

WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The year of 2020 has not been an easy one. There have been many challenges to overcome in my new role as the President of the WHS, and adapting to one of the greatest pandemics of the last century has been one of them. In saying that, there isn't an institution that has not been impacted by Covid-19, and this unfortunately includes our museums and heritage sites.

In spite of the overwhelming challenges with Covid-19, our dedicated staff was determined to overcome and keep both the Keillor House and St. James Textile museum open and operational throughout the summer. Using information provided from the Association Heritage New Brunswick and the Canadian Conservation Institute, our Manager/Curator, Donald Alward, was able to create a comprehensive Covid-19 management plan that has allowed us operate and to provide tours to the public. While our

hours have been limited to five days a week (Wednesday thru Sunday) we are happy to say, once again, that we are open for business!

While our formal annual general meeting and dinner could not be held this year, we were able to hold a successful AGM online on June 25th with the use of Zoom video conferencing.

New Exhibits:

We now have on display at the Keillor house a spectacular doll house exhibit that was donated to the museum by Ann Ford of Moncton. Ann designed the doll house herself in a style depicting the late 1700's, and she had a friend of hers build it. She then decorated and furnished it in painstaking detail right down to the mouse looking for crumbs in the kitchen. Ann was even gracious enough to come to back to the mu-

seum to set it back up for us after it was transported. For more details, see Don's description and pictures on page 16.

Fund Raising and Events:

Due to COVID-19 we were not able to hold any of our traditional fundraising activities. As a result, our manager, Donald Alward, and our dedicated staff and volunteers decided that one of the safest way to raise money would be to hold a Keillor House Museum yard sale. This yard sale was held on July 25th outdoors under tents on the Keillor house lawn, allowing us to raise funds in the safest manner possible. Social distancing was required and people were required to wear face masks. Numerous people donated items and the sale raised approximately \$2,500 dollars. The funds will be used to support our museum activities.

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KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM —SPECIAL EVENTS

For updates on this year's Special Events, please check our website and/or FaceBook on a regular basis

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MANAGER-CURATOR'S REPORT

2020 is certainly a challenging year for us all. As Manager/Curator for the Keillor House and St. James Textile Museums, I have certainly learned a great deal over the last few months that I never dreamed would be necessary. My Bachelor of Science degree has actually come in handy to understand some of the terminology and references used as the whole situation has developed.

COVID-19 protocols and Public Health recommendations aside, this has actually proven to be a productive season for the museums. While there have not been very many visitors, the St. James staff have been constantly weaving to keep up with the demand for tea towels. Forty tea towels have been made and sold, including two custom-ordered in the Fraser of Lovat tartan. This marked the first time a tartan has been woven at the St. James Textile Museum and it was done by Freya.

The Keillor House staff has been busy helping with various collections-related tasks. The confirmation of artefact locations and ensuring that the database contains the correct information has taken place for several locations in the Keillor House. Costume collection storage locations have been confirmed and entered into the database for all 163 storage bins and all 184 items in the seven sections of the hanging storage at the Payzant and Card building. Digital scanning of 131 archival records resulted in 1435 pages being captured. The majority of the materials in this fonds are related to Josiah Wood (1776-1809) who, among several other occupations, succeeded Robert Keillor as the tavern-keeper in the county jail. (He was also the grandfather of the Josiah Wood who became Sackville's first mayor, and later Lt. Governor of New Brunswick.) The collection includes Day Books and Ledgers ranging from 1805 to the 1820s. It seems that Mrs. Wood, who married Philip Palmer, continued to operate the business after her first husband's death.

Photographs have also been taken of seventy-six large textile pieces with the aid of the hanging rack purchased earlier in the year, and I have also been slowly plugging away at the accessioning of new artefacts.

Besides collection-related tasks, we have been able to re-organize the genealogy collection while adding several new-to-us reference materials. We also added more filing cabinets to accommodate the ever-increasing artefact files.

Since this year has been devastating for our usual fundraising endeavours, we came up with the idea of having a yard sale. This turned out to be very successful, not only for raising funds, but also for de-cluttering some of our spaces. It is amazing how much 'stuff' has accumulated over the years that no longer has a useful purpose for the museums. Don't worry though; no artefacts were sold in the yard sale. I need to say a special thank you to all the staff for their tremendous help with the yard sale, which raised \$2500.

The summer staff team has been exceptional this year. While we did not have as many staff as in previous years, they have all been dedicated, hardworking team members who stepped up to meet the challenge in this unusual season. Thank you to you all for helping make every day interesting:

Freya Milliken returned to us for twelve weeks through a Young Canada Works in Heritage position with Federal funding.

Charlie Savage joined us for twelve weeks through a Young Canada Works in Heritage position with Federal funding.

Annika Williams returned to us for eight weeks through a Canada Summer Jobs position with Federal Funding.

Evelyn Whittemore joined us for eight weeks through a Canada Summer Jobs position with Federal Funding.

This year I was able to use the Community Museums Summer Employment Program funding from the Province to help fund positions for both Alice Folkins and Dee Milliken. The ability to use this funding in this way has been tremendously helpful in keeping the cash outflow minimized.

In closing I would like to thank the Westmorland Historical Society for continuing to support me in the work I do. See you again next year!

Yours in History,
Donald Alward

Additionally, without our regular funds coming in from events, I had to take steps to ensure the cash flow needs of the WHS would be met. Therefore, I took the initiative to apply for the Canada Emergency Business Account. This is a fund that provides an interest free loan of up to \$40,000 for businesses and not-for-profits facing financial challenges due to Covid-19. The loan can be used for operating costs during periods when our revenues have been reduced. While we haven't used the funds to date, they are there should the need arise. If the loan is paid back before December 31, 2022, 25% of it will be forgiven.

Properties Updates:

Heating and cooling for the Payzant-Card Building has been an ongoing problem, one that was creating a health hazard for the Library staff. After due consultation, it was determined that a heat pump would be required to fix it. Luckily, our dedicated volunteer, Alice Folkins, was able to secure a \$5000 grant from the Community Investment Fund. The heat pump has now been installed and is working well. I would like to thank Alice for obtaining the grant and Cole for overseeing the installation. Last winter the board decided to renew the listing of the Sir Pierre Amand Landry House, for an asking price of \$189,900. Proceeds from the sale will be invested and used for capital projects related to the upkeep of our other buildings.

