

WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 51 ISSUE # 3 SEPTEMBER, 2016 ISBN320813

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This has been another outstanding year for the Keillor House...

Visits this year to Keillor House and St. James are up significantly from last year—and all our events to date have been well attended—the Mother's Day Tea, Sandpiper Breakfast, Heritage Fair, Inner Journeys Experience among others. On Canada Day, an original play 'From a Small Village a Nation Grew' was staged at the Veteran's Centre—an initiative of the Tantramar Trust; it was highly entertaining and well attended. (Alice has already applied to the Canada 150 Fund to commission another original play for Canada Day 2017.) Gene Goodrich's latest book *In Search of John Keillor: A Historian's Odyssey* was 'officially' launched June 11 and has been selling well. This year's Special Exhibit 'Homey Elegance, Aspiring Gentility: The Furniture Makers of Westmorland County' was well attended and offered original research into this neglected topic in

Westmorland County—the Exhibit will be extended into the 2017 season. A plaque honouring *John Keillor*—part of our Wall of Fame Exhibit in the Dorchester Library, designed and researched by Margaret Eaton and Gene Goodrich—was unveiled in the spring. The Website Committee—George and Mary Balsler, Margaret Eaton, Nancy Vogan, Gene Goodrich and Judy Morison, working with Leslie van Patter have the website up and running—and it's impressive. None of this success would have been possible without the hard work of these remarkable volunteers, and the enthusiasm of our staff and many other volunteers. *Thank you all for your wonderful work.*

As usual, Alice was the key player responsible for managing our schedule of events. (*See 'What Can We Say About Alice?' Part II to appreciate her contribution to WHS.*)

Staff News

Ashley Beaudin—long-time staff member and Manager of Keillor House for the last two years, will step down after doing an outstanding job for us. Next year she will be completing her studies at the Université de Moncton. Meghan and Ashley Beaudin—who are sisters—have managed Keillor House for us over the last few years, and have brought new ideas and initiatives to the job. *Thank you for your dedication. Well done...*

Rodrigo Martinez-Farina (currently our Head Tour Guide) will remain with us, offering special tours, cataloguing services, and assisting Alice through December. (He will also create a film for the 'Canada in a Day' contest for CTV on September 10.) Rodrigo has been a valuable staff member for several years (notice, our staff stays with us!) and will help with staff-

KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM —SPECIAL EVENTS

Haunted House Tour- Keillor House Museum

Oct. 14-15 & 21-22 7-9pm
Tickets at door. Special
bookings for groups; call
379-6620

Adults \$10. Students \$8

Victorian Christmas Dinner- Keillor House Museum

Nov. 26 & Dec. 3, 6:30-10
pm

*Elegant four-course dinner.
Musical Entertainment*

Book early: 379-6620

Tickets \$65

New Year's Levee-Keillor House Museum

Jan. 1, 2017, 1-3 pm

*Warm up at the crackling hearth
fire with homemade soup, chili,
sweets and hot drinks. Enjoy
community hospitality following
the Lions' Polar Dip*

Admission free

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

MUSEUM MANAGER'S REPORT	2
WHAT CAN WE SAY ABOUT ALICE? PART II BY GENE GOODRICH	4
A YEAR AT THE HARDWARE STORE BY DOULAS HOW	9
FOR NOSTALGIA BUFFS: THE COMMEMORATION OF CHAN- DLER HOUSE 1976	11
OUR VOLUNTEERS	12

MUSEUM MANAGER'S (VERY FULL) REPORT

Another season has come and gone for the Keillor House Museum, truly a novel one.

First and foremost, the new website is finally up, and the exhaustive efforts of the website committee paid off handsomely. The user-friendly design makes it easy to find all the information that could possibly be desired. Included is a detailed description of our museums, a calendar of events, write ups on our exhibits and activities, a section for history buffs, as well as a section reserved for our gift shop, where all our publications and specialty items can be seen and ordered online!

A new exhibit, *Homey Elegance, Aspiring Gentility – The Furniture Makers of Westmorland County*, authored by Eugene Goodrich and inspired by the visit of antique furniture expert Darrell Butler, was displayed in 'Grandma's Room, off the parlour. The wonderful display of Westmorland craftsmanship, which was some of the best in the province during the early 19th century, included a number of pieces from the Keillor House collection in addition to photos and descriptions of pieces from different museums and private collections. Visitors enjoyed learning more about furniture making, an aspect of Westmorland history that was not very present in the museum previously. The exhibit offered such extensive information about each piece that not everyone was able to absorb it all during their visit. Anticipating this, an attractive booklet was made available in the gift shop comprising all the pictures and accompanying information from the exhibit, including the introductory panel and even an 'added extra': a list of some of the cabinet and carriage makers of Westmorland County. Thus, visitors could turn the temporary exhibit into a collector's item for only \$5!

Another memorable event was the launch of Dr. Goodrich's latest book, *In Search of John Keillor, a Historian's Odyssey*. The detailed analysis of the Keillor family was a big hit, being THE most in-depth research on the Dorchester Keillors ever produced, with all copies sold during the course of the season. The book launch was held on Opening Day, June 11th, along with the opening of the new exhibit and the launching of the new website. Needless to say, the museum was filled with members of the community and history buffs alike. The summer staff worked tirelessly keeping our guests well fed with a variety of delicious hors d'oeuvres provided by volunteers.

