

WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy 2022 to all of our members. I am writing this letter just as the provincial government announced that all of New Brunswick will move to Level 3 of their COVID-19 plan for 16 days starting Jan. 14th, so basically another lockdown. These lockdowns have been very hard on many small businesses and charities. The unpredictability of the lockdowns over the last year has made it virtually impossible to plan for any fall or winter event activities, so all our museums activities had to be cancelled for a second year. We did, however, manage to have one of our few in-person Board meetings on September 29th. It was nice to be in-person once again as we were growing tired of doing everything by Zoom. The meeting was held at the Lady Smith Manor and we are very grateful that Miriam Andrews, our VP, provided us this space.

Gene Goodrich has provided us some great articles for our newsletter once

again. One of the fascinating titles is A Westmorland County 'Ferry' Tale. It takes you on a detailed historical tour of the ferries of Westmorland County since 1790. I learned a lot about their interesting history in the region: who managed them, where they traveled, and how this industry was regulated during this time. Let's just say Gene will take you on one great "ferry ride" with this one.

On a more somber note, one of our beloved board members, Patricia (Pat) Belliveau, passed away suddenly on October 17th. Pat's sister, Roberta Hebert, messaged me with the sad news on the morning of October 18th. I had just spoken with Pat a week earlier, so needless to say I was shocked by the news. There are a lot of wonderful things that people should know about this dedicated volunteer and her many activities in

the community and abroad. Her family also shared some stories about her childhood. Pat loved gardening and animals, also my two favorite things, so they were always part of our conversations. She was also on our museum committee and would often volunteer for some of the more tedious tasks, like ironing dozens of table cloths and napkins for our dinner events, or assisting with our online auctions. Gene has put together a fitting tribute to Pat and her life of dedicated community service.

Events:

We do not plan on having any in-person events this winter but still plan on hosting another online auction this spring. The dates for these will be posted on our Website and Facebook pages. Our last Keillor House auction, which took place on September 25th

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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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PAT BELLIVEAU IN MEMORIAM

Last October, just when things seemed to be picking up again after another challenging year, our Board received the sad and shocking news that Pat Belliveau, one of our new members, had suddenly died on the 17th. To those of us who knew her, it was immediately clear that WHS had suffered a grievous loss. Although she had been on the board only a short time—during which many of our activities were cruelly curtailed by Covid—it was enough to show that she was going to become one of the Society's super volunteers. And WHS is not the only organization that will mourn her and miss her. As I came to find out in gathering the information for what follows, Pat's whole life was about volunteering, giving, and caring for others.

No doubt her early training in unselfishness took place in the large and close-knit Memramcook/Dorchester family into which she was born. The sixth of eight children (one of whom, her brother, Robert, died in an accident in 1965), she had a happy childhood that included picking blueberries with her parents and siblings at Dorchester Cape and Rockport, skating on Palmer's Pond in Dorchester Village, and enjoying Sunday treats with her family at Dave's Dairy Bar in Sackville. They shared this picture of her as a baby in her father's arms on one of the early summer outings.



To those who got their mail at the Sackville post office, Pat will always be remembered as one of the friendliest and most helpful of the postal clerks, outstanding even among a cadre of generally friendly and helpful colleagues. But the friendly smile that brightened our day after a stop at the post office wasn't the only ray of sunshine she spread in Sackville, where she was a long-time resident. Always interested in sports and fitness, she was a member of two Maritime championship softball teams, an enthusiastic teacher of 'aqacise', and a long-time member and supporter of the Bob Edgett Boxing Club. Equally interested in community service, she had a long association with the Sackville branch of the Rotary Club, which named her a Paul Harris Fellow. She was also a keen supporter of local theatre. For over ten years she was a vital part of Stephen Puddle's 'The Performers' Theatre Company for which she not only acted but also served on the board and worked as props manager in a number of productions. She also appeared in Susan Amos' 'The Intercolonial', staged in 2019 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Intercolonial Railway's coming to Sackville. As someone who played a small cameo bit part in it, I can attest that she was a riot.

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and 26th, was another success, one we hope to repeat annually or perhaps even bi-annually in the future. The Society also hosted a booth at the Christmas Market held at Lady Smith Manor on November 20th and 21st. Our tea towels, made by our St. James staff, were again a big hit. If you haven't gotten yours yet, you must do so. I have two myself, and they are best tea towels I've ever owned.

Collections and Museum activities:

There were no museum activities, so there is nothing to report on, but the good news is that this has allowed our museum manager to work on some Covid19 grants. This year Donald was able to secure another \$18,827 from the Department of Canadian Heritage under their Reopening Fund for Heritage Organizations impacted by Covid19. This will allow us to keep our museums open again this summer. Given our limited ability to fundraise, this grant could not have come at a more perfect time.

Graydon Milton Trust:

I would like to acknowledge the generous donation of five thousand dollars from the Masonic Sussex Lodge in Dorchester. The donation will be placed into the Graydon Milton trust as requested by the lodge. It was sad to see the Sussex Lodge close its doors after playing such a distinguished role in the Dorchester community for so many years. In their memory we will be honoring them at our Keillor House Museum this summer with an overview of the Masonic lodge's history, including an exhibit of its many interesting artifacts.

Properties

The Bell Inn lost one of its wonderful tenants, as The Cape Road Baking & Company had to close its doors in January. Their baked goods were amazing, and they will be missed. The space will be open at the end of January for anyone wishing to rent it. Interested parties can contact our Property Manager, Nathalie Bouchard, for more details at dorchesterhistoricalproperties@gmail.com

The Payzant-Card had one vacant apartment in October, but it will be rented again in January. Both our museums were shut down in September due to Covid19 restrictions. The only good thing about this is that the down time allowed us to do a lot of repairs on our museum and our other properties. We plan on doing many more much-needed repairs over the next year. Our new property manager, Nathalie Bouchard, has been doing a great job coordinating all these renovations for us.

Acknowledgments:

In closing, I would like to thank Donald Alward, our Manager/Curator, for working on the grants this year. They have kept our doors open. I also want to offer a special thanks to our many donors who came through in a year when we needed them most. We received \$10,115 in donations this year. Many thanks to our membership Secretary, Judy Morison, for her work in managing these donations and our memberships.