Acknowledgments:

In closing, I would like to thank Donald Alward, our Manager/Curator for creating our comprehensive Covid-19 plan. I would also like to thank Alice Folkins for her ceaseless commitment to the management of our properties, Dee Milliken for her supervision of the St. James Textile Museum during this difficult time, and all our volunteers for the many things they do. I would also like to thank our out-going President and Secretary, Cole and Judy Morison. They have committed a great deal of time to the WHS over the last eighteen years. Their dedication will not be forgotten. I know I have some big shoes to fill with Cole stepping down, and I am glad he has agreed to stay on in an advisory role. While Judy will no longer be on the Board, she has agreed stay on in a new role as our Membership Secretary.

I would also like to thank our current board members for all their support and welcome the following new board members to our team: Miriam Andrews, Marisca Lucoe, Pat Belliveau and Bernie Melanson.

We have an incredible group here at the WHS. Congratulations to all of you for a job well done!

Bonnie Swift

WHS would like to honour the memory of Ted Nicholson, who died on May 26, 2020. A great friend of the Society and long-time supporter, Ted initiated the project to restore the Pioneer Cemetery (Est. 1781) in 2001, using volunteers from the Westmorland Institution. The project received a national award.

Ted always volunteered at Sandpiper Breakfasts—pancakes were his specialty! He and Diane, our one-time Manager, on many occasions supplied veggies from their garden for various events. Ted & Diane were also very active in raising funds for the restoration of the Keillor House front wall.

Ted was a great story teller. Alice said that our summer students and guides loved to hear his stories, and often sought him out to hear more.

He was a long-time member of 'B' Company, Nova Scotia Highlanders (north) and retired with the rank of Captain.

Our sincere condolences go out to Diane, Megan and the family.

Ted will be missed by all who knew him.

DORCHESTER'S MI'KMAQ

In casting about for another piece of Dorchester history to share, it occurred to me, given that the village borders on the Fort Folly Indian Reserve, whose members are also very much part of the local community, that some account of the history of the Mi'kmaq in the Dorchester area would be timely and appropriate. (Most, but perhaps not all, readers will know that the Mi'kmaq are the particular First Nation indigenous to eastern New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island.) I thought I had given myself a relatively easy assignment, assuming naively that there would be at least a few scholarly works I could draw upon to construct a coherent and continuous story. I was disappointed to find very little that fills this particular bill and was at one point almost persuaded to abandon the project. However, after considerable poking in some unlikely places, I was able to find a few bits of information—and even a few stories—that shed some light on the subject. They are far from being an adequate account, even assuming that one could ever be written, given the lack of evidence, but they are interesting in their own right. *Faute de mieux*, I offer them here.

The first European to observe Mi'kmaq in the Chignecto region was the Jesuit missionary, Father Pierre Biard, who took a trip up this way from Port Royal (now Annapolis Royal) in August 1612. After remarking on the “many large and beautiful meadows, extending farther than the eye can see,” he observed that the “Savages [at this time the French word ‘sauvages’ meant nothing more offensive than ‘wild people’] of this place may number sixty or eighty souls, and they are not so nomadic as the others, either because the place is more retired, or because game is more abundant, there being no need of their going out to seek food.” (I am indebted to Paul Bogaard of the Tantramar Heritage Trust for supplying this reference.)

The first scholar to collect information (though it was scanty indeed) on the Mi'kmaq in and around Dorchester was William Francis Ganong (1864-1941), whose father and uncle had founded the famous Ganong Brothers candy factory in St. Stephen. Instead of following in the family footsteps as expected, he became a professor of botany at Smith College in Massachusetts, but spent his summers in New Brunswick indulging his lifelong passion for old maps, place names, the Maritime countryside, Acadians—and Indians, even gaining a working knowledge of both Mi'kmaq and Maliseet as well as, of course, French. (He translated parts of Champlain's journals as well as those of other early French explorers and became one of the early experts on Acadian history.) Among his many publications in historical geography is “A Monograph of Historic Sites in the Province of New Brunswick” (1899). It is still a much-quoted source and the apparent origin of all later statements regarding the Mi'kmaq in and around early Dorchester. The relevant passages are short enough to be reproduced here. They reveal that his methodology consisted chiefly of studying old maps in conjunction with the local topography and interviewing any local people who appeared to have some knowledge of the subject.

“Fort Folly: This considerable reservation is on the Petitcodiac a mile and a half above Folly Point. It was established in 1840, and from its very favourable situation is probably an ancient camp site. The Indians removed here from near Dorchester, whence it is sometimes called the Dorchester reserve.

Dorchester: Early maps, particularly the fine French map of the Isthmus of 1755 (1779) places “Indiens” with a number of houses on some stream south of present Dorchester, but the topography is too imperfect to allow us to locate the settlement exactly. It may have been on Johnston's Creek flowing into Grand Anse, or on Palmer's Pond just south of Dorchester. A resident, Mr. S.C.W. Chapman, of Dorchester, tells me there was before 1834 an Indian settlement near Dorchester, where Sackville Street crosses Palmer Brook, east of the brook and north of the road. He states there was another on the Chapman farm, north of Dorchester, south of the road to Woodhurst. The Indians from both of these settlements afterwards settled on the Fort Folly Reserve (see above), often called the Dorchester Reserve.”

Before commenting on what Ganong said about Fort Folly, I can add from my own research for the Keillor book that the Chapman farm included three contiguous two-hundred acre lots on either side of the Woodhurst Road purchased by John Chapman between 1790 and 1802. They were just a little north of Weldon lands later occupied by the Maritime Penitentiary. The implication of S.C.W. Chapman's statement (whom, incidentally, I cannot find in the Chapman genealogy compiled by Helen Petchey, unless he was the William identified as one of John's grandsons) is that Indians were living on the tract at the time of Chapman's purchase and continued to do so until they moved to Fort Folly in 1840. The same goes for the "settlement...where Sackville Street crosses Palmer Brook." This means that Palmer was not talking about still-visible remnants of ancient camping grounds such as the Mi'kmaq are known to have used in pre-contact times during their seasonal migrations between seaside and deep forest in search of whatever was on the menu at the time (seafood in spring and summer, eels, moose, and beaver in the fall, ice fishing and seal hunting in the winter, etc.) They could have been that as well, but the clear import of Palmer's testimony is that some Mi'kmaq (and they could only have been Mi'kmaq since they were the only First Nation in this area) lived in and around Dorchester for more than half a century after it had been settled by English-speaking Protestants.