Speaking of the summer staff, getting students was a particular challenge this year because of changes made to the SEED program. Nevertheless, our activities coordinator, Alice Folkins, persevered until we ended up with five wonderful students. *Eric Maquignaz*, a returning employee and student at Mount Allison University was tasked with taking care of the gift shop. Thanks to him, we had numerous objects for sale under consignment, which provided a nice diversity of products. Being the only bilingual tour guide, Eric also gave every French tour this season, which kept him quite busy. *Mary McCluskey*, a Sackville native and St. Thomas University student, was tasked with cataloguing for the season. Seeing that Mary had never catalogued artifacts before, two of our previous managers volunteered their time to give her a hand. Meghan Beaudin gave her a little workshop on properly identifying objects and their donors, analyzing their condition, creating their accession number and using the electronic cataloguing database. This allowed Mary to catalogue many of the artifacts that came in, but some needed a particular expertise. Phyllis Stopps graciously volunteered three full days helping Mary identify textile artifacts and their pertinence to Dorchester's history. Mary catalogued over 20 items during her ten-week grant, all the while giving regular tours — pretty impressive! Another Sackville native, *Stephen Patriquin*, was a tour guide and our go-to handyman. Being a Bloc 1 carpenter and a first-year student at Mount Allison, Stephen was often tasked with little projects that would arise and also helped Alice take care of the heritage properties. An interesting fact about Stephen: did you know the gift shop sells a book written about his childhood home? *Reader be Thou Also Ready* is about the murder of Stephen's great-great-grandfather, William Fawcett, which took place in the house that has been in his family ever since. One tour even had him sign their copy of the book! Our fourth tour guide was *Matt Durnnian*, a first-year student at Mount Allison and originally from Kingston, NB. His friendly and helpful personality created a cheerful atmosphere for employees and visitors alike. Even on rainy days, you could count on Matt to bring a little ray of sunshine to work with him. Our final employee, *Rodrigo Martinez-Farina*, is a returnee and also the recipient of a six month Youth Employment Fund grant that will allow him to work with the Westmorland Historical Society until December. Rodrigo was a tour guide, an event planner and a gardener! He loved to deadhead the rose bushes and water the vegetable garden. He also had his first event planning experience this year when he was given complete control over the annual Heritage Fair, which was quite a success. He introduced many new ideas, such as children's games and food vendors. I think he will be a wonderful asset during the coming months as well.

This summer has been a great one. I believe that all these factors contributed to our visitation going up roughly 12%. I would like to finish up this year's report by thanking everyone who has stopped by the museum this year. It truly was a pleasure.

Ashley Beaudin

ing during the 'shoulder' season.

A special thanks to Dee Milliken, Supervisor of St. James Textile Museum, for another successful year. Dee manages St. James, gives daily demonstrations and tours, oversees the St. James Facebook account and promotes WHS (via demonstrations) at many events—the Highland Games (Moncton), Tantramar Heritage Fair(Sackville), and the Sackville Fall Fair, among others. *Well done, Dee.*

Fund-Raising Events

This year's Haunted House Tours (October 14-15 and 21-22) promises to be our most successful fund raising event. (Last year we entertained over 1700 visitors, and raised \$14,000!) Mike Shea, Marilyn and Ted Wheaton—and their families and friends, are setting up different routes through the 'dungeon' this year with new animated exhibits. If you would like to volunteer as staff and 'dress up' on one or more nights—it's great fun. Contact Alice at 379-6620. (Mike is also looking for Halloween masks—and foam rubber. Can you can help?) *Thank you Mike, Marilyn and Ted for your many weeks of work to make this event such a success.*

If you plan to attend a Victorian Dinner (November 3, December 3), you need to book ASAP by contacting Alice at 379-6620. (Cost of four-course dinner with wine and musical entertainment is \$65.00. Special bookings for groups are still available but fill up quickly.)

Bell Inn Update

We continue to advertise the Bell Inn Restaurant and have a number of parties looking seriously at the opportunity it offers. The building is currently self-supporting—with three apartments rented, so we have the time to find *that special* tenant who understands our expectations and can also develop a sustainable business in a competitive environment.

In the interim, starting October 1, Tasha Brooker ('Mrs. B's Meals to Go') will be locating her business in the downstairs kitchen of the Bell Inn, offering 'meals to go': pickup on Fridays, with 'takeout' from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm Wednesday to Friday. Tasha already has many loyal customers and offers a variety of affordable meals (\$10.00 and under). This is a great service—especially for seniors who want convenient, nutritious and affordable meals. *Contact Tasha at 213-4328.*

Welcome New Board Members

In the last Newsletter we mentioned that six Board Members (five have served 9 years) are retiring this year—Marlene Hickman, Margaret Eaton, Eddy Bowes, Shirley Oliver, Genie Coates and Nancy Vogan, and we want to thank them again for their service. (Although 'retired', many Board Members are continuing as volunteers.)

Our new Board Members—Inga Hanson, Bob Hickman, Brian LeBlanc, Bernie Melanson, Bonnie Swift and Karen Truman, are an experienced, well-qualified group and we expect to put them to work soon. I think they will find it a rewarding experience.

It has been an exciting year for the Society and the future looks promising, thanks to great support from all of you, who make it a pleasure to report on our activities.

Cole Morison

WHAT CAN WE SAY ABOUT ALICE? A RETROSPECTIVE ON HER LIFE WITH WHS PART II BY GENE GOODRICH

I can think of no better way to introduce this second part of my retrospective on Alice Folkin's staggering contribution to the Westmorland Historical Society than to quote from the introduction to the first part:

"Anyone associated with the Westmorland Historical Society knows how central Alice Folkins is to every aspect of its mission. Whether as chief organizer of our special events, supervisor of our rental properties, behind-the-scenes Museum Manager—you name it, and she is always there at the very centre of things. But unless you research it a bit, it's impossible to appreciate just how deep her commitment to WHS is, and how far back it goes. For the last twenty years, at least, she has been its main pillar. What may be less well known is that she played an important role in the Society long before that. I know she has received much praise in the *Newsletter* and other places as well, but I think it's now high time to lay it all out a little more systematically. So far as I know, she plans to be with us for a long time yet, but that doesn't mean we should wait for her obituary to celebrate her achievement."