In closing, I would like to congratulate our volunteers, staff and board members for sticking through another challenging year. I hope I will get to see them all soon, as well as our many dedicated members. Maybe with some luck I will see you again at our 2022 AGM this spring. Until then, all the best in 2022!

Bonnie Swift, President

As noted in her obituary, Pat “had a heart of gold...and always wanted to help those around her.” The most powerful testimony to this requires a short digression to set the scene. Stephen Puddle, the founder and director of ‘The Performers’ Theatre Company, was, in another and earlier incarnation, a flight attendant on Virgin Australia Airlines which regularly flew between Melbourne and Johannesburg, South Africa. Since they had a long lay-over in Johannesburg before returning home, some of the more charity-minded flight attendants—which certainly included Stephen—inquired about orphanages in Johannesburg where they could do volunteer work. It was in this way that Stephen got to know Maria Gaba, herself a remarkable example of devoted service to others.

After fleeing with only a limited education from a background of abuse, Maria systematically put herself through a series of certificate programmes—hairdresser, seamstress, community counselor for HIV, etc.—and gradually pulled herself out of poverty to acquire a family of her own. After some years, she and her family moved into one of the unorganized squatter settlements of Johannesburg where social services are minimal to non-existent, and poverty, crime, and family breakdown take their daily toll. There she saw children wandering the streets and being abused and exploited; they were simply a liability to their families—if they even had one. Moved to her core, she decided to start a primary school for them, even though she had no experience in such matters. When the board of education made it clear that it wasn’t interested in helping her, she went ahead anyway and somehow managed to get one going on a shoestring budget and by living from hand to mouth. After a few years of success, the board finally recognized the value of what she was doing and agreed to take it over, whereupon she started a pre-school and day care centre. Fortunately, it attracted patrons and volunteers and her reputation in the community grew apace. One result of this was that people started to beg her to take on abandoned children, many of them orphaned when their parents died of AIDS, often simply leaving them on her doorstep. When they learned how effective she was with her charges, teachers and principals at the local schools began asking her to take on problem children. Of course she never refused.

It was to Maria Gaba’s pre-school/orphanage that Stephen and some of his fellow flight attendants came to volunteer, and like everyone else who knew of her work, he quickly learned to admire her greatly. After returning to Canada he started raising money for her and going to Johannesburg every year to help out. When people asked why he wanted to go to South Africa every year he would tell them about Maria and her inspiring mission. One who heard him was Pat. It was a story she couldn’t resist, and as soon as she was in a position to do so she approached Stephen and said that she would really like to go with him on his next trip. Stephen readily agreed. Pat, being Pat, promptly recruited another volunteer, Buffy, and all three of them went to Johannesburg for several weeks in 2017. Among many other things, Pat made Christmas dinner for the orphanage, topped off by her own famous cinnamon swirls. Back in Sackville, she would speak at various venues about her experiences in Johannesburg, encouraging support for the pre-school and orphanage. To raise money for them, she held a huge garage sale in 2019 and was in the process of organizing another when she was so suddenly taken from us. Very appropriately, her children asked to have donations in her memory directed to The Almond Tree Orphanage or Maria Gaba and Mpumelelo Daycare. On the initiative of President Bonnie Swift, the WHS Board of Directors did just that at our last meeting. In this way we honoured the memory of a very large and loving heart. Although it was for all too brief a span, WHS is proud to have had Pat Belliveau as one of our members.

Gene Goodrich, for the Board and Society

A WESTMORLAND COUNTY 'FERRY' TALE

Editor/author's Note: My sincere thanks to Colin MacKinnon, Paul Bogaard, Rhianna Edwards, Al Smith, and Peter Spence for sharing images as well as much valuable information and commentary for this article.

Among the pleasures enjoyed by summer visitors to Kings, Queens, and Sunbury Counties are the ferry rides across the Saint John River at Belleisle Bay, Evansdale, Gagetown, and—up until a few years ago—Hampstead. But did you know that there was once a number of ferries in Westmorland County, although their main clientele were not tourists, and the pleasure of riding them was considerably less than that offered by the treasures in our more favoured sister counties that, by some miracle, have so far escaped the attention of 'efficiency experts'? Long may they continue to do so!



Ferries were nothing new when Westmorland County was established in 1786 soon after New Brunswick was carved out of old Nova Scotia. According to this map based on a sketch “drawn on the Spot” in 1755 by a British officer involved in the Expulsion and kindly shared here by Paul Bogaard, there was an Acadian ferry across the Tantramar located on what is still known as the Ram Pasture. (The river has since cut through its banks to form an oxbow, rendering the pasture useless for pasture or hay.) From the map, which is all the evidence we have to go on, its function is somewhat ambiguous. Where ‘Ferry’ is marked on the map (just below the *) it seems to be simply a means of crossing the river (which wouldn’t have been much more than 500 feet across) in order to connect two sections of a road that led to Fort Beauséjour. On the other hand, it is also clear from the map that the road led to a point on the Aulac River just down from the fort and continued up the other side to it. As Paul informed me, remnants of it can still be seen today on the west side of the fort in the vicinity of what was called the Holy Well. Yet, there is no marking on the map of another ferry at this point, although it’s

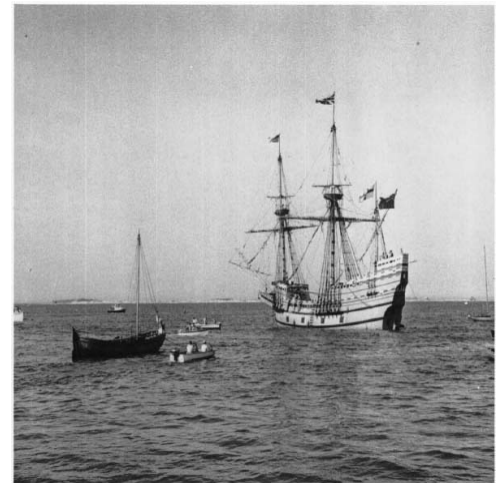
hard to imagine travelers wading across the river. If there was indeed no second ferry at this point, it would raise the possibility that the first one went down the Tantramar and into the Aulac (or vice versa), which the map suggests it could have done without entering the bay. This was certainly in general terms the route followed by a later ferry connecting Westcock and some point on the Aulac. But without further evidence there is no way of deciding this question. There is also no record (that I know of) to indicate whether the ferry established by the French continued to run after Acadia became Nova Scotia, or even whether, or for how long, the road continued in use. What *is* known is that, soon after it was founded, New Brunswick delegated the regulation of ferries (as well as markets and many other local matters) to the counties, more specifically to the biannual meeting of the county’s provincially-appointed Justices of the Peace, known as the General Sessions of the Peace. The record of the General Sessions has been preserved in its entirety for the years 1785-1809 and incompletely from 1834 down to the replacement of the General Sessions by an elected County Council in 1877. A fair bit of information on the Westmorland County ferries may be found in it, and this forms the basis for much of what follows here.