This raises the question of relations between the two groups. Not surprisingly, I found no direct evidence that would even hint at an answer, but I can offer a few speculations based on considerable research into the early history of Dorchester and surrounding area that may not be entirely idle. At first glance you would think that relations were probably unfriendly. The Mi'kmaq, as is well known, were staunch allies of the French all during the struggle for possession of North America and they were at least as bitter against the British as were the Acadians during and after the infamous expulsion of 1755-60. After the capture of Fort Beauséjour—soon afterwards renamed Fort Cumberland—numbers of them joined various French/Acadian guerrilla groups that took reprisals, some of them quite bloody, against British and colonial troops whenever they could ambush them. There were also Mi'kmaq among the forces of Jonathan Eddy that, in November 1776, attempted to seize Fort Cumberland for the revolting American colonies. (Apparently, they were promised a better deal if they helped win Nova Scotia for the new republic—an unlikely result, to say the least.) To those who remembered the reprisals and the Eddy Rebellion—many of whom would have still been alive in the 1820s and 30s—the Indian remained something of a terror figure. John Keillor's (d. 1839) brother-in-law, William Trueman (d. 1826), who lived over at Point de Bute on land still in the Trueman family, kept a daily "Memorandum of Events" for about twenty years. On August 26, 1815 he recorded, "This day a daughter of Dr. Rufus Smith was buried. Her death was occasioned by a fright by an Indian a month before." Dr. Smith was the most prominent and best-loved physician in the Chignecto at that time. A little genealogical research revealed that his daughter, Lucy, who died on August 23, 1815, was born on September 18, 1807, so she was only seven at the time of her "fright." Trueman did not explain why it took her a month to die of it, but she was obviously traumatized by some encounter that presupposes gruesome stories of Indians as terrorists and bogeymen.

However, if Anglophone settlers in much of the province still regarded Indians as a potential threat well into the 1800s, and were at least a little wary of Acadians, this may have been less true of Dorchester Parish where the Mi'kmaq continued their close association with the Acadians, with whom they were bonded by religion, history, and, to some extent, by blood, considerable intermarriage having taken place. Many Acadians who had settled in the Memramcook Valley escaped deportation by going into hiding, while many others returned after 1764 when the ban on them was lifted on condition of taking the unqualified oath of allegiance, the refusal of which in 1755 had led to their expulsion. The result was that, until about 1850, Acadians were in the majority in Dorchester Parish. Moreover, they did not live in isolation from the Anglophone minority, nor were they in any way oppressed or disadvantaged. After New Brunswick was carved out of Nova Scotia to form a separate province in 1784, all the large grants along the Memramcook on which post-expulsion Acadians either squatted or had been settled as tenants of big-shot grantees were revoked and re-granted in "family-size" parcels. The grants went not only to the mainly Loyalist and Yorkshire applicants who drew lots from Dorchester Cape to just beyond Upper Dorchester (where the old Rockland covered bridge once stood), but also to the Acadians, whose grants began immediately adjacent to the An-

glophones', continuing upstream well past Memramcook Village, and they were just as large and farmable (in fact more farmable than many of the ones near Dorchester Cape). Acadians were appointed to supervise the construction and repair of roads in their area and were to some degree integrated into local government. I also found some evidence that John Keillor had at least occasional business dealings with Acadians, and it's probably a safe bet that others had as well. Familiarity, proximity, and personal contact would have fostered understanding and perhaps even friendship, particularly as the Anglophone settlers had had nothing to do with the expulsion. The Loyalists among them were themselves exiles with, likely enough, a natural sympathy for fellow sufferers, while most Anglophones probably shared the regret over the cruelty of the expulsion that seems to have become quite general by the early 19th century.

It appears, then, that relations between the Anglophones and Acadians of Dorchester Parish were cordial from the beginning, and they became more so as the century wore on. In 1846 Amand Landry, whose family had been among the exiles, was elected to the legislature with strong support from his Anglophone neighbours, including John Keillor's son, Thomas, as well as Dorchester's most prominent lawyer and politician, E. B. Chandler. Amand's more famous son, Pierre-Amand (later *Sir* Pierre-Amand), became a leading resident of the shiretown and likewise enjoyed strong support from the Anglophone element, while Albert J. Smith notoriously courted the Acadians. So, if Anglo-Acadian reconciliation began earlier in Dorchester Parish than in most other parts of the province—and I think there is good evidence that it did—it would probably not be going too far out on the speculative limb to suggest that the good feelings extended to the Acadians' friends, the Mi'kmaq.

Whatever Anglophone feelings towards the Dorchester Mi'kmaq may have been, one thing is certain: they did not own any land either in the village or in the parish (which took in the whole Memramcook Valley). Some 60,000 acres were designated as Indian reserves in the early 1800s but none of them was in Westmorland County (they were in Kent, Northumberland, Restigouche, Gloucester, Carleton, and Saint John) and no Dorchester Mi'kmaq were among the recipients of the redistributed lands mentioned above. This means that if there were indeed Mi'kmaq settlements within the village—or parish—during this early period, they must have been on otherwise unused lands owned by others, and the condition of their occupancy would have been "on sufferance." This would also have applied to the settlement that is said to have been close to where the Church of St. Thomas now stands in St. Joseph a few miles upriver from Dorchester village. Although there is no surviving evidence to prove or disprove it, insecurity of tenure and radically new limits to their ability to move freely over the landscape to hunt and fish—with attendant cultural loss—may well have led to social problems—particularly alcoholism—as it certainly did in other parts of the province. But the Mi'kmaq of Dorchester Parish had an early and effective protector and advocate in the local Catholic clergy, and this time we have some evidence.