I then went on to describe her role in the restoration and repurposing of the Bell Inn, the Landry House, the St. James Textile Museum, and the Payzant & Card Building. She was a principal reason for the success of all these projects, and it is worth remarking again that most of her work was done as an unpaid volunteer, marked by a selfless devotion that only a saint can match. I ended by pointing out that all this was accomplished while she was holding down a full-time job at the bank, volunteering at the local food bank (she was a founding member), participating in the activities of the Lioness's Club (a founding member), sitting on the school board (eleven years), working with a youth club (which she and two others organized), teaching Sunday School and raising five kids. In this issue we continue to chronicle and celebrate her prodigious labours on behalf of our Society.

The Visitor Information Centre

Sometime in the early 1990s when Alice was working for the Atlantic Waterfowl Celebration in Sackville, Sylvia decided that Dorchester needed a dedicated visitor information centre and craft shop. (There had been one in Keillor House Museum, but it hadn't worked out very well.) She had her eye on Spence's Store, which had recently closed, and when that burned down she got the idea of acquiring the property and erecting a new

building. Alice, who wasn't even on the Board yet, was asked to "see what she could do." What she did was go to the Spence family, who gave it to the Society in exchange for paying the back taxes on it. Then she engaged a Sackville architect (originally from Dorchester) to draw up some plans and spent the next year and a half (well, not all of it—she did a whole lot of other things as well) wading through red tape to get the road easements that were deemed necessary even though the store had somehow stood for many years without them. When that was settled, she went to the manager of Harrison's Hardware in Amherst with the plans and explained what the building was for, saying she would like to buy all the materials from him. He said, "I feel like there's another shoe to drop." "There is," said Alice, "We have no money. The most we can pay is \$500 a month." And because he trusted her and knew it was for a good cause, he agreed to supply all the materials on credit. The Lion's Club got involved and the centre was built entirely by volunteers (whose ages ranged from ten to seventy-four) under Warren Folkin's supervision. It was quite successful for a while but when the grants started drying up there wasn't enough money to pay a staff—even though the provincial government lavished a generous \$800 a year on its visitor information centres. So Alice offered to let the village use it as a visitor information centre but it declined, preferring instead to run its own from the village office. Thus, the building sat empty for several years and began to deteriorate due to dampness caused by inadequate ventilation. After several attempts to start a business in it had failed, Debbie Wiggins approached Alice with a reasonable offer and there was a happy ending after all. The building has been expanded and thoroughly renovated to a high standard, and it now houses a very successful beauty parlour as well as a small take-out. Although things didn't work out exactly as planned, in the end, employment was created, a vacant lot was filled with a nice looking building and Dorchester is better off for it. Again, much of the credit is due to Alice.

Corrections Canada and the Westmorland Institution

Important as they are, the restoration projects tell only a part of the story of Alice's contributions to WHS and Dorchester. Another very large part is the relationship she has developed with the Westmorland Institution, which has become one of the best friends the Society has ever had. It seems to have started with the second painting of St. James. Like the province's other museums, we were being cut back on the number of students we could hire for cutting the lawns, etc. and

Ted Nicholson was volunteering to fill in the gaps. When it got too much for him to do the lawn alone he would bring in an inmate to help, something he was authorized to do as a retired custodial officer at the penitentiary. About the same time, Alice and Dianne Nicholson, who was then Museum Manager, got wind of Benjamin Moore's offer of \$5000 worth of paint to charitable organizations, as well as Heritage New Brunswick's offer to match with cash the value of any volunteer labour recruited for the restoration of heritage buildings—and an idea was born. They approached the authorities at Corrections Canada, Alice turned dimes into dollars and St. James got a magnificent paint job and a new roof to boot, as described in the last issue of the Newsletter.

The next major step in the developing relationship was the restoration of the old Methodist burying ground located on penitentiary property and now known as the Pioneer Cemetery. (The land was originally deeded by early Yorkshire settler John Weldon, a devout Methodist whose grant included the land occupied by the penitentiary today.) It had been in a state of dilapidation for years, and Ted and Dianne Nicholson, who live right across the road from it, had often expressed concern. The opportunity to do something about it arose when one of the inmates turned out to have had some experience in restoring tombstones. Ted learned of this and got Alice and Dianne to approach the Institution on the possibility of a restoration project. They were amenable and Alice and Dianne got the United Church minister involved. (The United Church inherited the old Methodist church properties after a union of Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists formed the United Church of Canada in 1925.) Considerable enthusiasm was generated and the boys did a great job of cleaning and resetting the tombstones, in many cases after digging them out of the ground where they had lain hidden for years. Even more importantly, they thoroughly documented every one of them, photographing them, recording the inscriptions and producing a record in the form of a binder and CD that has become a valuable research tool for genealogists and local historians. They also cleaned up the graveyard itself and made a new arch for the entry. Alice and Dianne brought their work to the attention of the Association of Museums of New Brunswick and each of the twenty-four volunteers who had worked on the project received a certificate of recognition. On their prompting, the Association also nominated Corrections Canada for a Canadian Heritage Award. They got it, and the warden received a special presentation in Saint John. It was the first time anything in Dorchester had been recognized in the way of heritage preservation and it brought home to the Westmorland Institution just how fruitful a relationship with the Westmorland Historical Society could be. Ted and Dianne deserve a great

deal of the credit, but so, too, does Alice.