Westmorland County (which included what became Albert County in 1845) apparently did nothing about ferries until January 1790, when the General Sessions appointed Isaac Evans ferryman between Westmorland Township (it bore the same name as the county) and Westcock in Sackville Township. Originally from Wales, Evans lived in Westcock very near to the wharf belonging to Sackville’s leading citizen, Amos Botsford. It was situated just down from the old Blair Botsford house on Hospital Loop Road, which is now in the Fisher family. The remains of Evans’ house can still be seen on the northeast corner of Malcolm Fisher’s property. According to the record of the General Sessions, Evans was to “keep a good and sufficient boat for transporting foot passengers” between a wharf on the Aulac and a wharf on the Tantramar (presumably Botsford’s, although that isn’t stated). He was to erect a pole “at the point of O’Lac” and run up a flag as a signal that the ferry was in service. It is impossible to say for sure where the “point of the O’Lac” was, but a good guess might be where it met the Aulac River below the fort. A small piece of evidence to support this supposition will be presented below. Evans was also ordered to blow a horn “ten minutes previous to leaving Westmorland or Westcock” to warn stragglers to get a move on. The fare

was also set by the General Sessions: one shilling and six pence—less than a glass of rum at the local tavern. Better yet, it was reduced to one shilling if there was more than one passenger. “Bales, boxes, and packages” went at eight pence per hundred-weight.

It proved very difficult to find direct information on the type of vessel that would have been used, or the route followed. The mention of a “boat” and “foot passengers,” as well as the lack of any reference to horses or vehicles—and the fact that it sailed on shallow rivers—makes it clear that the vessel was a small one, certainly propelled by oars and possibly also by a sail when the winds were favourable. My best guess is that it was a small shallop of the kind carried on board the larger vessels that brought the first European settlers to these shores and used to explore the coastlines. These were open boats, some twenty-five to thirty feet long, that could carry up to a dozen people and be sailed as well as rowed. Here is a reconstruction of the one that accompanied the *Mayflower*, also reconstructed in this image:

The route is a little easier to figure out, thanks to the British officer’s map. It shows that in 1755, and presumably well into the 19th century, the mouths of the Aulac and Tantramar were probably somewhat closer together than they are today. So the ferry did not have to venture very far into the bay in order to get from one river to the other. In fact, it seems to have followed very closely the road built along the banks of the two rivers by the French. A few years ago, Colin MacKinnon retraced it on one of his many field trips over the marsh and kindly shared this image illustrating his conclusions. The double-dotted line running through the words AULAC MARSH represents the surviving remnants of the old French road.



It was of course possible to travel between

Westmorland and Sackville townships by land, but that could be very inconvenient, especially in wet weather when the marsh was full of muck—and it took a lot longer. Whether people continued to use the “old French Road” after the Conquest is unknown, but it seems that, unless conditions were ideal, the only other way to get across by land was further upstream at the height of tide near the High Marsh Road where the Tantramar would have been fordable and where, sometime early in the 19th century, a bridge was built, one of whose successors still stands as the Wheaton covered bridge. In summer the preferred and much faster way

was by the ferry. For this we have the testimony of Rev. Edward Willoughby, an Anglican missionary minister who served briefly at Amherst, Point de Bute, and Sackville in 1794. In a letter he wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel back in England, which Rhianna Edwards drew to my attention, he reported that he conducted services at Amherst and Westmorland (in St. Marks’ Anglican Church) every Sunday and on the first Sunday of every month at Sackville (probably at Amos Botsford’s recently built mansion located on what is now Malcolm Fisher’s property; St. Ann’s Anglican Church was not built until 1817). He said it was “twenty-nine miles from Westmorland,” which I think was an overestimation. Measured by the Google map, it is not much more than seventeen miles going around by the High Marsh Road. But his statement that the “summer crossing by ferry [is] only four [miles]” is very plausible. I used the distance-measuring feature of the Google map to follow what seems (in general terms) to have been the route that the ferry would have taken, starting from Botsford’s wharf. It is almost exactly four miles to where, according to the 1755 map, the “old French Road” crossed the Aulac.

Isaac Evans ran the ferry until 1797 when a John Simonds was appointed to replace him. His appointment stipulated that the ferry was to run every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. It didn't say "weather permitting," but I assume that was implied, although people were much tougher in those days. Almost needless to say, it could only have run when the tide was in, or nearly so—which probably means that there were two crossings on the days it operated, one going and one coming to/from Westcock/Westmorland. At this point the General Sessions also levied a fine of twenty shillings (=one pound) on any ferryman who didn't follow the regulations, as well as on anyone who presumed to start up a rival ferry. Ferries, in other words, were a regulated monopoly, but it appears that would-be competitors could petition the General Sessions to be appointed instead of the incumbent. Thus, in 1798 Benjamin Tower Junior, whose father ran a grist and saw mill on Lower Mill Creek in Sackville, was successful in "praying that he may be appointed Ferryman across the O'Lack from Westmorland to Westcock," which he was, "subject to the regulations of the precedent year." The following year Edward Reed was appointed "under the same Regulations as Isaac Evans," except that the ferry was only to run on Tuesdays and Saturdays whether there were passengers or not. Apparently business was not as brisk as had been anticipated. As a special inducement, Reed was also to "have a Tavern licence gratis." However, it seems that he was not without competition, or maybe he changed his mind at the last minute. Just after his appointment, the Justices held a Special Sessions to appoint Edward Buck instead. Buck was also offered a free tavern licence, while the inducement to Reed was probably withdrawn. There was also another reason why someone might want to be appointed a ferryman, although it probably wasn't a very weighty one: Like members of the provincial government, Sheriffs, Coroners, Justices of the Peace, ministers of the gospel, schoolmasters, and certain millers, ferrymen were excused from having to enlist in the county militia, although they could do so if they wanted to.