In 1842 Moses Perley, Special Commissioner for Indian Affairs, after visiting and interviewing all the First Nations communities in the province, filed a comprehensive report in the legislature on their condition that included many recommendations for improving it. (Unfortunately, most of them were ignored.) He found deplorable conditions in some of the communities, particularly among the Maliseet of western New Brunswick, but not so much among the Mi'kmaq. That was because most of them had taken, and kept, the pledge of total abstinence from alcohol that was sweeping the province during the first heady decade of the Temperance Movement. "Formerly, they were generally intemperate, and much less industrious and cleanly than at present. The great improvement which has taken place in their character, conduct, and appearance since their adoption of the pledge... is really wonderful," and could, Perley thought, serve as a shining example to hypocritical whites who "continue to wallow in the mire of intemperance" while "conceiving themselves superior in every respect to the unlettered and neglected Indian." Perley gave much of the credit for this happy state of affairs to a number of Roman Catholic clergymen, among them Rev. Ferdinand Gauvrau of Dorchester Parish, whose zeal for "the temporal interests" as well as the spiritual welfare of the Indians had been unremitting. Perley met Father Gauvrau at Dorchester and learned that he had 126 Mi'kmaq under his pastoral charge, and that their "temporal interests" had not been neglected:

“The Reverend Gentleman stated to me that they occupied a piece of land containing 63 acres, purchased for them two years since with a sum of £30 granted for that purpose by the Provincial Legislature, which land had been conveyed to the Magistrates of Westmorland County, in trust. He also informed me that they had taken the pledge, and were consequentially sober and industrious; that they did not cultivate the soil so much as they would do, if they had more land; that they owned boats, and fished in the Bay of Fundy, thereby making out a tolerable living; and that with very little assistance they might be rendered quite independent in their circumstances.” Perley added a comparative statement of the number of adults and children in each Mi’kmaq community and found that the one at Dorchester had the highest portion of children, with 75 children to 51 adults, indicating an increasing population, while many of the others were declining, “from which a very favourable opinion of that settlement may be drawn.”

With this we can now return to what Ganong said above about Fort Folly:

“Fort Folly: This considerable reservation is on the Petitcodiac, a mile and a half above Folly Point. It was established in 1840, and from its very favourable situation is probably an ancient camp site. The Indians removed here from near Dorchester, whence it is sometimes called the Dorchester reserve.”

It is evident that both Ganong and Perley were talking about what was later called, and what we still know as, the Beaumont Reserve, also at one time called the Fort Folly Reserve, and it is to there that (apparently) all the Mi’kmaq of Dorchester Parish removed in 1840. The lack of surviving evidence leaves unclear exactly who, and what, was behind the move. A *Wikipedia* article (apparently based on Mi’kmaq oral tradition) claims that by the 1830s alcohol was becoming a big problem among the Mi’kmaq, something Perley would have agreed with. Then, in 1837, Father Gauvreau was appointed Indian Commissioner for Westmorland County and in the same year a regional gathering of Mi’kmaq elected Peter Bernard as Chief. Here, he and Father Gauvreau discussed establishing a permanent settlement in the county for the Mi’kmaq. Next year, armed with a letter from Father G., Chief Bernard met with Edward Barron Chandler, at that time a member of the very influential Legislative Council and soon to become Premier of the province, a man known for his sympathy with both Indians and Acadians. They discussed how to stop the sale of alcohol and Chandler agreed that the county would buy some land for a settlement. The *Canada’s Historic Places* website says that Bernard then petitioned the provincial government “for a piece of property where his people could settle permanently.”

I went through the list of all petitions to the legislative assembly from 1837 through 1840 (printed in the Appendix of the legislature’s journal and now easily available online) without finding one either from a Bernard or pertaining to land at Beaumont. This was a disappointment, as it might have shed some official light on the reasons for submitting a petition. I can’t explain this, because there should have been a petition in order for a grant to be approved—and a grant certainly was approved. In the *Acts of the General Assembly of His Majesty’s Province of New Brunswick* (also now easily available online) I actually found two monetary grants, one in 1839, the other in 1840, for £20 and £30, respectively, “to purchase a small tract of Land, to be deeded in trust to the Magistrates of the County of Westmorland, for the use of the Micmac Indians.” Perhaps a word from Chandler to the appropriations committee was enough to dispense with a formal petition, something that accompanied all the other grants in the appropriations bills. A hundred years later, according to an article in the *Moncton Daily Times* (January 9, 1940) a “musty, time-tattered” copy of the deed that conferred the land was rediscovered and “fondly cherished by the Micmacs as the symbol of the beginning of an era of peace and understanding between their tribe and the white man.”

In the Digital Age we no longer have to wait for time-tattered copies to appear by some miracle of preservation. Again with minimal effort, I was able to obtain an image of the Registrar’s copy of the original deed archived in the New Brunswick Land Registry Office. It confirms that, on August 15, 1840, Amasa Weldon and his wife, Sally, sold 62½ acres (25.3 hectares) on the east bank of the Petitcodiac River to the Justices of the Peace of Westmorland County “and their successors in office forever in trust and for the use of the Micmac Indians.” In other words, the land was not turned over to the Mi’kmaq them-

selves, but vested in the county to be held in trust for their exclusive use. This is an important point because it means that the Beaumont/Fort Folly Reserve was different from the earlier reserves in the rest of the province in a way that avoided the worst pitfall in the former arrangement. Grants on the other reserved lands were made to Indians as individuals in the same manner as to other settlers, except that recipients were only entitled to occupy and possess them during pleasure. This meant that they couldn't sell them, as could others, but they could lease them out, which in all too many cases they did to white encroachers and squatters for only a fraction of their yearly rental value. When the encroachers made improvements (clearing, farming, fencing, building, etc.) they petitioned the government to make the leases permanent, with the inevitable result that the reserves shrank alarmingly. The Beaumont/Fort Folly Reserve, small in any case and of limited interest to would-be encroachers, was protected from this sort of skulduggery and the result was a stable community that lasted for over seventy years.