The St. James project, followed by the cemetery project, was the beginning of a relationship that has benefited the Society in so many ways that it is difficult to count them. Here is a partial list:

Since repainting and re-roofing St. James, volunteer inmate labour has replaced the sills around the belfry (with beams Alice had saved from another project), milled up and installed new trim to replace some that had rotted, and refinished the floor.

Sometime around 2005, Corrections Canada agreed to allow work release volunteers to help us repair and repaint the exterior of Landry House, even providing the supervisor and scaffolding, a very considerable 'added extra'. Thanks to Alice's grant-getting skills, Heritage New Brunswick matched the market value of the volunteer labour with cash, and because there were so many man hours involved (the painting was only the smallest part of the job) it was again enough to buy all the paint and materials and then 'top off' the project with a new roof. This could never have happened without the inmates' eagerness to volunteer, and Alice's persuasive ways with them as well as with Corrections Canada. Since then, another work release volunteer has completed the caulking of the clapboards that somehow got forgotten about during the main project. Want to guess who supervised and steadied the ladder for him?

Our friends from the Westmorland Institution also volunteered most of the labour for the renewal of the penitentiary exhibit in the Carriage House, although the idea was mainly Alice's. Of course she worked alongside them and, needless to say, procured the exhibit renewal grant that made the project possible. The exhibit was completely reworked, new shelving was installed, a new exhibit cabinet was built in the Institution's carpentry shop and the boys even added a mock cell to lend a further note of authenticity. But they didn't stop there. The Carriage House was finally finished on the inside—it had been left in the rough for years—with paneling for the walls and new paint everywhere. Again Alice got a matching grant for their labour and used the money to add lighting, pay for the paint and put on part of a new roof. For the latter job we were able to get just one volunteer and who do you think was up there on the roof with him putting on shingles and worrying lest he fall off and make waves in the wrong places? He also did other projects for Alice that saved the Society many thousands of dollars. For example, he replaced the rotting ramp leading into the Payzant-Card building, finished the entrance into the library and painted part of the ell as well as the outside of the Carriage House—with Alice working right alongside him, of course.

Inmates in the main penitentiary are not eligible for work release, but some of them do good deeds for us from a distance.

They have made many items for the Gift Shop, for example all the lovely birdhouses that are so popular they fly off the shelf without any help from the birds, as well as many things (such as the horrible Jaws of Hell) for the Haunted House Tour. Another inmate volunteer working at the carpentry shop made all the sophisticated stands for Inga Hansen's outstandingly successful *Small Town, Big Fashion* exhibition. Alice priced what it would have cost to buy them and discovered that he saved us on the order of \$14,000. In other words, he made the exhibition possible for us. She estimated that in the last five years alone (leading up to 2014) our friends on the Hill have given us at least a quarter of a million dollars worth of labour, much of it skilled.

Sadly, the penitentiary carpenter shop is now closed, another victim of recent cost cutting measures. Nevertheless, we still get men who can do useful things, and Alice makes the most of it. For example, one of them recently re-caned the seat of the adjustable chair that was damaged during the move when the front wall was reconstructed in 2005. (It has been one of the favourite artifacts in Keillor House for years.) He even managed to stain the new caning so that you can't tell the difference from the old. Another fellow who has considerable organizational skills helped Judy Morison and Shirley Oliver create a filing system to handle the vast accumulation of administrative materials—correspondence, minutes, grant applications, etc.—that has been collected over the last half century, much of it by Alice. (It was this project that made possible the articles on the history of the Society published in the last few Newsletters.) Volunteers also regularly scrape, paint, clean, scrub and cut the grass, the last named alone representing a considerable savings each year. To give some idea of the scope of their contribution I can do no better than to cite a few lines from President Cole Morison's eloquent "Tribute to Our Volunteers from Westmorland Institution," published in the September 2013 issue of our *Newsletter*:

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 in working with her and her husband, 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.

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."

Another aspect of this relationship that should not go unnoticed is its therapeutic effect on the volunteers. Again, Cole's "Tribute" says it about as well as it can be said. In answering his own rhetorical question, "Why do these volunteers love to work at Keillor House?" he wrote:

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. As she says, "They weren't always inmates." 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.

Not to put too fine a point on it, these volunteers are vital to our operation and we are an important part of their rehabilitation. I believe this to be a unique relationship between a historical society/museum and a correctional institution, and in very large measure we have Alice to thank for it.

Alice the Recruiter

Another of Alice's many talents that have brought great benefit to the Society lies in recruiting volunteers and developing relationships with potential friends and patrons. She just seems to have a knack for attracting the right person to the right job at the right time, and no doubt her own enthusiasm and dedication is a large part of her magnetism. She also keeps an ear close to the ground, listening for opportunities. As I am sure you will

appreciate, it would require a thick book to elaborate on, or even list, all the cases in point. I have already briefly mentioned the help we have gotten from Warren Folkins and the anonymous Sackville engineer through her. Let me just add a few others as examples that can stand for many more.

Almost everyone familiar with Keillor House loves and admires the beautiful flower garden around the south and east walls, and many are aware that it is entirely the work of Bernie Melanson, a Mathieu-Martin physics and math teacher whose grandmother once worked for the last Mrs. Keillor to live in the house. But unless you read and remembered my article on Bernie in the February 2012 issue of the *Newsletter*, you may not know—although I suppose many of you could have guessed—that it was Alice who snagged him for us. As explained in the article, he was showing some relatives ‘from away’ where his grandmother had worked—it was his own first visit to Keillor House—and was struck with the lack of an authentic garden to set it off. An enthusiastic gardener himself, he asked at the museum if they needed any help with the gardening, and left his name. The common fate of such overtures in most institutions is to get lost in the bureaucratic shuffle of good intentions, but they are not blessed with an Alice who, then as now, was ever on the prowl for fresh recruits. Springing immediately, she invited him to lunch at the Bell Inn (he still remembers the seafood chowder and biscuits), and—to repeat the cliché—‘the rest, as they say, is history’.

