WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As noted in the last issue, Sylvia Yeoman was honoured during Shiretown Days (June15) for her many contributions to the preservation of our heritage. Among those attending the unveiling of the commemorative plaque that now hangs in the Dorchester Memorial Library, besides family members and many friends, were Senator Stewart-Olsen, Minister Olscamp and Mayor J. J. Bear. *Congratulations to Margaret & her Committee for this outstanding job.*

Cheryl Feindel's wonderful 'Tea and Talk' Series complimenting our 'fashion theme' during this celebratory year was very popular. *Thank you, Cheryl, for sharing your research and giving us so much of your time.* (Presenting five 'talks' over five months was asking a lot!)

Inga Hansen's *Small Town, Big Fashion:100 Year Retrospective of Fashion in South East New Brunswick, 1860 to 1960* opened June 30th at Keillor House to excellent reviews and extensive press coverage. If you were unable to attend, all is not yet lost. This outstanding exhibit will be travel to the New Brunswick Museum in Saint John in January and to the Moncton Museum sometime thereafter. It includes a self-guided tour, and, as an added bonus, a catalogue printed by Gaspereau Press will be available next year. *Congratulations Inga for mounting such an outstanding Retrospective for our 200th Anniversary Year. Well done!*

Upcoming

200 Years of History Through Fashion, a runway show illustrating fashion from 1813 to 2013—from bustles to bell bottoms to the latest from Toronto Fashion Week (Dreamboat Lucy's Fall/Winter 2013 Collection). The show highlights changes in fashion in the context of local history and period music. Tickets are available at Keillor House (379-6633) and Tidewater Books in Sackville for $10.00, or at the door for $12.00. Sunday, September 22nd from 7:00 to 8:30 pm at Tantramar Regional High School, 223 Main Street, Sackville, NB. *Inga and her team are working hard and your support is always appreciated!*

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Maggie's Memories (letters of Margaret Duncan Borden to her grandchildren compiled by Eldon Hay and edited by Gene Goodrich) was launched August 18th at Monroe Heritage Centre. It was standing room only! Several reprintings have been necessary and if you want a copy you can call Keillor House or Monroe Heritage Centre. They are also available at Tidewater Books in Sackville. *Congratulations to Eldon and Gene on producing a bestseller!*

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KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM —SPECIAL EVENTS

Harvest Supper. *Hip of Beef and old-fashioned deserts by the crackling hearth.* Oct. 5, from 4:30-6:30. $14.00 & family rates.

Haunted House Tour. *For ghosts and goblins of all ages. Special bookings for groups.* Oct. 18 and19,and also 25 and 26, from 7:00-9:00.

Victorian Christmas Dinner. *Elegant four-course dinner with wine and live music, served in the glow of candlelight and the warmth of our famous hearth.* Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, from 6:30-10:00. $60.00. **Book early!**

Phone Alice at 379-6620 or www.keillorhousemuseum.com

Christmas Caroling. *Spectacular decor and live music at Keillor House. Join in the caroling with cider and Christmas cookies. Food Bank donations accepted.* Dec. 15 2:00-4:00 $5.00

New Year's Levee. *Homemade soup, chile, sweets &hot drinks by the hearth in Keillor House.* Jan.1 2014 1:00-3:00 following the Polar Dip. Admission free.

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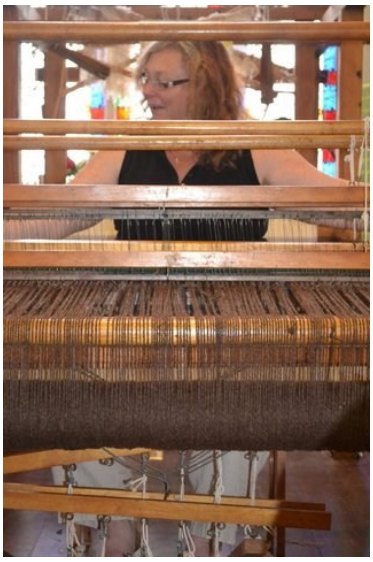
St. James Textile Museum: A Rich Experience for Visitors

When was the last time you peeked into the St. James Textile Museum and viewed our impressive collection of domestic tools and other artefacts? Did you know we have all of our looms on display in working order, with a different type of project on each? Betty Adams and Denyse Milliken are available every day to demonstrate the following weaving processes:

Simple Two-Harness Plain or Tabby Weaving: This is done on a 10" wide two-harness loom, one of thirty in our collection. They were once used as rehabilitation therapy for wounded soldiers returning from World War I. We now use this specimen in our "Needle & Thread for the Bed" *Inner Journey Experience* to teach visitors how to weave a simple book-mark.