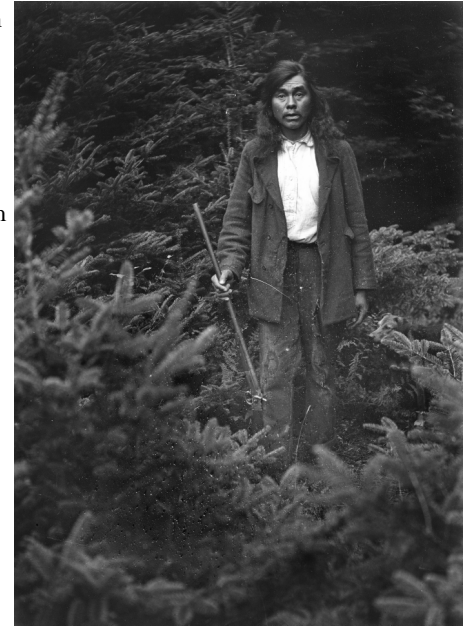
One reason for the stability was no doubt the proximity of Acadians living in and around nearby Boudreau Village. To all intents and purposes, Acadians and Mi'kmaq in the Beaumont area became a single community, symbolized by the building of Ste. Anne's Chapel in 1842, now a Provincial Historic Site. As outlined by archaeologist Helen Kristmanson in *A Short History of Beaumont, New Brunswick*, there is dispute whether Acadians and Mi'kmaq together, or Mi'kmaq alone, built it (in the sense of paying for it and volunteering labour; it was designed and constructed under the supervision of a contractor from Barachois), but both attended services regularly. "Each Saturday a priest from St. Thomas Church [in St. Joseph] would travel by horse to Beaumont, spend the night there and serve mass in Ste. Anne's Chapel on Sunday." Acadian and Mi'kmaq children also attended the same school.

Another reason for community stability was the opportunity for steady employment in several nearby stone quarries that, until the end of the 19th century, shipped large quantities of high-quality building stone as well as grindstones and pulp stones to the eastern United States and central Canada. The Mi'kmaq also made baskets, buckets, tubs, and necklaces and sold them in the surrounding villages. A number of Mi'kmaq men are said to have been coopers (barrel makers) and one of their products may well have been firkins, small barrels for shipping butter, a considerable amount of which was produced in the Memramcook Valley for the Saint John market. There was not enough land on the reserve to do much farming, even if the soil were suitable—which it is not—but the surrounding forest abounded in game and both the Memramcook and Petitcodiac teemed with salmon, shad, and other fish, so there is little reason to doubt that the Mi'kmaq of Beaumont/Fort Folly lived to a large extent off the land, as they had done since time out of mind.

It is not recorded how many of Father Gauvreau's 126 charges settled at Beaumont/Fort Folly in 1840, but their fluctuating numbers can to some extent be traced in the decennial census records from 1851, when the first one was taken. In that year there was "an Indian settlement in the Parish of Dorchester containing a good chapel, four wood houses and ten camps." Kristmanson also gathered the following information: The 1861 census listed 37 individuals bearing the family names Turnett, Toney, Paul, Nocoté, Nocoud (later spelled Knockwood), and Bonas. Abraham Bonas, age 70, was Chief in that year. In 1870 "there were said to be 20 Aboriginal dwellings or 'huts' at Beaumont, and census records reported 44 families including Bernards, Pauls, Alexanders, Hammonds, and Nocotts. Most of the men worked as coopers, and at least one made his living as a day labourer. By 1881 the small community was well established with four log cabins, ten wigwams, and a steady population of about 40 that at times grew to over a 100. At the same time, as census records indicate, there were at least 60 Aboriginal people in Dorchester Parish [apparently meaning that they were outside the reserve] including the Bernards, Nocouts, Noquods, Stephens, Thomas, Jeromes, Angelines, and Francis. Most family men worked as coopers, labourers, farmers and hunters."

The decline of the quarries towards the end of the 19th century seems to have had a profound effect on the population of Beaumont, as a number of families moved over to Aboujagane near Shediac, while others returned to the village of Dorchester and surrounding area. By 1913 only three or four families remained at Beaumont, the last of which left in 1955.

Some idea of the tenor of Mi'kmaq life in the earlier part of the 20th century can be gleaned from the very interesting memoir of Bill Knockwood, posted on the Fort Folly website. A grandson of Chief Israel Knockwood (1889-1932), Bill was born in 1925 in Albert Mines where his father worked in the lumber mills in the winter, during which time the family home was “a small tar papered shack nestled on the edge of the spruce forest.” Bill also remembered going with his father on his trap line. In the spring his “mother and other Indian ladies would get together and plan mayflower picking in the nearby woods. [They] knew just where these beautiful, white, and very scented flowers grew. They would pick all day and in the evening make up little bouquets beautifully decorated with green leaves....” The next day they would take the train to Moncton and sell them door to door and in the streets. During the summer the family moved “to our permanent home on the small Indian reservation called Fort Folly [Beaumont]. I never did find out why it was called Fort Folly.”



Chief Israel Knockwood

Courtesy of the Provincial Archives of
New Brunswick

I will interrupt Bill's story long enough to report on what has been said about the name, because it remains a puzzle. Amateur historian Reg Bowser (*Dorchester Island and Related Areas*, 1986) referred to the undoubted fact that on his way to attack Fort Beauséjour in 1776 Jonathan Eddy dropped off a small contingent at the mouth of the Petitcodiac to watch for any reinforcements that might be coming to defend the fort. “Tradition has it they built a small temporary fort and since that period the location has been called Fort Folly” [presumably because of the folly of the adventure, which was an inglorious failure]. Apart from the notorious unreliability of “tradition” as a historical source, I think the story is implausible, as the party was hardly there long enough to build anything resembling a fort, although I suppose it could have piled up a few logs. The only other explanation I have run across is perhaps more plausible on its face, but is unfortunately not substantiated by the known historical facts. It came from Cyril Chapman, a Dorchester magistrate and amateur historian who at age ninety published a series of articles on local lore in the *Sackville Tribune Post* in the early 1950s. Drawing on what he said was Mi'kmaq tradition, he claimed that the French had built a fort there when they still controlled the area and that it was put to good use during the initial stages of the “Battle of the Petitcodiac” in 1755, as follows:

After he had taken Fort Beauséjour, Colonel Monckton sent a force in two vessels to the Petitcodiac to burn out the Acadian settlements along the river and capture as many Acadians as possible for deportation. According to Chapman's sources, it attempted to land at Folly Point, which divides the Memramcook and Petitcodiac rivers, but was met with such a hail of fire from the fort that it was forced to withdraw and land further down the Bay of Fundy, whence it commenced operations. When the fort's garrison saw what was happening, it rushed off to defend the inhabitants, thus clearing the way for the British to land and capture the fort. That was apparently the “folly” of Fort Folly. Unfortunately for the believability of this explanation, the “Battle of the Petitcodiac” was reported in great detail by the participants, including the embarrassing fact that a detachment of the “search and destroy” force was ambushed while burning the church at Village-des-

Blanchards (now Hillsborough), leading to a withdrawal back to Fort Beauséjour. There is no mention of the capture of any fort, and the force is known to have landed at Shepody and worked its way up the west side of the Petitcodiac, across the river from Fort Folly/Beaumont.