It is not recorded how Evans reacted when Simonds replaced him, but he may no longer have been interested in the job, as he had another source of livelihood in the form of a schooner engaged in the Fundy coastal trade. Unfortunately, sometime in 1798, it, he, and all his crew were lost in a violent storm off Partridge Island (the one near Saint John, not Parrsboro) leaving his widow to eke out an existence by using her home as a road house and tavern. Isaac had taken out a tavern licence in 1791.

There is not much more to tell about the ferry between Westmorland and Westcock because the record of the General Sessions of the Peace has been lost for the years between 1809 and 1834. When it picks up again there is no more mention of this ferry. I suspect that it quit operating when a better road was built between Sackville and points east. We do, however, have it on the authority of Sackville's first historian and newspaper editor, W.C. Milner, that it was still running in 1812, and, by implication quite a while after that. "In 1812 there was only a trail or path through the woods between Sackville or rather Westcock and Dorchester, but a passable team road then existed from Westcock to Tantramar. *There was a ferry from Westcock to Aulac. The ferryman at this time was "Lin" Baizley. He was succeeded by James Evans.*" One of Isaac's sons, James later took over the tavern when his mother died in 1842. So the Westcock-Westmorland ferry business came full circle in the Evans family, and could well have stopped running in 1842 or thereabouts. Another factor in its demise would have been the building of a new bridge over the Tantramar at the end of Bridge Street in 1840, thanks largely to the efforts of leading Sackville merchant William Crane, who stood most to benefit by it.

In 1797 the General Sessions granted permission to establish two new ferries. The smaller and less important one went to William Black Esq. for service "over the Memramcook River opposite his House" at a rate of "one shilling for one passenger and six pence (half a shilling) when more than one." Clearly, the fare reflected the distance to be covered, which was considerably less than that between Westmorland and Westcock. It may also indicate that Black was motivated more by a desire to provide a public service than to make money. William Black was the son of a Scottish high official of independent wealth. According to his descendent, Larry Black, who told his story in *A Country Store and More* published in 2012 by Tantramar Heritage Trust, he "spent his youth as a country squire, following the hounds and doing little else." Then he moved to Yorkshire where he did well enough by marrying into more money and establishing a linen drapery business. For some reason, he joined the Yorkshire emigration in 1774, apparently thinking there were even better prospects in the Chignecto. In any case, he did it in style. He is said to have arrived at Fort Cumberland with a private physician, servants, and some horses and hounds. After purchasing a large tract of land in Amherst Township, he returned to Yorkshire to fetch his family, some livestock, and a servant girl. When his wife died soon after arriving in her new home he remarried (regrettably, I can't introduce a note of scandal by saying it was the servant girl, because it wasn't), divided his Amherst property among his children (one of whom was William Junior, founder of the Methodist movement in the Maritimes), and about 1790 moved to Dorchester where he purchased two lots near to where the old Rockland covered bridge used to stand. There is no evidence, and, given

his status and wealth, little likelihood, that he operated the ferry himself. He was repeatedly appointed to the higher offices in the township, such as Commissioner of Highways, and became a Justice of the Peace in 1798. But he didn't think it beneath his dignity to own a tavern, no doubt for the comfort and convenience of his ferry passengers as well as the general public. It seems to have been usual to locate a tavern close to a ferry. What better place to await its departure, enjoying liquid refreshments while safely out of the elements?

As in the case of the Westcock-Aulac ferry there is no direct evidence of the type of vessel Black used on the Memramcook, but it is a safe bet that it wasn't a sailboat. I would guess that it was some kind of a barge that was poled and/or rowed across while fastened to a hemp rope or metal chain strung across the river to prevent it drifting with the tide. (Or maybe it just ran when the tide was sufficiently in and the current was in its slow stages.) After Black's appointment as ferryman there is no more specific mention of the Memramcook ferry in the surviving portions of the record of the General Sessions. We are left to assume that it continued in service for some time after 1797 but I can say nothing more about it, except that, as noted below, a James Black was appointed one of the ferrymen in Dorchester Township in 1808, and he could have been William's son.

The other new ferry licence granted in 1797 went to Thomas Wheldon, the third son of local squire John Wheldon (the spelling was later changed to Weldon) and a brother-in-law to John Keillor. Besides his holdings on land later occupied by the Maritime Penitentiary, John Wheldon had property down by Dorchester Cape, some of which he deeded to Thomas. About 1790 he also had a stone house built for him near Dorchester Island and that is most likely where Thomas kept his "good and sufficient boat for transporting foot passengers" from Dorchester to Hopewell "at the junction of the Petitcodiac and Memramcook Rivers." Two different fares were authorized: "To Shepody five shillings for one passenger, when more than one, three shillings and six pence. To the lower village on the Petitcodiac, six shillings for each passenger, when more than one four shillings." These names are confusing to anyone trying to locate them on a current map. Given the price difference, "the lower village" was clearly further from Dorchester than was Shepody. If by 'Shepody' was meant the successor of the Acadian village founded in 1698 and destroyed in 1755, then it was a good seven miles (11 km) further downriver from what is today called Hopewell, and the "lower village" must have been closer to Riverside-Albert, or perhaps Harvey Bank. This makes sense when we consider that Hopewell, or more accurately Hopewell Cape, was not established as a village until it became the location of the courthouse and jail for Albert County. The confusion is further cleared up when we learn that Hopewell, or Hopewell Cape, was the more delicate and uplifting name given by the British to what a French sea captain, who had probably been at sea too long, had called "Cap Demoiselle" after a rock formation that he thought resembled a young woman's figure. Both terms referred to the whole area around the cape, and not the later village where the Albert County Museum is located. Today, all that is left of Cap Demoiselle is the tiny community of Demoiselle Creek near Albert Mines.