The Colonial loom

Four-Harness Plain and Twill Weaving: Here we use the four-harness LeClerc Loom powered by jacks, which can also be attached to lamms or treadles for treadle weaving. We make our 100% cotton kitchen towels on this loom. The towels measure 14" x 28" when finished, including a hand-sewn hem. We've been weaving these towels for three years now, and they have proven so popular with visitors that we have decided to dedicate two looms to their production next season. We will be demonstrating one loom with twill and the other with waffle-woven kitchen towels.

Fancy Twills & Colonial Pattern Weaving: These are demonstrated on our 22" wide LeClerc Four-Harness Loom. This year, Denyse Milliken wove two shawls in a Swiss Twill Pattern, the first using a Hunter Green wool, the second a grey raw silk with variegated purple cultivated silk border.

Four-Harness Treadle Weaving with Wool: We weave wool throws on our 45" wide Four-Harness Counterbalance Loom. Our most recent piece was a tribute to Miss Pamela Black whose Beachkirk Collection was the nucleus of our own. Continuing her legacy as a working museum, we incorporated some wool skeins found in her home two years ago

Rag Rug Weaving: This is displayed on our Colonial loom, which is over two hundred years old and the pride and joy of our museum! Saved from the consuming flames of an Upper Cape farmer's woodstove by Miss Black, it has all its original parts and pegs, including an original reed actually made of marsh reeds! Rag rugs were woven from torn strips of clothing when they could no longer be handed down or mended.

Many of our visitors tell us they have never seen a loom in working order, or met a trained weaver eager to show them how it is operated. They are particularly taken with our 'Victoria Walking Wheel'. It is very rare to have one of these intact in a museum—and even rarer to meet museum staff that knows how to operate it! We take great pleasure in showing visitors how our great-great-grandmothers would have done their spinning, and they really appreciate the experience, as well as the keepsake we give them as a tangible memory of their time spent with us.

Denyse Milliken

Loom and shuttle

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Bell Inn Update

As some of you are aware, after many successful years, David and Wayne have decided to retire this November. They will be sorely missed by their many faithful patrons, but there is reason to hope that Dorchester will not be deprived of one of its most precious assets, the Bell Inn Restaurant. It is still too early to make a definite announcement, but your executive is actively supporting their efforts to find a suitable successor to carry on the fine culinary tradition they have established.

Cole Morison

THE FINE ART OF TEXTILE CONSERVATION

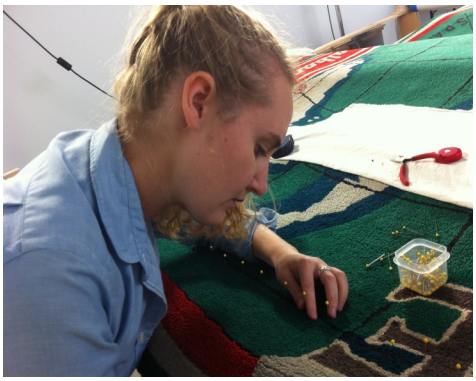
Reprinted from Moncton Times & Transcript, 08/16/2013, with permission from Brunswick News Inc.
By Margaret Patricia Eaton

After writing "Dorchester hosts blast from fashion's past" (*This Week,* June 27, 2013), an article describing the historical fashion exhibition curated by Inga Hansen at Keillor House Museum, I realized there were really two stories. In the first one, I focused on *Small Town, Big Fashion* which showcases 20 elegant costumes from the museum's permanent collection which represents 100 years (1860-1960) of fashion. Each dressed mannequin is accompanied by information about the fashion silhouette as well as information about the woman who wore it. Although the dresses were sewn locally, either by dressmakers or by the women who wore them, they followed the latest trends from Paris and London, thus dispelling myths our region was ever a backwater when it came to haute couture.

This second story about *Small Town, Big Fashion* is a behind-the-scenes look at the conservation and curatorial work Inga did to create an exhibition of the calibre I'd expect to see only at a leading costume museum or gallery.

Inga, who grew up on a farm in Jolicure traces her interest in textiles back to her mother's influence. "She's an extremely talented textile artist, always sewing and knitting and she taught me how to sew and knit, so I was making textiles in my childhood and I've always maintained that interest. And I was interested in fine arts because my father (Thaddeus Holownia) was a photographer."

With this background it's not surprising Inga completed a BFA degree at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design University with a major in textiles, focusing in screen printing and weaving.



Inga stabilizing a rug, a technique she learned in her Master's programme at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

When she graduated in 2009, she began work at Keillor House Museum, cataloguing and photographing their costume collection of women's, men's and children's clothing which number over 3,000 pieces and says it was a wonderful opportunity to gain experience in the museum world as she'd always been interested in historic fashion. Then after three seasons there she began a Master's degree program in fashion and museum textile studies at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. "It's an amazing two year program," she says, "because in the first year you do both conservation and curatorial studies, so it gives you a really great base for textile and fashion specific museum work. Many programs will focus on just one of those, but to be a well-informed curator or conservator it's important to know about the other side. In my second year I focused on conservation. I was drawn to it because it allows me to work with my hands and creatively problem-solve, so I still get to do some sewing while paring it with research on the piece."