However, just to confuse matters a bit further, there may indeed have been a French fort at Folly Point. One may be sceptical of Chapman's Mi'kmaq oral tradition, but the *Société d'histoire de Memramcook* website has posted a scholarly article, complete with footnotes, that cites other sources as well, including a letter, dated May 8, 1754, from Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts informing the Colonial Office in London that "the small French fort on the point of land between the Memramcook and the Petitcodiac" could easily be taken. It is said to have been constructed in 1751 and originally called Fort de La Galisonière. So perhaps Chapman knew something that wasn't included in the British version of the "Battle of the Petitcodiac." There must be some reason why it became known as "Fort Folly." It's just that we aren't much wiser than Bill Knockwood was on what it is.

To return to Bill's story: When he was still a small child, tragedy struck the family, but his grandfather turned it towards a positive outcome. When one of his uncles was electrocuted on his job, Chief Israel used the insurance money to buy a property in the village of Dorchester and Bill started school here at age five, which would have been in 1930. Like his grandfather, he, too, served as Chief of the small band of Mi'kmaq living in the area, with the difference that, whereas Israel's position was hereditary, Bill was elected (1973-77). He was succeeded by his younger brothers, Henry (1977-79) and Joseph (1997 to 2003 and 2005 to 2013).

The article in the *Moncton Daily Times* mentioned above (which I found in the Webster Collection in the Mount Allison University Archives) reported on a tradition, alleged to have begun with the Beaumont settlement, that indicates a positive relationship between the Dorchester Mi'kmaq and the 'mainstream' population. Since it is no longer easily available to general readers, I reproduce the relevant parts here.

"Dorchester, N.B., Jan. 8 1940—The 100th anniversary of a custom that long ago grew into a tradition was observed a week ago today—New Year's Day—in this shiretown of Westmorland County. Micmac Indians, led by their Chief, Peter Thomas, made their annual group call at the homes of Dorchester friends of long standing." After mentioning the "time-tattered deed" noted above, the article goes on to say, "None of the Indians that first benefitted by that deed are alive today but a number of their children and their children's children live in quaint little homes just outside Dorchester. Others live on that property skirting the Petitcodiac [Beaumont]. The Dorchester Micmacs repeated their colourful custom on January 1—their New Year's social call at the doors of longstanding friends throughout the shiretown. For years they have been doing it on this first day of the year. Headed by their Chief, or if there is no Chief the oldest man in their 'tribe,' they 'invade' the town, armed with rifles, sleds, bags, in which to carry gifts. They are young and old, grizzled with the years or unmarked by time. Their number is usually about 25, although it fluctuates from year to year.

Old friends never fail to greet them with a smile after a rifle shot rings out as a signal that the visitors have arrived. Hands are shaken, compliments of the season exchanged and the Micmacs usually leave with a bundle of gifts. By the time the circuit is completed they are usually liberally loaded down with presents from the descendents of those who took this continent away from the Indians back in the dim past of Canada's history. Many of the fine old people who used to greet them have long since passed away—the Hickmans, Sir Albert and Lady Smith, the Haningtons, the Chandlers, the Palmers, although descendents of some of these families remain to wish them well. The gifts include money, poultry, vegetables, tobacco.

The day comes to a brilliant culmination when a celebrating party is held in the Indian Village in the evening. There the 'loot' is divided up."

Judy Morison just happened to have a picture, taken by one of her ancestors, Albert Hickman, of the Mi'kmaq on their New Year's visit to the Chandlers at Rocklyn in 1899.



In the 1960s, H.R. How, who, I am pretty sure, was a brother of Doug, Dorchester's most famous "man of letters," wrote a 75-page history of Dorchester (a longer version of the one he did as a centennial project for the Dorchester Home and School Association), which he never published. However, he gave the typescript to the New Brunswick Museum and I ran across it there while researching another topic. Much of it was based on W.C. Milner and other local historians, but some parts came from his own early memories of Dorchester during the 1930s, and they included the Mi'kmaq New Year's tradition. He remembered that they "always fired the shotgun outside my widowed mother's door, though she had few gifts to offer them." One was a woman named Ann who called "for old times' sake, as years earlier she had worked for my grandmother." How added another detail that corroborates the *Times* report: "The Micmacs extended their good luck wish only to those they liked. But despite the snowy mess made of the house by such an invasion, many a superstitious family on seeing the Indians pass without stopping would send papa or a youngster after the procession, to beg the chief to fire his shotgun by the front door—just for good luck."

Another Dorchesterite who remembered the New Year's visits, this time from the 1950s and early 60s, was Garfield Spence whose story we told in the June and November 2011 issues of the Newsletter. He remembered that there were four Mi'kmaq families all the time he was growing up in Dorchester. "They would come to every door. You would have no more than they had, really. But you would give them some canned peas, or tomatoes, or what not. Everybody in Dorchester did that...they did it for years." Garfield's younger contemporary, Ernie Partridge, whose remarkable memory has, over the years, supplied a good deal of information to these pages, told me that there is still some buckshot in his roof from a shotgun that wasn't aimed high enough on one of those occasions, but it was all taken in good part.

For those who are wondering about the origins of this custom, I think it is safe to say that it was not part of original First Nations culture. Interestingly enough, a similar tradition is, and has long been, celebrated by the Oneida and Onondaga of New

York and the Six Nations (also Iroquois) in Ontario, and one claim is that they may have learned it from Dutch and/or German immigrants in New York. Perhaps it seeped eastward by degrees through Iroquois contact with the Algonquian Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, and Maliseet, and from them to the Mi'kmaq, but that is pure speculation on my part. Whatever its origins, it is an example of cultural assimilation that clearly went very far among the Dorchester Mi'kmaq. The *Times* article also had some interesting things to say on this topic, although its way of saying them may not be entirely “politically correct” today.