Unlike the Memramcook ferry, there is much more to say about its larger Dorchester-Hopewell sister, starting with the fact that, like its Westcock-Aulac cousin, it experienced a succession of ferrymen. Thomas Wheldon only had the concession for one year. In 1798 it went to Elijah Ayer Junior, who briefly appeared in our June 2021 issue as the captain of the schooner that brought Josiah Wood to Dorchester in 1800 and whose niece, Sarah, Josiah married. Elijah is quite a story in himself. Originally from Connecticut, he, together with his parents and several brothers, were among the early settlers of Sackville Township who became disillusioned with the British government and supported the American Revolution. Both Elijah and his father, also called Elijah, took part in the Eddy Rebellion of 1776 and when it collapsed they fled to Maine where Junior prospered as a sea captain and commissioned officer in the American navy. Some time before 1785 he returned to Sackville where he had property in Westcock. (His father later followed him.) One of his nearest neighbours was Amos Botsford, Westmorland County's most powerful and influential man. About 1792 Botsford moved to Westcock from Dorchester Island, which, among many other properties, he had been granted in return for his services as a leading Loyalist. (He followed up on this with a large chunk of the Westcock marsh.) Loyalists were supposed to be the enemies of all rebels, but this didn't keep Amos, who was also from Connecticut, from friendly relations with the Ayers. In 1797 he sold Dorchester Island, along with the large stone house that he had just built, to Elijah for a good price, while Elijah sold his Westcock property to Botsford's son-in-law, Stephen Millidge, High Sheriff of Westmorland County. Both Botsford and Millidge continued to patronize Elijah's schooner, which delivered goods to the store they kept at Westcock. Given Botsford's influence at the General Sessions where he was both clerk and leading Justice of the Peace, Ayer's appointment to the county's most important—and

no doubt lucrative—ferry service is not as surprising as it would otherwise be. There is no evidence that Thomas Wheldon took out a tavern licence, but Elijah didn't overlook this little detail in the interest of his passengers' comfort. Indeed, he went a step further and became a licensed innkeeper in 1798, the year before he got his tavern licence. The Botsford house on Dorchester Island would have made a splendid inn, and indeed it continued for many years to serve in this capacity after Ayer sold it to the next owner.

Again, there is no direct evidence of the type of vessel that Ayer would have used, but, given the distance covered and the waters to be navigated, we can be pretty sure that it was a shallop, probably somewhat bigger than the one at Westcock-Aulac. As will be seen below, the Dorchester-Hopewell vessels remained rowable and open for many years to come.

Like his former Westcock neighbour, Isaac Evans, Elijah Ayer did not continue for long in the ferry business, probably because he, too, had other vessels in the coastal trade, and wanted to concentrate on them. The June, 1803, General Sessions appointed Hugh Boyd "Ferryman across to Hopewell at the Customary Rate." Boyd was a resident of Hopewell Township in 1800 but he may have moved to Dorchester after his appointment. At any rate both John Wheldon and John Keillor posted bonds, as was required by law, in support of his tavern licence, which he renewed every year at least until 1809 when the record of the General Sessions breaks off. Along with four others, Boyd was one of the ferrymen appointed for the Township of Dorchester in 1808, so he must have moved here. I don't know where he lived, only that it wasn't in the former Botsford house on Dorchester Island, as Ayer sold that to Benjamin Wilson in 1803.

The other ferrymen appointed for the Township (also called 'Parish') of Dorchester in 1808 were James Black, Peter Poirier, Samuel Robichaud, and Baptiste Vautour. The last three were obviously Acadians and, while we learn nothing about Poirier and Robichaud except their names, the same is not true of Vautour. He was "appointed ferryman over the Scoodiac (Scoudouc) River at the oyster beds" and allowed to charge "for every single person three pence [a quarter of a shilling] and for each and every person with a horse six pence [half a shilling]." This is the earliest reference in the record to a ferry capable of transporting a horse (or horses), but the low fares and the fact that the Scoudouc is neither very wide nor very deep, especially at the oyster beds, makes it probable that it was only a glorified raft, no doubt with rails to keep the horse(s) from jumping overboard. Perhaps it looked something like this:



As mentioned before, the record of the General Sessions is lost between 1809 and 1834. It breaks off right in the middle of the June Sessions when the Clerk (by this time Amos Botsford's son, William) decided to start a new ledger, which was not preserved. However, we do get a brief peek at the Dorchester-Hopewell ferry service in 1831. It comes from the "Memorandum of Events" (a cross between a diary and a log book) kept by Captain George McAllister of St. Stephen who had a brig built for him in Sackville by shipbuilder Christopher Boultenhouse. (Boultenhouse later built the gracious home now in the loving care of Tanatramar Heritage Trust). In

October 1831 Captain McAllister came up to Sackville to settle with Boultenhouse and get the brig ready for sailing. He came up the Fundy coast in another brig as far as Shepody-Hopewell River where, on October 20th he "landed upon a dyke which enclosed about a thousand acres of land." This describes almost exactly the area immediately north of Harvey Bank and eastwards of the river. After failing to find a horse for hire he set out at 11 AM on a three-hour walk to the ferry landing, arriving at 2 PM "too late to get across the ferry that tide." He twiddled his thumbs until 11 that evening "when I should again have been disappointed had it not been for another person wanting to go across." Although it was a clear night and not much wind "the Ferryman [who is unfortunately unnamed] was afraid that he should not be able to get back again alone.

[Apparently it didn't occur to him to overnight on the other side and let westbound passengers help him on the return trip.] Therefore he gave us the Boat fitted out with an old sail and an oar to steer her with and sent us off, the distance being about three miles, neither of us knowing where the landing was."

Captain McAllister doesn't tell us where the ferry departed from on the Hopewell side, but about the only plausible place, given the stated three-mile distance across the Petitcodiac, was a point a little northeast of the Hopewell Rocks in the vicinity of McGinley's Corner. The distance to there from the aforementioned dykes near Harvey Bank where he landed in the brig is about twelve miles, just about what could have been comfortably covered in three hours, with perhaps a little time to spare

for a meal at a local tavern. By using the distance-measuring feature on the Google map I was able to determine that the landing on the Dorchester-Sackville side of the river must have been either at Cole's Point, located on what later became the site of the now defunct Westmorland Chemical Park, or some spot further downstream a bit below the Johnson's Mills Shorebird Interpretive Centre but not as far as Grande Anse. Given that Cole's Point was the closer of the two to Westcock, I assume that that is where they landed. A boat steered by an oar (no doubt because of the shallow water over the mudflats) and capable of being handled by two men could not have been a very big one, but at least we have confirmation that it was sailed when the wind was blowing in the right direction. I doubt that it could have handled a horse.