"There are a lot of ethical considerations when you're working on a conservation piece to decide what is appropriate and

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DORCHESTER MEMORIES: ERNIE PARTRIDGE PART II

When we left Ernie in the last issue, he was Superintendent of Aboiteaus for the Maritime Marsh Reclamation Association, a job he enjoyed "every minute" of because the work was interesting and rewarding and the men he supervised were of such excellent quality and sterling character. But it didn't pay much, even by the standards of the 1950s. His starting wage was 89 cents an hour, while the men were paid only 28—and were happy to get it. The most Ernie ever made in a year on that job was $2630. Yet, he managed to raise seven children in the small but comfortable house he and Janet still occupy, and—as he had promised when he proposed to her—they never went hungry. Nonetheless, money was a worry and so after a dozen years with MMRA he decided, against his own better judgment, to take a job as a guard at the penitentiary, where the pay was much better. Like those of his father, his experiences at the 'pen' were not the happiest of his life, but in keeping with the character he had been building since childhood, he determined to make the most of them and to do the best job he could.

There was no formal requirement for the job but, true to form, he volunteered for a training course in Kingston. Unlike most of the others who went mainly for a good time, he resolved to learn something and so made the best grades in his class, despite the efforts of a vengeful instructor who had bragged that he could put anyone through a doorway whether he wanted to go or not, but found out that Ernie was one fellow he couldn't. Because of his good showing he was offered a promotion but he wouldn't take it because it was being denied to another guard whom Ernie considered more deserving than anyone—a man who could really work with inmates and gain their confidence and respect. For the most part he found the job the "most demoralizing on the face of earth" because, he said, you came home every day knowing "you didn't accomplish one thing." This was his way of saying that he was frustrated because he didn't think he could do anything to help rehabilitate most inmates or improve them in any way. Although he didn't say so directly, I could sense that he wanted to be a role model for others just as men like Bill Tate and Bill Hickman had been role models for him. Part of what stood in the way was most inmates' lack of motivation, but another big problem in his estimation was the break down of discipline and the handing over of too much control to them. Older methods may have been harsh, but in his view they were kinder in the long term. Worst of all was the relentless and short-sighted removal of opportunities for inmates to acquire useful skills and do the kind of work they could take pride in. Ernie saw the benefits of this when he first started on the job. Among other duties, he supervised crews loading coal down at railway siding and saw what good workers some of them could be, and their potential for rehabilitation. Although it happened after his time there, the "unkindest cut of all" was the closing of the farm. As Ernie well put it, "they will never realize the benefit of the farm until they have a big uprising someday."

With the undermining of their authority, the custodial staff's job became even more stressful, and incidents such as the following more frequent. One day, the deputy warden instructed him and another guard to bring an inmate by the name of Pyburn to court. When they went to get him, he refused to budge, saying that if the deputy warden wanted to see him, he knew where to find him. They were forced to manhandle him into court—an unpleasant experience—but they at least had the satisfaction of hearing the deputy warden say, when Pyburn asked him to make "these lugs ease up on my arm," "Yes, officers, you can ease up on him, but if he makes any false moves break it off and hit him over the head with it." The report of his words (not meant literally, of course) had a salubrious effect on the attitude of other recalcitrant inmates for some time. After his discharge, this same Pyburn was widely suspected of setting fire to the county courthouse in order to force an evacuation of the prisoners from the county jail, among whom was his friend who had served time with him in the penitentiary and since his release had gotten into new trouble.

Ernie's most exciting (and stressful) adventure as a guard happened when he played a key role in the capture of three armed and dangerous escaped inmates. Pointing a smuggled revolver and maiming his dog with a weight bar, they forced the guard who had custody of the keys to open the door of the main dome building, then proceeded over the wall with the help of a ladder from the tool shed. Making their way through the dark night to Frosty Hollow, they stole a pickup truck from Junior Phinney and headed for the four-lane highway (which had just been built) where they had arranged for an accomplice to pick them up. In their hurried confusion they went through Middle Sackville and up Mount View Road only to find access to the highway blocked. Desperate, they broke into a house and took Cory