The Society is fortunate in having, and to have had, a number of generous behind-the-scenes patrons who have helped our cause immensely, and once again it is largely Alice who is responsible. Two come to mind immediately.

Mrs. Ruth Stanley has been a long-time member and generous supporter of the Society and it is mainly Alice who apprises her of our needs and maintains the warm personal relationship that makes it rewarding for this very kind and gracious lady to be our friend. For example, she is the one who arranges for her transportation to and from our special events such as the Victorian Christmas Dinner and the Mother’s Day Tea. A couple of years ago she was her companion on a Caribbean cruise. Not to give away too many secrets, the many nice things that Mrs. Stanley has done for Keillor House alone include the drapes for the parlour, the state-of-the-art dishwasher and the beautiful carriage lamps at the front entrance.

Perhaps only those who have served on the Executive are fully aware of just how important the Graydon Milton Endowment fund is to our operation. Far more than establish-

ing the library and genealogy centre, it helps to fund our museum operations in many other ways as well. In fact, it’s not too much to say that without it we might very well not be operating at all. But perhaps even fewer are aware of how we came by it, although you are probably beginning to suspect that a certain person had something to do with it.

Graydon Milton was a Dorchester boy who, like many others during the Great Depression, left to seek his fortune elsewhere. He eventually found it in California where he did very well and built up a considerable estate. His reconnection with his hometown began in 1984 when Doug How got the idea of a reunion of Dorchesterites who had gone to school here during or before World War II, and asked the Society for help. Alice was delegated to help organize it. (You can be sure she did a lot more than ‘help’; just tracking them all down was a monumental labour in itself.) Nearly five hundred came from all corners of North America, but unfortunately Graydon Milton wasn’t one of them. He very much wanted to come, but was unable to. But he wrote to the Society and asked to be kept informed. Alice was delegated to do that, too. This was how she learned of the book he had written describing his boyhood in Dorchester and how he learned that the Society was looking for materials to publish—a match made in museum heaven. He gave us the copyright to his engaging autobiography, *A Teenager’s Odyssey or Five Million and Once*, paid the publication costs and made a \$1000 donation to the Society. Alice and Sylvia decided that a professional brochure would be a good use of the money and when the cost spiraled upwards to \$4000 Alice organized a fundraiser to make up the difference. She made sure Graydon got some copies, together with a hearty thank you. This started a sustained conversation both by letter and phone (they never met) in the course of which he—growing increasingly nostalgic for his old home—would ask her about people he once knew in Dorchester. She would get them to contact him, send him pictures of the house he grew up in (it is still standing in Middleton), fill him in on the latest news, etc. The upshot was that one day he informed her that he was leaving the Society \$100,000 in his will and the same amount to the Nova Scotia Museum. Alice’s diligence and kindness paid off in a way she would never have expected, while the Nova Scotia Museum’s negligence and bureaucratic complacency added an even more unexpected bonus that nevertheless came our way mainly because of her. When it received the cheque, it simply put the money into general revenue without so much as a thank you note, apart from the tax credit. Its reward was that Graydon rescinded his gift and gave it to us instead. Under the careful management of Cole Morison it has not only sustained us in so many ways, as mentioned above, but has grown well beyond the original amount to remain a legacy for the future. Of course we must be grateful to Graydon Milton for this, but—and I am sure he would agree—we must also thank Alice, for without her willingness to go above and beyond the call of

duty it most likely wouldn't have happened. Let's remember that she wasn't even on the Board, maybe not even a formal member of the Society, at the time.

On a personal note I can add that I, too, am an example of her recruiting powers and perhaps the story of how she laid and sprung the trap will be of some interest in the present context, as it's entirely typical of how she operates. As a pilot and sometime amateur photographer very much in love with the marsh and coastal scenery of the region, I accumulated a considerable collection of slides (remember those?) that I drew on for presentations to several organizations. Hearing of this from someone who had attended one of them, Alice, who as President of the Society was just then in the market for an after dinner speaker for the Annual General Meeting, contacted me and asked if I would do the job. (She confessed later that she was also in the market for a new member of the Society with academic credentials.) As an honorarium I was presented with the nice print of Keillor House by Robert Lyon and was about to be given an honorary membership when she discovered somewhere in the files that I was already a life member—something I had totally forgotten. (I made a \$100 donation to the Society way back in the early seventies when we lived in Dorchester, for which a life membership was automatic, but had otherwise never been an active member.) Her next move, which came soon thereafter, was to ask me if I would serve on the Board after all these years of passive membership. Thinking this would mainly entail going to Board meetings three or four times a year, I took the bait. I was, after all, retired and had some free time, so why not? About the second meeting, I was asked to sit on—nay chair—a committee to set up the Graydon Milton Library and Genealogy Centre (those academic credentials, you see). Then it was, 'would you consider letting your name stand for President?' Alice had been President for a number of years and felt she needed a breather—quite apart from the fact that such long terms are against the Society's constitution, and in any case she was doing a myriad of other things as well. When it became apparent that others better qualified than I were already overburdened and felt unable to make the commitment, I agreed. By this time I had had first hand experience of her competence and dedication, and I just didn't want to let her down. Besides, I already knew that she would be there to keep things running smoothly—and me from making too many mistakes. Again, 'the rest is history', but I am happy to add that, although I have now written quite a bit of history for the Society, I have not yet become 'history'.