Captain McAllister also describes the return ferry ride across the Petitcodiac on October 22, two days after coming over: "After leaving Mr. Boultenhouse, we walked down to the point [most likely Cole's Point, about 11 miles from Wood Point where Boultenhouse had his shipyard] and made a smoke, the usual signal for the ferryman. After a long time he came. Among the passengers that came over with him was Mr. Smithson. We had to beat back against a strong breeze, the tide favoring us running strong, and it here flows 50 to 60 feet, and the ferry goes an hour and a half before and after high water. Ferriage river: 2 shillings going, 3 coming. Got dinner and walked back to Chepody to get my trunk [which he was obliged to leave when he couldn't get a horse] and seek a passage to St. Johns. Stopped at a tavern kept by a Mrs. Rogers." From this it seems that the ferryman had an extra boat, as he clearly came over from the Hopewell side with several passengers to pick up Captain McAllister, and also that there was only one ferryman at this time. In any case, it confirms the importance of taverns and roadhouses to the travelling public—hardly any surprise there.

For a long time it was thought that all record of the General Sessions after 1809 was gone, but when I was researching the article on the Dorchester poorhouse that appeared in the June 2018 issue of the Newsletter I had reason to examine the microfilmed record of the Westmorland County Council (the successor of the General Sessions) and made the happy discovery that the record of the General Sessions from 1834 to 1877, the year they were replaced by the elected County Council, is in fact in the provincial archives, and has been microfilmed. But the archivist/microfilmer assumed that it was the first part of the record of the County Council and filed it accordingly, so that, unless by way of an accidental discovery, no one knew of its existence. While I had a copy of the microfilm on interlibrary loan I took images of the record of the General Sessions for my own files. Even though they weren't relevant to the Dorchester poorhouse, I figured I would probably want to consult them some day. And so I did—for this article.

As it turns out, the newly discovered record is not complete. There are a lot of missing and torn pages in the mouldy ledgers that survived and, almost worse yet, sometime in the late 1860s or early 70s, the General Sessions got a new clerk who wrote in an almost illegible scrawl and unfortunately continued in the position for some years after the General Sessions was replaced by the County Council. Nevertheless, I was able to gather enough information from the record to take the story of the Dorchester-Hopewell ferry down to about 1850, after which it is continued from two other sources that I will introduce at the appropriate time.

It seems that the surviving record of the General Sessions begins again just in time to inform us of some important changes in 1834. The November Sessions of that year decided that two ferrymen would now be appointed for the Dorchester-Hopewell service, one for each side; that they would have "the exclusive privilege of carrying over passengers;" and that each would have "the privilege of conveying to and from the other side..." Thomas Calhoun was appointed for the Hopewell side and Edward Murphy "on Dorchester Island." There was also a significant reduction in fares from what they had been in 1797. Since it is not the natural tendency of fares to go down, we can probably assume that this reflected the poor state of the New Brunswick economy, which sadly disappointed Loyalist dreams of a new land of milk and honey. There is no more mention of two landings on the Hopewell side, but instead of costing five or six shillings for single passengers and three shillings and six pence or four shillings when more than one, the passage now cost only three shillings for single passengers, two shillings and four pence when there were two, and just two shillings when there were three or more. Moreover, the vessels could now carry more than just people. The fare for "horses and horned cattle" (i.e. beef cattle) was four shillings a head, for a horse and rider five shillings, for a "horse, gig, and person" six shillings and three pence. By this time roads had improved enough that it was practical to travel by horse and carriage. As an added bonus, "when there is more than one horse or one head of horn cattle, the person accompanying them to go free." Clearly, the vessels had gotten much larger since the days of

Elijah Ayer and Hugh Boyd, something that is confirmed by the resolution “that each ferryman have one large and one small boat suitable to the comfortable conveyance of passengers, horses, gigs, &c.” If there were no longer two landings on the Hopewell side, the same was not true of its Dorchester counterpart: “Resolved likewise that it be at the option of passengers to be landed either at Cole’s Point or at Dorchester Island and that the respective ferrymen do at all times consult the reasonable requests of passengers in this particular.” Here we learn that there was already a ‘Cole’s Point’ on Dorchester Cape. It was named after Ebenezer Cole (d. 1826), one of the founders of the Baptist Church in Sackville. Cole moved to the Cape about 1802 where he established a farm that later became the site of the ill-fated Westmorland Chemical Park whose sorry saga we recited in the June 2019 issue of this Newsletter. Interestingly enough, he bought the land from Thomas Wheldon, the first ferryman on the Dorchester-Hopewell run, and maybe this got him or his boys to thinking. Later some of his descendants would take over the ferry.

After this, the information on the ferry in the surviving record of the General Sessions is sporadic. In 1835 Edward Murphy was continued as ferryman for Dorchester. We learn no more about Thomas Calhoun, but in 1840 the ferryman at Hopewell was Joseph Sears. However, the Calhoun family may still have had a hand in the business. In 1839 the provincial legislature approved a grant to erect “a ferry wharf at the public landing called Calhoun’s Landing in Hopewell,” and George Calhoun was one of the Commissioners appointed to erect it. In 1840 the General Sessions appointed James McElman ferryman at Dorchester and ordered that jurors attending the General Sessions or any other court at Dorchester be given free return passage from Hopewell. It also further reduced the fare for foot passengers to two shillings—a sign of tough times for the New Brunswick economy—and ordered that the Hopewell ferryman “when required by any passenger shall if practicable land him or her at Dorchester Island.” From this it would seem that Cole’s Point had become the main ‘terminal’ on the Dorchester side, while the Island was becoming a bit of a nuisance stop. There is even a hint that the regulations on this and other matters weren’t always followed to the letter, as the good Justices also increased the twenty-shilling fine for violating them to thirty shillings. On a brighter note, the provincial legislature granted twenty pounds to subsidize the ferry.

The rest of my information drawn from the record of the General Sessions comes from the Index, which survived intact. It is even more sporadic and spotty than the above, but is not without interest, as it confirms that by mid century there were other ferries in the county besides the ones that have so far appeared in this article. There is no indication of where it started from (possibly Westcock), but there was a ferry to Minudie, with O. Barnes (a good Sackville name) as ferryman. There was another at Stony Creek, operated successively by C. Colpits and William Beattie, while Simon Outhouse ran the one at the ‘Bend’, as Moncton was then commonly called. In 1845 Dale Weldon (notice the spelling change) was ferryman at Dorchester, followed a few years later by Mariner Lamb.