Estabrooks and his wife hostage. Word of this soon got back to the authorities in Dorchester, and Ernie, who had quite a reputation as a hunter and woodsman, was called upon to take a two-way radio as well as a rifle with a scope and go into the woods facing Cory's house in order to report their every move. When he saw them leave by way of the henhouse he silently followed, tracking them closely enough to hear their footsteps crunching in the snow and reporting their position to an RCMP helicopter that by now was circling overhead. Several times he had them in the scope of his rifle and asked his superiors what they wanted him to do, but of course he was forbidden to fire. By the time he got out of the woods the helicopter had landed in a nearby field and the fugitives were safely taken into custody. Luckily for everyone—and not least themselves—they did not attempt to fire the revolver. Later when the authorities tried to fire this weapon on the prison firing range, they discovered it had no firing pin, although the escapees apparently didn't know that. A girlfriend had somehow smuggled it to them and she probably didn't know much about guns either. As a footnote of more than passing interest, one of the escapees was David Milgaard who was later exonerated of the crime for which he was incarcerated, the rape and murder of nursing student Gail Miller in 1969, and compensated with $10m for wrongful conviction. A number of websites detail the long judicial process of appeal and acquittal, but, curiously enough, none mentions the brief escape from Dorchester Penitentiary.

In spite of deteriorating working conditions Ernie persevered as best he could, but it took a toll on him. After a bleeding ulcer almost killed him, deliverance suddenly came when a position as dairy herdsman became available at the Westmorland Institution farm and he was awarded it. He had little previous experience with dairy cattle, but again true to form, he borrowed books from the chief herdsman, Charlie Zwicker, and boned up on every aspect of feeding, breeding and caring for Holsteins. He was back in his element and, like a true cattleman, soon conceived a genuine affection for his charges. And, just as when he had worked for Bill Tate, this brought sorrows as well as joys. A particular case in point is the sad story of Shepody Command Performer, a prize bull that Ernie raised, tamed and grew fond of. (His mother was the butterfat champion of Canada.) When a grader who graded dairy cattle all across Canada, and had seen sixty bulls since leaving Ottawa, rated Shepody as 'excellent'—the only one from the Dorchester farm ever to be thus distinguished—Ernie was "just as proud that day as if that bull was mine." Then one day, while Ernie was on one of his off days, an order came down to ship Shepody to the Fredericton Artificial Insemination Unit to have semen drawn. The idea was that Westmorland Institution would get so many vials, and the rest would go on the market. In the meantime a ring had been put in his nose in spite of Ernie's protests. Hitherto, the bull had been as gentle as a kitten, but he apparently felt insulted by the ring, and it changed his temperament. Knowing this, Ernie came in on his off day to load him, carefully tying him with two leather halters, one on each side of his head, rather than by the ring, as was usual. But, confident all would be well, he didn't accompany him to Fredericton. When he came to work the next day he was told that Shepody had been put down. Ostensibly it was because he had 'gone wild' but Ernie is convinced that when the folks at the Fredericton unit saw what a magnificent specimen he was, they decided they didn't want the competition, and seized on the excuse. Ernie was devastated. Not only had he lost his pet, the farm had lost its chance to have a great champion for its herd sire.

Afterwards Ernie transferred to the beef operation and was soon introducing a new diet in the feedlot. The farm had contracted to raise 25 acres of potatoes for sister institutions in Quebec. The first year there was a bumper crop but it had some minor blight that didn't allow it to be shipped out of the province. The farm also raised a lot of cabbage at that time and the leaves were left to rot in the field. Putting two and two together, Ernie came up with the idea of pulping the potatoes, having inmate crews gather up the cabbage leaves (a job they really enjoyed) and feeding the result to the steers. There was no little skepticism, but he had the satisfaction of proving it misplaced when all the animals fattened on it graded AA—and being fed only a very small amount of grain, a considerable saving to the feed budget.

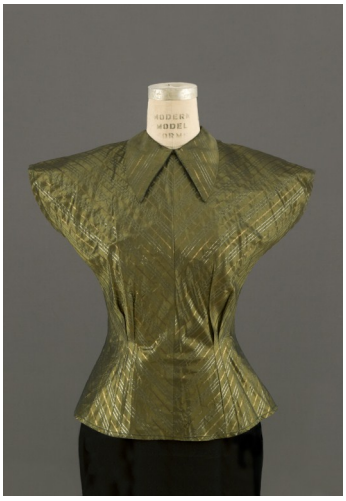
As if the care of some 150 beef cattle was not enough to keep him occupied, Ernie was also in charge of the slaughterhouse, where he processed four beeves and nine hogs each week for use in Spring Hill and Renous Institutions as well as Dorchester. Although not the most pleasant work in the world, it had to be done, and, like all who have lived close to the land, Ernie had long since learned and accepted nature's reality that life can only be nurtured by death. Ironically, perhaps, it was the slaughterhouse that occasioned one of his more heartening human experiences at the Westmorland Institution. One of the inmates, a Newfoundlander by the name of Pye, decided he wanted to work there and learn the butcher's trade so that he could make something of himself when he got out. He had never had any experience with animals but under Ernie's tutelage he became an expert at the job, as good as anyone Ernie had ever known. When it came time for his release, he asked Ernie

if he would help him find suitable work. Ernie phoned Joe Rinzler, owner of the now defunct Hub Meat Packers, and gave Pye a glowing recommendation. After working successfully at Hub for a time, he returned to Newfoundland and established his own meat business. For a number of years thereafter he would phone Ernie at Christmas to thank him for all he had done. Ernie never forgot that. He had made a difference in Pye's life, just as others had made a difference in his, and it is the measure of the man that this was among the most satisfying of his experiences at the Westmorland Institution.

