank them too often.

Betty Adams again worked every day at the St James Textile museum, as she has done for many years.

Deanna Crossman and Anne Hendrikson came early and stayed late to help at every fund raiser. "They certainly give the WOW factor to being a volunteer," says Alice.

Deanna and Anne were also among the volunteer guides who stood in after the students returned to classes, along with Edward and Barb Bowes, Carol Maclean, Margaret Eaton, Jean & Helen Cole, Pat Jones, Dorothy Armour and Claudette Shea.

Teresa Simpson does our twitter updates, undertakes genealogical research on request and manages all the Keillor House e-mail to make sure it goes to the right places.

The volunteers for the fundraising dinners, lunches and breakfasts this season were: Joanne Corey, Judy Morison, Teresa Simpson, Roland McIssac, Diane Nicholson, Maryann Crossman, Pat Jones, Susan Spence, Helen & Jean Cole, Ginette Glew, Gene Goodrich, Alice & Ritchie Folkins

Then, of course, there is Alice. She is not even (officially) on either the Board or Executive Committee, but she continues to be the pillar of this organization. Just to give a small sampling: For the last few months she has been working 2 to 3 days a week with work release volunteers from Westmorland—transporting materials and serving as a general 'go-for'—while providing lunches and snacks. She supervised con-

struction of the new deck & railing and dealt with the roofers at the Payzant Building. Most of the grant applications for 2012 she worked on and submitted. Recently, she recruited our Harvest Supper volunteers, managed the event and then helped serve the food! As Chair of the Heritage Zone, she supervised staff and represents us at the Cultural Policy forum. In addition, she is busily planning the Keillor House 200th Anniversary Celebration—for which she just received a \$14,900 Legacy Grant!

There's no doubt about it. Alice has more than earned her Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

The Executive