With this, information from the General Sessions fizzles out but two other sources enabled me to continue the story of the Dorchester-Hopewell ferry service for a bit longer.

1. Sometime around the mid 19th century, American cartographer and entrepreneur Henry F. Walling began making maps of cities, towns, and counties to sell to governments, businesses, and private individuals. Showing in wonderful detail every street, road, and building with the owner’s name beside it, they soon became so popular that Walling decided to expand into Canada. He only got four New Brunswick counties done (probably in the late 1840s or early 1850s although not published until the early 1860s) but fortunately Westmorland and Albert were among them. Quite a few have been preserved and they are a goldmine of information. Tantramar Heritage Trust has a fine reproduction



specimen on the stair wall of the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre and Colin MacKinnon kindly shared this image of a relevant portion of it.

It shows that at the time the Walling map was made (late 1840s or early 1850s) there were *two ferries between Hopewell and Dorchester Cape*. The upper one ran between a landing just down from the Albert County Courthouse, built in 1845 or not much later, and Cole's Point. The lower one ran between what was almost certainly the aforementioned landing near McGinlay's Corner and a point near the Johnson's Mills Shorebird Interpretive Centre, identified above as one of the two possibilities where Captain McAllister could have landed in October 1831. Again by using the distance-measuring feature of the Google map, I was able to determine that the upper ferry (between the Albert County courthouse and Cole's Point) only travelled about 1.8 miles, quite a difference from the nearly three miles between Cole's Point and the landing lower down from which Captain McAllister and his unhappy fellow traveler left in 1831. There will be occasion to talk again about these three miles.

2. A few years back, Marlene Hickman, one of our long-time members (she also served on the Board of Directors), began collecting everything she could find in the old newspapers about Dorchester. Diligent readers of the Newsletter will recall that I used a lot of her treasures in a series entitled 'Notes from Marlene's Scrapbook'. Happily, there are still a number of items in her collection (which she has now posted on Facebook) that will help us here. From an article she discovered in the *Chignecto Post* we learn that in 1871 the ferry (whether the larger or the smaller one) was still "a small open boat," which made the crossing "sometimes very perilous." There was some pressure to replace it with a steam ferry, but not as much as the editor (W.C. Milner) thought there should be: "Has the agitation for a steam ferry to connect Hopewell with Dorchester fizzled out? Or are there no public-spirited men in either County to press the matter to a favourable conclusion?... The prosperity of Dorchester rests upon these improvements being carried out..." Ten years later nothing had been done, as is evident from another article that appeared in the *Chignecto Post* (no doubt encouraged by Milner, if he didn't write it). Entitled "The Impressions of a Stranger" it describes a ferry passage from Dorchester to Hopewell in 1880. The 'stranger' said that it was possible to leave from Dorchester Island but, for some reason he doesn't explain, this meant landing at a less convenient place on the other side "in order to keep tolerably clean." So he elected to go by way of the Cape (i.e. Cole's Point) from where the ferry was scheduled to sail at high tide. But there were delays in getting going, the tide ebbed away with the hours, and the craft was left high and dry. "As the river would not go to the boat, it was evident that the boat must go to the river. Bare feet and legs were the correct thing for the occasion, and in this uniform ferryman Cole [this is the earliest reference to a Cole as ferryman that I have seen, but others could well be buried in the lost or illegible portions of the record] and his passengers propelled the craft over the flats until the current was reached and the boat launched into the waters of the 'red sea' of the Petitcodiac." A stiff north-west breeze and a strong ebb tide combined to carry the ferry a mile or so beyond the normal landing point, which the "stranger" said was ordinarily three miles. If this was the correct distance, then the "normal landing point" was the one down by McGinlay's Corner, and not the one below the Albert County Courthouse. Either that, or the "stranger" got the distance confused with the one between the Albert County courthouse and Dorchester Island, which is almost exactly three miles. Wherever it was, the extra mile or so landed our intrepid, if somewhat disgruntled, traveler "at the edge of a wide and suspicious looking expanse of mud flats." The rest of his literary effort is taken up in describing the tactile pleasures of wading through mud "in which it was possible for the pedestrian to sink to a depth seriously detrimental to his dignity and comfort."

Clearly, there was a need for better facilities, but travelers had to wait another seventeen years for it to be acted upon. Finally, the November 13, 1897 issue of *The Spectator* announced that a petition was being circulated in Westmorland and Albert Counties for a pier at Cole's Point, to be built "far enough out on the flats to permit crossing by ferry at high or low tide." It would be "a strong inducement to Ferryman Cole to put in a small steam ferry capable of carrying horses and wagons, which would no doubt divert more of the travel to and from Albert in this direction." This time, action came quickly. The pier was built, Ferryman Cole acted accordingly, and by March 1898 *The Spectator* was able to report that "the Ferry Boat is now plying between Cole's Point and Albert County. [Dorchester Island was now apparently out of the picture.] Passengers can be driven from the railway station to the ferry by the Hotel Livery or from the ferry to the Windsor [Hotel] or the station by the ferryman's team as the case may be." The report doesn't say specifically that it was a steam ferry, but this is

strongly implied in Ferryman Cole's ad in the April 16, 1898 issue of *The Spectator*: "Cole's Ferry—To convey passengers to and from Albert County and convey passengers to and from the railway, during the opening of navigation. Good boats and skilful management."

How long did the Dorchester-Hopewell ferry remain in service? So far, I have found no more reference to it in the usual sources, but will keep my eyes open. I can say tentatively that it was apparently no longer running in the 1930s, the years of Ernie Partridge's childhood. As many will attest, his memory would put an elephant to shame, and it goes back almost to his earliest years. Not only does he not remember the ferry, he doesn't recall ever having heard tell of it. From this I would guess that it stopped running sometime around the end of the First World War, or perhaps in the early 1920s. We may have some concrete evidence of this, courtesy of Peter Spence and Colin MacKinnon. It is in the form of a picture of what was reportedly the last ferry operating from Cole's Point:



Unfortunately, we can't place it except to say that it was taken from the photo album of Grace Cole Marney, a sister-in-law of an Edgar Cole who lived at Cole's Point. It definitely looks to be from the 1920s, but it was clearly not powered by a steam engine, nor would it have been able to accommodate livestock. I would say that it was a small gasoline-powered motor launch. In any case the service seems to have ended not long after the picture was taken.