Ernie's whole life, it seems, has been about character building and the love of family and home. I sometimes wonder if there was something in the Dorchester water that produced so many of his kind. We have met a number of similarly strong characters in previous episodes of 'Dorchester Memories' and it will be my pleasure to share Ernie's memories of some of them—and introduce some others—in the next issue.

Gene Goodrich

THE FINE ART OF TEXTILE CONSERVATION (CONT))



This silk taffeta blouse with metallic threads, circa 1952, was a gift of Alberta Hickman Gibbard (1919-2001), Dorchester. In 1947 Christian Dior's "New Look" debuted in Paris, influencing fashion around the world as stylish women gravitated to feminine full skirts or slim tapered skirts, such as the one paired with this blouse.

what's going too far, because it's really important to do conservation and not restoration. These pieces have a story and they've lived a life and it's important to not get rid of the evidence of that life, so you assess what needs to be done and just make the piece stronger and support it where it needs support but only do things that can be reversed without harming the object."

When selecting the 20 pieces for the show, Inga had three criteria. They had to be strong enough to withstand display and be without visually distracting stains; there needed to be some information available about the woman who wore it and it had to be a good representation of that fashion moment. Since textiles are the most fragile of museum materials, it's not surprising that two of the oldest dresses (an 1860 black brocade with a circular skirt worn over a cage crinoline and an 1870 green plaid bustled dress) required conservation work.

The first step in the conservation process involves determining the fibre content of the piece through microscopy, which involves looking at tiny fragments of each individual thread, "because there could be different thread in the warp and in the weft and you have to test everything," Inga says. "At first I thought the green plaid dress was coated cotton, since it was kind of luminous, but even though it is almost entirely cotton, it does have a silk thread running in the weft direction, which would increase the sheen of the fabric and make it softer in hand. It was just a small amount, but it really makes it a more visually striking fabric."

The skirt of this dress had an L-shaped tear, which Inga meticulously repaired by creating a supportive patch of fine silk crêpe line (loosely woven silk organza). "The threads are passed across the tear and then the threads are sewn down, so I'm not really sewing the fabric, I'm sewing the threads that are supporting the fabric," Inga explained.

Although the fabrics used in 19th century clothing were all natural – cotton, silk, linen and wool – the exaggerated fashion silhouette was anything but natural and underwent fairly rapid changes as I learned from Inga. The 1860's sloping shoulders and circular skirt supported by a cage crinoline underskirt gave way to the early

1870's bustled dress with the bustle worn at the lower back. By the late 1870's, bustles were no longer fashionable and skirts were just gathered at the back for some fullness, but in the 1880's bustles returned although were worn lower. Then in the 1890's there were the exaggerated puffed sleeves.

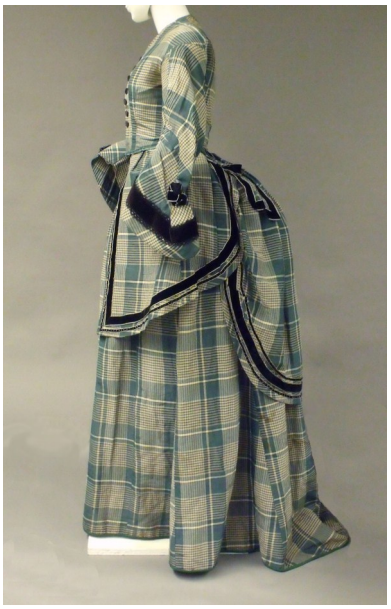
Just as women living in those periods depended on elaborate undergarments to support the fashion silhouette, mannequins also require foundation garments in order for the dress to be properly displayed. The costume collection does include them, but Inga says they're historic artefacts and can't be used in this way, so she's created replicas of bustles, crinolines and corsets.

"We really don't have that kind of extreme fashion anymore," she says, "because the world has changed in such a way that everything we wear has to be wearable. I think that the way we live today just couldn't accommodate the drastic style changes and the specific structural fashion that defined 19th and early 20th century fashion."

Until mid-September, however, you'll be able to step back in time and experience haute couture in tiny Dorchester. As a lasting souvenir of *Small Town, Big Fashion,* Inga is developing an exhibition catalogue with publication date to be announced later. I think it will be well worth waiting for as her meticulous work on the exhibition guarantees it will be a treasure.