“Although time and association with the white man have robbed the Micmac of many of his forefather’s traits, few indeed are the young ‘braves’ who are not crafty woodsmen, crack hunters, able with their hands. Many a white Dorchester boy has been ‘armed’ with a bow and arrow created by the capable hands of Peter Thomas or another of his tribe. Hundreds of American tourists have stopped at Peter’s little ‘store’ where he keeps scores of knick-knacks moulded from wood either by himself or others of his tribe. Intricately, beautifully woven baskets are bought by the dozen by the tourists, bringing welcome money to...the little settlement or at Beaumont.”

Judy also shared a picture of an undated postcard that features a group of local Mi'kmaq in “authentic” dress, clearly for the delectation of the tourists.



Speaking of Peter Thomas, both Garfield and Ernie remembered him well and fondly. Garfield said, “He was a smart man, old Peter,” and Peter befriended Ernie in a way that Ernie never forgot. We told part of this story in the articles on Ernie in the June and September 2013 and February 2014 issues of the Newsletter, but it will bear telling again, this time in a little more detail. Ernie was about thirteen or fourteen, so this would have been around 1943-45. His family was very poor, (his father was overseas serving his country) so he started a little business snaring rabbits and selling them, ready for stewing, to the inmates at the county jail. Peter lived by Palmer’s Pond in a little two-room log cabin with a porch in front. In the porch hung a beautiful stuffed moose head. From its antlers hung one of Peter’s bows. The cabin was near Ernie’s “trap line” and one day he happened by when Peter was outside splitting wood. They got to talking and Peter asked if he had a spare rabbit. Ernie just happened to have one that was not spoken for, so he gave it to him. Thus began a friendship that lasted as long as Ernie had his rabbit business. Practically every Saturday they had a visit and whenever Ernie had a spare rabbit he gave it to Peter, who was well up in years and no longer able to snare his own rabbits. He lived alone at the time and Ernie remembers

that his front room was crowded with partially made baskets, the floor covered in shavings. Peter told him that he made all his own dyes, a lot of them from alder wood. Some of the baskets were brightly coloured, others just plain half-bushel baskets used for picking potatoes.

Bill Knockwood remembered that his grandfathers were all great story tellers and Ernie attested that Peter Thomas was as well. One of his favourites was the following: In his younger years Peter was a highly skilled hunter and a licensed guide. One day, George Lowerison and a friend hired him to take them on a moose hunt. Peter told them to be at his cabin the following Saturday at 4:30 a.m. They arrived on time, only to be greeted by a very cold foggy October morning with almost no visibility. Nothing daunted, Peter led them out to what the locals called the "Black Mud Swamp," also known as the "Moose Bog." There they found a "moose swill," a place where moose wallow to kill the ticks that plague them. "Now," said Peter, "When we find a trail I want you fellows to be real quiet. Don't step on any twigs to make a snap or any noise." He went along all crouched over, the others following obediently, until he came to a fresh trail. He knew it was fresh because he found bits of mud that weren't frozen, and knowing that moose soon shake off the mud from the "swill," he deduced that these bits had come off the animal that morning because they hadn't had time to freeze. Crouching further along, he found more mud and whispered back, "Not very far away now." A little further on, he encountered some moose droppings. "Getting closer," he whispered. Continuing on, he went down on his hands and knees through fog so thick you could hardly see your proverbial hand in front of your proverbial face. Suddenly, he felt something warm and gooey drop onto the back of his neck. "*Real* close, now," he said. Peter swore it was a true story and Lowerison confirmed it. It was repeated in the village for years, so there must have been something in it, but your guess is as good as mine as to what that something was.

There is a touching footnote to Ernie's reminiscences of Peter. The young lad often admired the bow hanging from the moose's antlers, and one day, just as he was departing, Peter took it down and gave it to him as a 'thank you' for all the rabbits, and also as a token of their friendship. Ernie treasured it for years afterwards, though, sadly, it was later stolen.

A number of Mi'kmaq continued to live in and around the village throughout the 1950s and 1960s as individual families with "status" but without a reserve. This changed on December 24, 1969 when the present Fort Folly 1 Indian Reserve was formally established on the land bought by Chief Israel Knockwood, mentioned above. I was unable to find out much about the particular circumstances that brought this about, but I believe that the Indians of Canada Pavilion at Expo Canada (held in Montreal in 1967 to celebrate Canada's Centennial) played an important, if indirect, role. The exhibits presented a First Nations' view of Canadian history as the story of the suppression of their culture and values. It also emphasized the intrinsic worth of their arts, crafts, and way of life, with the clear implication that these ought to be cherished and preserved, and that old wrongs ought to be righted. In spite of indignation from some quarters, the exhibition aroused a good deal of sympathy from the Canadian public (I remember it myself as being very moving) and was no doubt a major step towards the reconciliation and restitution process that occupies so much political attention today. I have no direct evidence or testimony to this effect, but I can well imagine that some of the Dorchester Mi'kmaq were inspired to retrieve their cultural loss by re-establishing a community in which they could live as part of a modern technological society but also preserve and even revive what is most valuable from their own past. And for this they would need a reserve. Significantly, the present band does not consider it to be a new foundation but rather a re-location from Beaumont. This explains the name 'Fort Folly', which was one of the designations for the Beaumont Reserve.

However it got established, the present Fort Folly Reserve is in its fifty-first year, still going strong, and very much in tune with the times. The band, which includes thirty-six members living on the reserve and another ninety-six off it, now has its first female Chief in Rebecca Knockwood, a niece of Bill, Henry, and Joseph. Its goals are both economic and cultural. It seeks to achieve economic self-sufficiency by encouraging Mi'kmaq small businesses both on and off the reserve, for example

the Giptu Tobacco and Gas Station, the two fishing vessels (lobster and scallop) owned and operated by the band, and the development of blueberry fields.