So, unlike normal fairy tales, this 'ferry tale' does not end with the heroes living happily ever after. If and when I find further information I will share it with you. In the meantime 'ferry[e] well'.

Gene Goodrich

THE WESTMORLAND COUNTY CENSUSES OF 1834 AND 1840

When searching the record of the General Sessions for the 'ferry' tale, I ran across two censuses that the county undertook in 1834 and again in 1840. I found the information to be very interesting and thought it worth reproducing here. Before they were all but abolished in 1965, New Brunswick counties were divided into civil parishes, which until the 1830s were also informally called townships after the original New England model. By 1834 Westmorland County had ten parishes: Westmorland, Sackville, Dorchester, Botsford, Shediac, Moncton, Coverdale, Salisbury, Hillsborough, and Hopewell. By 1840 Harvey had been added. In 1845 Hillsborough, Hopewell, and Harvey were separated out to become Albert County.

1834

Inhabited Houses:	By How Many Families	Males Above Age 16 White	Males Under Age 16 White	Females Above 16 White
Dorchester 433	Dorchester 502	Dorchester 733	Dorchester 823	Dorchester 705
Hopewell 290	Hopewell 316	Hopewell 495	Hopewell 555	Hopewell 444
Sackville 275	Sackville 315	Sackville 516	Sackville 575	Sackville 459
Shediac 198	Shediac 217	Shediac 337	Shediac 340	Shediac 296
Botsford 208	Botsford 264	Botsford 350	Botsford 298	Botsford 316
Westmorland 110	Westmorland 167	Westmorland 290	Westmorland 313	Westmorland 260
Coverdale 80	Coverdale 85	Coverdale 155	Coverdale 157	Coverdale 146
Salisbury 176	Salisbury 182	Salisbury 317	Salisbury 270	Salisbury 254
Hillsborough 117	Hillsborough 142	Hillsborough 227	Hillsborough 204	Hillsborough 221
Moncton 80	Moncton 87	Moncton 150	Moncton 157	Moncton 117

Females Under 16 White

Dorchester	821
Hopewell	513
Sackville	463
Shediac	343
Botsford	370
Westmorland	270
Coverdale	155
Salisbury	275
Hillsborough	248
Moncton	154

PEOPLE OF COLOUR

Males Above 16	Males Below 16	Females Above 16	Females Below 16
Dorchester 3	Dorchester 2	Dorchester 3	Dorchester 4
Hopewell	Hopewell	Hopewell	Hopewell
Sackville 5	Sackville 2	Sackville 3	Sackville 2
Shediac	Shediac	Shediac 1	Shediac
Botsford	Botsford 1	Botsford 1	Botsford 4
Westmorland 6	Westmorland 9	Westmorland 8	Westmorland 8
Coverdale 2	Coverdale	Coverdale	Coverdale 2
Salisbury 3	Salisbury	Salisbury 1	Salisbury
Hillsborough	Hillsborough	Hillsborough	Hillsborough
Moncton	Moncton	Moncton	Moncton

Parishes in Order of Population

Dorchester	3024
Hopewell	2007
Sackville	1970
Botsford	1340
Shediac	1318
Westmorland	1165
Salisbury	1120
Hillsborough	960
Coverdale	617
Moncton	578

Total Population of County in 1834 14, 099

Total Blacks in County in 1834

Males	33
Females	37
Total	70

1840

The numbers to the right of each parish represent, in order: white males over 16; white males under 16; white females over 16; white females under 16; black males over 16; black males under 16, black females over 16; black females under 16. The parishes are listed in order of population.

Dorchester	750; 808; 770; 738;	0; 1; 1; 2	total	3,069
Sackville	668; 573; 581; 537;	2; 1; 3; 1	total.....	2,366
Shediac	453; 514; 428; 493;	0; 2; 1; 3	total.....	1,894
Botsford	436; 463; 416; 457	0; 2; 1; 0	total.....	1,775
Moncton	391; 414; 339; 385		total.....	1,529
Harvey	368; 405; 339; 376		total.....	1,488
Westmorland	343; 347; 335; 365;	11; 12; 6; 17	total.....	1,436
Salisbury	378; 368; 333; 347		total.....	1,426
Hillsborough	263; 203; 245; 281		total.....	992
Hopewell *	259; 258; 230; 244		total.....	991
Coverdale	167; 160; 164; 150	2; 0; 2; 0	total.....	645
			Total for County.....	17,611
			Total Blacks	70

** The precipitous decline in Hopewell's population since 1834 is explained by the erection of Harvey.*

Grist Mills: Dorchester 6; Sackville 6; Westmorland 4; Botsford 19; Shediac 4; Moncton 4; Salisbury 7; Coverdale 3; Hillsborough 3; Hopewell 3; Harvey 3.
Total in County 62

Saw Mills: Dorchester 18; Sackville 12; Westmorland 8; Botsford 20; Shediac 11; Moncton 14; Salisbury 13; Coverdale 6; Hillsborough 19; Hopewell 17; Harvey 3.
Total in County 141

Horses : Dorchester 576; Sackville 606; Westmorland 424; Botsford 340; Shediac 252 ; Moncton 241; Salisbury 348; Coverdale 165; Hillsborough 170; Hopewell 142; Harvey 178
Total in County..... 3,442

Beef Cattle: Dorchester 3604; Sackville 3557; Westmorland 2578; Botsford 2069; Shediac 1335; Moncton 1433; Salisbury 1236; Coverdale 1175; Hillsborough 1298; Hopewell 1048; Harvey 1421
Total in County..... 20,754

Sheep: Dorchester 5194; Sackville 3842; Westmorland 3001; Botsford 3429; Shediac 2285; Moncton 1038; Salisbury 1756; Coverdale 1433; Hillsborough 1795; Hopewell 1442; Harvey 1702
Total in County..... 27,553

Swine: Dorchester 3026; Sackville 2416; Westmorland 1531; Botsford 1956; Shediac 2082; Moncton 1035; Salisbury 1140; Coverdale 638; Hillsborough 1026; Hopewell 712; Harvey 983
Total in County 16, 545



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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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