Inga is currently working on *200 Years Reflected in Fashion,* a show incorporating music, history and fashion scheduled for September 22 at the Vogue Cinema Sackville. The exhibit and the fashion show are supported by grants from the Province of New Brunswick, Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture and from Heritage Canada.

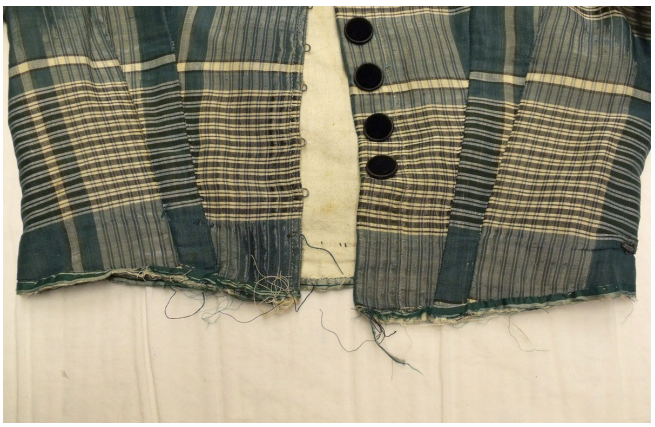
Margaret Eaton



Pam Black donated this afternoon dress, circa 1870 of cotton and silk, with silk velvet ribbon and buttons to the Keillor House Museum. The dress was probably worn by Mary Ann Snowball Black (1834-1911) of Middle Sackville. The round, even fullness of skirts from the 1860's transitioned to the bustled skirts seen in the early 1870's; over the decade the fullness in the skirt moved gradually to the back where it was supported by a bustle. A structure typically made of steel and fabric, the bustle projected outwards from the lower back to achieve the fashionable shape.

Below

Conservation before and after: The silk ribbon seam binding on the bodice hem was shattered, since silk naturally deteriorates faster than the mainly cotton fabric of the dress. The shattered silk of the hem binding was supported by encasing it in nylon net, carefully matched in colour, so it would be unnoticeable and sewn to the bodice using pulled threads from the silk organza.



Before

After

MEMORIES OF A LOST LANDMARK: THE HICKMAN BARN

This article is based on information drawn from Helen Petchey's **The Hickmans in Dorchester's Heyday,** *the interview I did with Ernie Partridge for the 'Dorchester Memories' column, an article on the move to Minudie by Jamie Heap published in the* **Amherst Citizen-Record** *December 2012, and notes on Hickman family history by Marlene Hickman.*

The Hickman house and barn before 1912

One of the most beautiful of Dorchester's lost landmarks was the Hickman barn that until 1942 stood next to the still handsome Hickman family home on Main Street. To judge from its architecture, it dates from about the same time as the house—sometime before 1860—and was built by Joseph Hickman (1821-1889), second son of the original Dorchester Hickman, John, who ran the Dorchester Hotel (also called Hickman's Hotel) from1825 to 1850. While his younger and somewhat more famous brother, William, made his mark as a shipbuilder, Joseph prospered as the founder of the vast Hickman lumbering enterprise that "continued well into the next century and extended beyond Dorchester Parish and Westmorland County." (Helen Petchey) He also ran a well-stocked general store that supplied lumber camps and shipyards, food for workmen and their families as well as household furnishings, hardware and small luxuries. (*Ibid.*) In 1876 he built a magnificent new store, famous in its day as the J.H. Hickman Company, which some older residents of Dorchester still remember as Bishop's Hardware. Extremely well designed, the barn was central to the farming operation that most of the elite families also carried on, no matter what their main source of wealth was. I would speculate that, among other things, the farm probably produced foodstuffs sold in the general store.

Thanks to Ernie Partridge's tenacious memory, we have a good verbal description of the barn as it was in the late 1930s, when it was still an impressive building. As a young lad he loved to visit with Bill Hickman, a grandson of Joseph and uncle to Judy Hickman Morison and Bob Hickman Jr. Bill helped his older brother, Joe, in the family lumber business and sometimes gave Ernie odd jobs around the barn, so Ernie knew it well. Other things that happened before his time he learned from Bill.