A very important part of its cultural mission is the month-long Mi'kmaq language and cultural programme offered to children, non-Mi'kmaq as well as Mi'kmaq, every July for the past fifteen years. It is conducted by Elder Gilbert Sewell of the Pabineau First Nation and includes, besides language training, Mi'kmaq folklore, Mi'kmaq drumming, Mi'kmaq legends, an introduction to traditional medicinal plants, and how to survive in the woods if you are lost—things he learned from his grandfather when he was young. One of Chief Rebecca's fondest hopes is to bring the Mi'kmaq language back into the Fort Folly community. One of Elder Sewell's former pupils, Nicole Dubé of the Mi'kmaq Child and Family Services of New Brunswick, is now a cultural co-ordinator at Fort Folly working to revive Mi'kmaq practices. She is with the children every day for an hour going over the "seven sacred teachings," building a wigwam, practising various ceremonies, learning how to prepare traditional medicines, etc. She also holds a community culture night once a week for adults to do beading and quill work. She teaches them how to harvest and dye quills and even how to do art work on birch bark, an ancient art form that is now being revived.

Another important cultural focus is the preservation of the environment. To this end, the band launched a project called Fort Folly Habitat Recovery. Among many other things, it has partnered with Fundy National Park, Atlantic Canada Fish Farmers Association, and half a dozen other organizations to establish the Fundy Salmon Recovery programme. Fort Folly's role is to transport smolts from Big Salmon River and the Petitcodiac Watershed to conservation pens on Grand Manan for release as adults into the Bay of Fundy. Fort Folly Habitat Recovery is also an active member of the Petitcodiac Fish Recovery Coalition, formed in response to the opening of the controversial Petitcodiac causeway that had so decimated the stocks. To raise awareness of both the environment and Mi'kmaq traditional culture, Fort Folly has built a 3.5 km walking trail on the reserve, complete with interpretive panels in English, French, and Mi'kmaq, featuring Mi'kmaq legends and medicinal plants.

The old ways are also celebrated by the annual procurement of two moose and ten pounds of lobster per family for sharing (very important in indigenous culture) on Ste. Anne's Day (Sainte Anne is the patron saint of the Beaumont chapel). Families are also encouraged to pick berries at this time in memory of their ancestors' life as hunters and gatherers.

The Fort Folly band's long-term development plans include the upgrading of roads, lighting, and signage; the creation of a new subdivision to encourage on-reserve housing; and securing ownership of the Beaumont property, including the chapel and rectory.

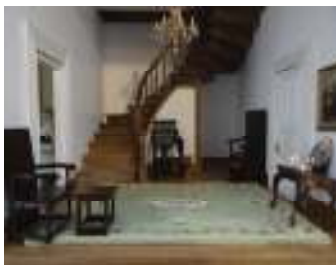
WHS wishes them well in their endeavours.

Gene Goodrich

‘PRANKHURST MANOR’: THE STORY OF THE DOLLHOUSE

I was contacted by Ann Ford of Moncton offering the Keillor House Museum a donation of some items including a doll house. As with any donation to the museum, I wanted to see the items to assess the suitability for the collection before saying yes or no over the phone, so we arranged for a visit. When I visited Ann at her home she showed me some very lovely items that she was willing to part with. The last room we went to was where the doll house was located. I was expecting a typical doll house of the Victorian era; what I saw was astounding. After showing me some of the details of the doll house and explaining her passion for it, Ann pulled out a painted tin that likely originally contained tea. It was painted to depict a brick manor house from England in the style of the later 1700’s. This tin was the inspiration for her design of Prankhurst Manor, the fictional name she gave the doll house. Ann designed the doll house and had a friend of hers build it. She then decorated and furnished it in painstaking detail. The doll house is 46” wide, 55” tall and 23” deep. When you add the 21” table that it sits on, you end up at over six feet tall. It is truly an impressive size. The house exterior is textured to simulate brick with four white pillars in front. The gable end of the roof features a crest in the centre surrounded by dental moulding. The pillar left of centre conceals the seam of the two doors that open to reveal the three top floors. The lock pin to hold the doors closed is cleverly disguised as one of the teeth of the dental moulding. When you first look, it takes a couple of minutes to figure out how to get into it. The lower part of the house, which looks like cement blocks, features the stair cases to approach the front door. This whole section removes to reveal the ‘downstairs’ portion with the kitchen, pantry, and servants area. There is so much wonderful detail: cast iron cookware in the kitchen; single-thread hand crocheted clothes on the dolls in the child’s room; counted cross-stitch covers on the pillows in the parlour; hand-knit bedspreads; needlework carpets; miniature books on the shelves in the library that can actually be read, albeit with a magnifying glass; a silver tea set and real china dishes in the dining room; painted artwork on the walls; a unique semi-circular staircase; a mouse in the kitchen looking for crumbs—there is even a doll house in the doll house, and the list goes on. It is truly a unique marvel that impresses everyone who sees it. I wish to express a huge thank-you to Ann for coming to the museum to set the house back up after it was transported.

Don Alward





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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 five 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.

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SALUTING OUR OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

WHS would like to salute our latest outstanding volunteers.

Carol Machen came to Sackville from Ontario several years ago and in due course became interested in our Haunted House Tour and the Victorian Christmas Dinner. Last year she took the plunge and volunteered to help out at both events. When she got hooked on volunteering for us, Alice pounced, and we now have another super-lady powering our remarkable organization. When the plague wiped out this year's Special Events, Carol turned her inexhaustible energy to the gardens, especially the rose garden below Keillor House, which had become badly overgrown for lack of staff to look after it. She has cleared away all the old dead trees and underbrush, so that you can actually see Keillor House as you come up through the garden, and has planted many new flowers and shrubs, many of which she procured herself. The rose garden looks great in spite of the terrible drought, and we can hardly wait to see it bloom next spring. Carol's work is making the greatest improvement to the grounds since Bernie Melanson joined our team.

Heather Alward has volunteered many hours organizing the genealogical collection as well as the library, identifying duplicates for possible sale, thus freeing up much-needed shelf space. She has also identified the items in all of our scrapbooks and boxed them up for proper storage and preservation. As Alice said, when we hired Donald, we got two busy beavers for the price of one. The WHS tradition of dedicated volunteerism is clearly alive and well, and in Carol and Heather we have two fine specimens of it.

Editor