Alice as President, or Why the Wall Didn't Fall

It's also entirely typical of Alice that she doesn't remember exactly how or when she became President, or for that matter

even a member of the Board. The transition from (very modestly) paid assistant to super volunteer to board member and chief executive was simply the natural and all but unnoticed corollary of her steadily growing importance, not only to the Society's operation, but to its very existence. To be more concrete, she was already doing the work of a board member and executive officer long before she had the name, and she is doing so again as a member without formal office. All we need to know for present purposes is that she served as President from the late 1990s until I replaced her (if that is the right word) in 2006, and that one of her major accomplishments during that time was her role in preventing the 'Fall of the Wall'. Of course several others were also major players in that drama, notably Jack Limes and Cole Morison. But it was Alice who got the ball rolling and recruited the expertise that did the job in such magnificent style that a documentary entitled "These Walls will Rise Again" was made of it.

Working regularly at Keillor House, she was one of the first to notice the bulging of the front wall that finally became undeniable when snow blew in on the floor. When she brought this to the attention of the province (which still owned the building at that time) she wasn't taken seriously at first because she had no paper qualifications for making such an assessment. In fact, she wasn't even President yet. Instead, the person who came down to have a look assured her that the wall would stand for another hundred years. At that point she knew she would have to recruit someone with the right credentials to convince the government that there was indeed a problem. Fortunately, Sylvia just happened to know Jack Lines, a recently retired military engineer living in Port Elgin. He agreed to help out and Alice worked with him and Sylvia to prepare a submission that finally got some action from the government in the form of the less than handsome steel bracing girders that kept the wall from collapsing for a number of years until it could be properly repaired. Then she switched into fund raising mode to get that process started. She and Diane prepared a cookbook of historical recipes to sell in the gift shop and organized a sale of redundant artifacts, thus raising the initial \$5000. She also recruited the administrative talents of Cole and Judy Morison who had recently retired and moved back to Judy's hometown. (They expressed interest in volunteering after attending a Christmas Open House Tour, and Alice pounced immediately.) Cole became a key member of the project management team headed by Jack, and was primarily responsible for preparing the successful application for the \$350,000 ACOA grant that finally made the restoration possible after ownership of Keillor House

had been turned over to WHS (at the same time as the Landry House.) Before that, however, Alice had exercised her own grant-getting skills to snag a \$60,000 grant from Heritage New Brunswick and did her share and then some in the drive that raised another \$60,000 from the membership of WHS. Thus, while others directed the project, and many besides her deserve a great deal of credit for saving Keillor House a second time, it was Alice who first set the alarm bells ringing and took the first important steps to ensure that these walls would indeed “rise again.”

So, what more can we say about Alice that hasn't already been said? I have tried to convey some idea of the dimensions of her contribution to WHS and to Dorchester in this essay, but I don't think I have much more than scratched the surface. That's about the most powerful thing *I* can say about Alice.

A YEAR AT THE HARDWARE STORE BY DOUGLAS HOW

Editor's Note: In the last two issues we reprinted a couple of Douglas How's delightfully evocative articles on the Dorchester of his youth during the 1930s, 40s and early 50s. Now here's another one, first published in the Reader's Digest, February 1979.

Sometimes I feel this is where I came in. I read that young people find it hard to get jobs, especially jobs to which they feel their education should entitle them. More than forty years ago that's how it was with me, as it led to what seemed like twelve wasted months. But it doesn't seem that way now.

In 1936 when I got out of high school in Dorchester, N.B., the Depression had become a way of life. I looked for work but there was none. A newspaper said maybe, sometime. A bank said maybe, then no. Then William Hickman, the proprietor of a hardware-grocery store and a former schoolmate of my mother, said he would take me in until I found something better. So I became a helper at \$4 a week—not much but more than Mr. Hickman's troubled business could pay.

That's where I was for those twelve months, and from that experience I would say to any frustrated young job-seeker today: take what you can get, watch and learn. One day you'll likely be glad you did. You'll conclude that the broader your experience the more it enriches new experience. If my own year is any guide, you may enjoy yourself, and you may even discover what you really want to do.

It took me years, and more exposure to life, to sort out what I learned in that store. In my forties when I took an evening course in business administration, I often thought about the store in Dorchester, and sometimes today when I go into a supermarket I think of it too. A 1979 Loblaws tells me there are more efficient ways to do what I saw done. But I also real-

ize that Mr. Hickman's store had its own efficiency for humanity; it was warm and friendly in a way we've lost somewhere. I'm glad I saw things as they were before efficiency became a god.

What I learned above all was that I was fascinated by people—and a vague desire to write became a determination to become a journalist. I taught myself the two-fingered typing I have used ever since. I learned by pounding out the monthly bills, and in doing so I got an entirely new perspective on the village by seeing who owed what. I saw the merits and dangers of credit, learned that those who pay their bills are least often able to do so, but too proud and honest not to, and that those who should be the first to pay are often the last.

In that year, I know now, I began to see the village whole and came to appreciate it more. And today, it seems a minor miracle that a tiny place with such a mix of blood strains—English, Scots, Irish, German, Acadian, Micmac, black and one Jewish family—could somehow remain a community.

I know, too, that when I saw and admired brave families from threadbare homes, I was witnessing the slow dying of a priceless Canadian institution, the small family farm. When I think of the Depression, I think of an episode that crystallizes it in a single image: a group of men in rough clothes coming in to the store with pick and shovel to phone the district roads foreman. They'd thought, they'd *hoped*, there would be work to help them feed their families. I will never forget the gray ache in their faces when the foreman told them he had no funds.

The store gave me my first lesson in economics. The manager, Jim Dooe, used to send me out as a scout to see that other stores were charging for eggs, then he gauged his own price

accordingly. The key, I learned, was how the hens were laying, how many eggs the farmers were bringing into town for barter. In a more humbling moment, I was sent out to shop for rubber tacks. There was no supply, I learned, and I was the sole demand. It kept the customers in laughs for days.