Interior view : Recent photo

The barn had three stories. Part of the ground floor was for the horses used in the family's still extensive lumber operations. There were at least sixteen, all of them big beautiful Belgians, chestnut coloured with white manes and tails. Ernie particularly remembers Sandy, a gelding whose collar was so large he could crawl through it. The Hickman horses were not used for yarding—yarders supplied their own horses—but worked as sleigh teams hauling logs to the mill site. Before Ernie's time, beef cattle were also wintered on this floor, in their own section, of course. The barn had two double driveways, entered through two sets of big double doors, as well as an ally way. With this arrangement you could bring in a wagon for unloading, take the team apart and exit one horse at a time to do other work. During the haying season, loose hay was unloaded onto the ground floor and lifted up to the second story with a pitching ma-

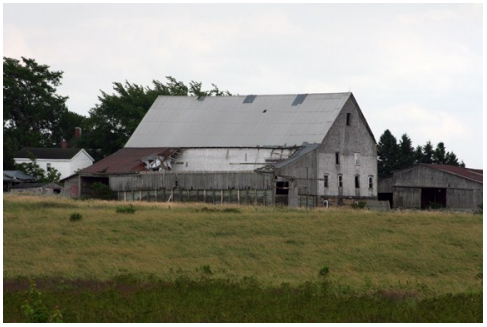
Before 1912. Note the big double doors and glassed in pigeon loft.

chine. Additional crews were hired to spread, trample and salt it. The second floor also had an oat room as well as a tack room (where the harness was kept), and another they called the 'bolt room'. It apparently got its name from the great bins two feet deep and six feet high and chock full of nuts, bolts, rivets, buckles, spreaders—everything necessary for making and repairing harness, whiffletrees etc.

Underneath was a well, pumped by hand. Ernie still remembers the huge watering trough made of hackmatak, a wood that doesn't rot—even down to the detail of the bolts on each end that could be adjusted to keep it watertight.

The third floor held something of a curiosity, a pigeon loft. Quite a few people in the community, especially those of English heritage, liked to eat 'squabs' (young pigeons), and so they were raised commercially. Though just a lad, Ernie was on a couple of occasions given the job of cleaning out the pigeon loft and laying down new straw. He remembers that the loft was glassed in to keep out the elements and that individual nests were provided for the pigeons. It's nice to think they lived in such luxury before making the supreme sacrifice.

When the Hickmans stopped milling their own lumber there was no more use for the barn, and in 1942 it was sold to Dr. Cochrane, a River Hebert physician who, among a number of other enterprises, also owned and operated the 'Elysian Farm' that once belonged to Amos ('King') Seaman, the famous Minudie grindstone baron. Far too large to be transported by truck, it was dismantled and reassembled piece by piece in its new setting. Ernie doesn't know his name but he remembers the mover coming to Dorchester with ladders of every kind and description and scaling the barn to mark and number every piece—even down to the joists and wooden pins—so that it could be rebuilt in that order. He was obviously a man who knew what he was doing. Ernie also remembers that the frame and main timbers were taken to Wood Point by truck and then transported to the Minudie wharf by scow. Bill Seaman, a descendant of 'King' Amos, recalls "hearing the three Maple Leaf trucks that Dr. Cochrane hired to transport the Hickman barn to Minudie during the middle of the night from my home in Barronsfield, Nova Scotia back in 1942." They may have been hauling the smaller pieces.



The barn at Minudie today

Dr. Cochrane, who was "forever trying to keep the community employed," continued to operate Elysian Farm until 1959 when he sold it to Fitz Randolph of Bridgetown. Four years later, Randolph sold it to a Mr. Brown of South Rodden who in turn sold it to Saskatchewan native Wayne Woolfitt in 1968. (On a personal note, both his daughter and wife were students of mine at Mount Allison during the 70s.) A large sheep rancher, Wolfitt used the barn to house sheep. When this venture failed during the early 1980s the farm came into the possession of Bill Booth, but the barn and accompanying outbuildings have remained idle ever since. Although a far cry from what it was during its proud heyday, it is still in relatively good condition, despite the unsightly siding that Wolfitt added. There is talk among some members of the Minudie Heritage Association of restoring the barn when the nearby historic Amos Thomas Seaman House, built by one of 'King' Seaman's sons, becomes a Provincial Heritage House after the passing of Ruth Symes, the amazing 97 year old great-great granddaughter of the 'King' who still lives in it. I know that all members of the Westmorland Historical Society will join me in the hope that 'these things, too, shall come to pass.'

Gene Goodrich

A tribute to our Volunteers from Westmorland Institution

You really must be 'on the ground' to appreciate the wonderful work done for us by volunteers from the Westmorland Institution—and its crucial importance in maintaining our Museums, Special Events and Historic Properties.

In the fall of 2012, Alice submitted a four page list of all the things that two release volunteers had accomplished while working with her and Ritchie three days a week. It was quite an eye opener. The items included: extensive repairs (e.g. re-roofing, replacing broken glass, re-studding walls, rebuilding decks); on-going building maintenance (e.g. grass cutting, painting, plumbing); and new construction (e.g. building a washroom, work table, access ramp and new deck). All six of our buildings needed work and it was done very well, thanks to the skill and enthusiasm of these men.

And let's not forget Ritchie. Volunteering two days a week, as he has done for a number of years now, he supervised all the grass cutting for the Museums and Historic Properties as well as much of the building maintenance.

At the end of her Report, Alice writes…

"This is a list of activities that can be named. This does not include the moving of tables and chairs for events, cooking pizza, spaghetti, different casseroles for staff, helping plant and maintain a vegetable garden, changing light bulbs, helping to decorate for the Haunted House tours, cleaning, scrubbing, vacuuming, and too many other things to name."

Throughout the 2013 season Alice and Ritchie have again been supervising two days a week, and our work release volunteers continue to do exceptional work. Currently, they are refurbishing the larger apartment in the Bell Inn, re-puttying windows, painting, re-tiling, taking up carpets, replacing sinks and lighting fixtures—to say nothing of sealing the building's foundations against unwelcome guests.

For Inga Hansen's 'Small Town-Big Fashion' Retrospective, a Westmorland volunteer made important repairs on a number of the mannequins and built twenty display stands for the Exhibit. During preparations, they removed furniture and artefacts from Keillor House and helped with setting up the Exhibit itself.

There's no doubt that our Westmorland volunteers have contributed *tens of thousands of dollars in labour* to the Society in the last two years alone!

Why do these volunteers love to work at Keillor House?

In a word…Alice and Ritchie.

The men often tell me they don't feel like 'inmates' working at Keillor House, but as members of Alice's team. Alice really looks after her 'boys'. She treats them with respect and (like the rest of us!) they don't want to let her down. Her expectations are high, but since she works as hard as anyone, the men meet and even exceed them. Some give up 'paying' jobs in order to work at Keillor House, and after leaving they often keep in touch, sometimes even proudly bringing family members to visit and see the results of their hard work.

Many of the volunteers are skilled carpenters, professional painters, plumbers or other tradesman who want to work on projects that utilize their skills. Others are simply motivated by a desire to take part in worthy projects. Recently, one of them—soon to be released—told me that he wanted to volunteer at St. James and would request that any 'income' from his work be split between Keillor House and St. James.

The daily lunch at Keillor House provided by WHS is really a 'family occasion'. Staff and volunteers eat together, and the volunteers often do the cooking! Socializing in this relaxed atmosphere on equal terms has been rewarding for the staff and

therapeutic for the volunteers. They feel—some for the first time they can remember—like valued members of a team doing important work for the community. One who was particularly moved said that he had *never* experienced the kind of warm, open and compassionate interaction that happens around this table.

Besides Ritchie and Alice—who do the 'heavy lifting'—Board Members Kathy Bowser and Ginette Glew also work with our volunteers. If you would like to join them, supervisory accreditation requires only an evening or so of your time.

On Leaving the Programme

Upon 'graduation' from the programme, volunteers receive a framed Certificate of Appreciation signed and presented by the President of WHS:

The Westmorland Historical Society Inc.

Presents This

Certificate of Distinction

To

Name

In Recognition of his dedication to

the preservation of our heritage by volunteering generously

of his time & talents

Date: _____ President:

_____

Alice usually prepares a small photo album and the volunteers are given a photo of the ceremony.

Some of these men have *never* been formally recognized for anything they have done, so this is often an emotional occasion for them—and also for the staff.

Cole Morison

WESTMORLAND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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 14 to Sept. 13 2014

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

Annual Fees

(Includes *Newsletter*)

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

Saluting Our Outstanding Volunteers

We have so many wonderful volunteers that it's impossible to praise all of them adequately in this small space. Instead, as in the last issue, let me just single out two whose light has too long lain 'hidden under a bushel.'

Helen and Jean Cole not only attend virtually all our events, but often supply food and refreshments as well. (The cherry cheese sandwiches they make for our teas are Alice's favourite.) They are there to help quilt, hook a rug, or give tours in the off season when our paid staff have returned to school—even if they have to use sign language with visitors whose language they don't know. Their happy smiles and welcoming manner say it all.

Alice says that when she sees Helen and Jean come up the driveway she knows everything is going to be OK. They always arrive early just in case there is something they can help out with. And, needless to say, they usually stay late for the same reason.

It is volunteers like Helen and Jean—and there are a lot of you out there—who keep us going. Alice has a good word to describe them. She says they are 'enablers' who "make you feel that you can do it even when you're thinking, 'oh boy, am I out of my league.'" Thank you, Jean and Helen, for your longstanding devotion to the Society and its mission.

I won't name them here (their turn is coming next issue), but let's not forget our *Haunted House volunteers*, either. They have been working like demons since September 1 transforming Keillor House into a House of Horrors, and they very much look forward to giving victims (oops, I mean visitors) a 'helluva' time. They take a particularly twisted pleasure in bringing you the latest version of the Dungeon of Doom. Keep the dates October 18&19 and 25&26 in mind as good opportunities to experience something 'different'.

PS The witch who will greet you at the door may scare the daylights out of you, but she's really a harmless creature (at least in comparison to those devils in the Dungeon of Doom)

Cole Morison