It was those customers who dropped in to shop, to pass the time of day, to gossip, who bared to me the remarkable scope of the human personality. There was little Jimmy the Barber, whose celebrated and eclectic thirst longed for lemon extract (the orders were to sell him none); Zoël, an Acadian with face of biblical sorrow, who leaped madly when tickled unexpectedly, yet somehow usually managed to land with his fingers in the cookie barrel; and inscrutable Moses, the emissary from the county jail.

Once each day one inmate was allowed out to shop for all of them, and it often was Moses. He was teased a lot, but Jim Dooe teased him once too often, the time Moses gave him a quart bottle and asked for molasses. Jim pumped it full from a barrel, teased a bit and then, as Moses started to leave, asked where the quarter was to pay. "Da quarter," said Moses, "is at da bottom o' da bottle." He didn't bat an eye, but I like to think he chuckled all the way back to the jail.

My most vivid memories concern the commercial travelers who pedaled their wares to Jim and Mr. Hickman. They drove up in their city suits, gathered up their briefcases, straightened their ties and came through the big front door. And no two operated alike, not the successful ones. For at J.H. Hickman & Co. Ltd., the hard-sell types tended to leave with minimum orders or no orders at all.

Not Lol Beazley. He was a slim, pleasant fellow with a limp and a grin. He had a crisp manner, but somehow never rushed things. He fitted right into our crossroads. He came from a hockey family and he always had a bit of hockey gossip. He traveled for a tobacco company, and he knew how to make use of his talent for window design.

"Jim," he'd say casually, "your windows could use some sprucing up."

"See what you can do," Jim would say.

Maybe a bit of tobacco propaganda would end up in a prominent position, but Lol never overdid it. He didn't seem to spend much time selling, but he sold. The successful salesmen like Lol, the welcome ones, not only got orders, they usually ended up going to the hotel bar with Jim or Mr. Hickman.

Pat Smith was another, a big, strapping fellow who travelled for Eastern Hay and Feed. He'd been a professional boxer, and still looked like one and, like Beazley, knew how to pace things. He'd be apt to end up out in the backstore, stripped to the

waist, showing some of the village boys how to handle their fists. I doubt that he ever went away without an order, or a trip to the hotel.

But I suspect the best of the lot was Elmer Farnell, the embodiment of talent and vocation ripened into mellow splendour. He was a portly man in middle age, and never seemed to mention the firm he represented, but memory says it was a tea company. He made life in the store throb with his personality.

Elmer's soft-sell was in his beautiful voice. He could spread a bit of gossip and tell a joke or two, then Jim Dooe would say: "Sing us a song, Elmer." He'd sing, then get the customers singing with him, bodies leaning against the counters, against the tall, shelved backdrop of groceries and chocolate boxes and Surprise Soap packages and axes and saws. Stephen Foster songs, the old hymns, "Sweet Adeline"...he knew them all.

You were sorry to see Elmer go but his departure could be a kind of drama. One day the strains of "Down by the Old Mill Stream" had barely died away when I realized with a start that Elmer was leaving. If he had mentioned his product, I hadn't heard him, yet there he was, suddenly booming good-bye to one and all. He touched the latch. He opened the door. He started out—and just for a moment he paused like some actor in the last seconds of play.

"Elmer," Jim Dooe bellowed, "you didn't get an order!"

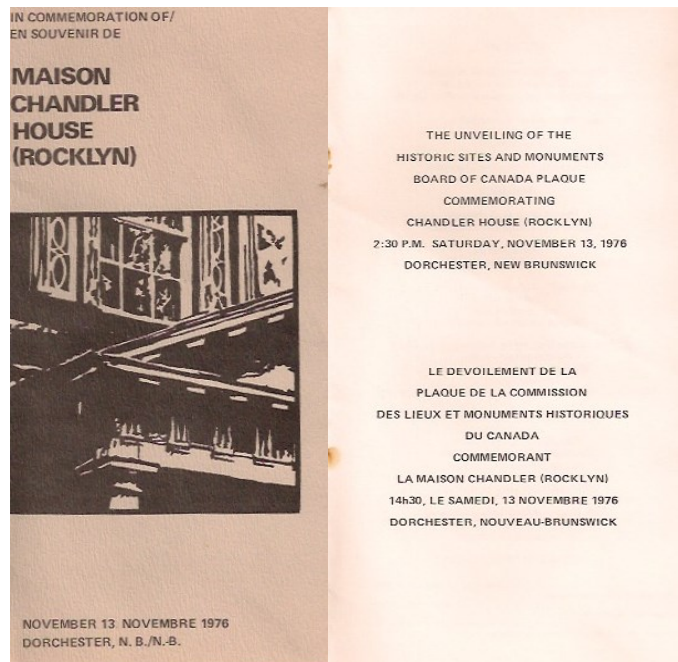
"Oh?" Elmer looked down at his briefcase as at some instrument of inexplicable guilt. "By golly, Jim, you're right."

He got an order, of course, and off they went to the hotel.

I realize now what I learned from those salesman—that society always functions within a system but that, given human ingenuity, any system is capable of almost endless adaptation. I have ever since enjoyed the spectacle of good men working with a certain irreverent joy at a craft they've mastered, whatever it might be.

The year itself? I have a simple gauge that tells me I enjoyed it: I still feel good every time I go into a well-kept hardware store.

FOR NOSTALGIA BUFFS: THE COMMEMORATION OF CHANDLER HOUSE 1976



PROGRAM

Chairman - Professor Jules H. Léger
New Brunswick Representative
Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada

Short Musical Interlude

"O CANADA"

Opening remarks by the Chairman

ADDRESSES

His Worship E. R. Monk
Mayor of the Village of Dorchester

Dr. Peter Penner
President, Westmorland Historical Society

Mr. Lloyd G. Folkins, M. L. A.
(Tantramar)
representing the
Premier of New Brunswick

The Honourable Romeo A. LeBlanc, P. C., M. P.
(Westmorland - Kent)
Minister of the Environment
representing the
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

PLAQUE UNVEILING

Mrs. G. E. G. MacLaren
Great-great-granddaughter of
Edward Barron Chandler

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

The Reverend George C. Lemmon
The Anglican Church of Canada
Sackville and Dorchester

"GOD SAVE THE QUEEN"

Reception: Chandler House

Organist: Ina Chafe

Organ: Mount Allison University Chapel

PROGRAMME

Président - Professeur Jules H. Léger
Représentant du Nouveau-Brunswick
Commission des lieux et monuments historiques du Canada

Court interlude musical

"O CANADA"

Mot d'ouverture du président

DISCOURS

Son Honneur E. R. Monk
Maire du village de Dorchester

Dr. Peter Penner
Président, Société historique de Westmorland

M. Lloyd G. Folkins, Député
(Tantramar)
représentant le
Premier ministre du Nouveau-Brunswick

L'honorable Roméo A. LeBlanc, C. P., Député
(Westmorland-Kent)
Ministre de l'Environnement
représentant le
Ministre des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien

DEVOILEMENT DE LA PLAQUE

Mme G. E. G. MacLaren
Arrière-arrière-petite-fille de
Edward Barron Chandler

PRIERE DE CONSECRATION

Le Révérend George C. Lemmon
L'église anglicane du Canada
Sackville et Dorchester

"GOD SAVE THE QUEEN"

Réception: La Maison Chandler

Organiste: Ina Chafe

Orgue: Chapelle de l'université Mount Allison

MAISON CHANDLER (ROCKLYN)

Edward Barron Chandler (1800-1880), qui fut tour à tour juge, député à l'Assemblée législative, chef du gouvernement, Père de la Confédération, commissaire des chemins de fer et lieutenant-gouverneur du Nouveau Brunswick, fit bâtir cette demeure typique du renouveau classique vers 1831. Un toit d'ardoise, en croupe, coiffe les murs en pierre de taille, à bossage rustique au rez-de-chaussée et à surface lisse à l'étage supérieur. Des triglyphes ainsi que des colonnes et demi-colonnes cannelées ornent le portique. Chandler conserva "Rocklyn" pendant toute sa vie publique.

CHANDLER HOUSE (ROCKLYN)

This Classical Revival house was built for Edward Barron Chandler (1800-1880) about 1831. A hipped slate roof tops the ashlar structure. Rustication on the first storey wall contrasts with the smooth face above. Triglyphs and fluted door columns enrich the handsome portico. "Rocklyn" remained Chandler's property throughout his long career in public office - as judge, member of the legislative assembly and subsequently government leader, Father of Confederation, railroad commissioner, and finally as lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick.



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 11 to Sept. 10 2016
 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 1960 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: \$15.00
- Family: \$20.00
- Student: \$5.00
- Life: \$150.00

Research Associates

Judith Rygiel, W. E. Goodrich
 Editor, *Newsletter*, W. E. Goodrich

Board of Directors

<i>President</i>	Cole Morison
<i>Past President</i>	Greg Partridge
<i>Vice President</i>	Vacant
<i>Secretary</i>	Judy Morison
<i>Treasurer</i>	Crystal Grant
Mary Balser	George Balser
Bob Hickman	Brian LeBlanc
Inga Hanson	Kathy Bowser
Bernie Melanson	Eugene Goodrich
Bonnie Swift	Karen Trueman

Alice's Kudos To Some Outstanding Volunteers

Volunteers are a breed unto themselves, and are we ever lucky to have some of the best supporting our museums, collections and fund raisers. We also have a number of people in the background that you often don't see or think about. They are just there doing what is needed, and I would like to mention a few of them in this issue. *Andrew Partridge* has been a volunteer for many years, first with the Haunted House and now with our gardens. He comes every spring to till our Keillor House vegetable garden, and this year he did the same for us at the Bell Inn. Thank you Andrew. Over the summer I routinely supervise volunteer inmates who come to do odd jobs and mow lawns. This year, on a number of occasions we were left without our lawn mowing helpers from the pen who normally do the Landry House. Noticing this, *Elizabeth Stultz*, who has always come to my rescue, helped me do the mowing. Elizabeth also keeps the lawns raked, not only when there is extra grass but also when they are covered in fall leaves. Thank you Elizabeth (Libby). *Bernie Melanson* continues to tend our Keillor House garden, starting the seeds at the school atrium and coming to Keillor house just before opening to work his magic—all at no expense to us. Bernie keeps an eye on the flowers all summer and often comes just to show the students how he can use some of the plants to make tea, etc. He also spends our Heritage Day making a meal in the open hearth fireplace for the busy students and visitors. Thank you Bernie. Speaking of Heritage Day, it always amazes me how everyone we approach comes to help us celebrate it. They come to shear the sheep, make baskets, bake bread in the bake oven, weave a chair bottom or exercise their special talents in many other ways—again without recognition or monetary compensation. They take time off from work or family responsibilities in order to make our Heritage Day at Keillor House the success it is, and we are so grateful. I am not mentioning your names just in case I forget one of them. You are all so wonderful, and I don't want to leave anyone out.

We are approaching our busy fall and our Haunted House activities, so if you want to help, please let me know. Without volunteers, this most successful of our fund raisers would simply not be possible. Please call Alice Folkins 379-6620 or email me at joansal@nbnet.nb.ca