

# The Pioneer Times

(News vehicle of the Cloyne and District Historical Society)



**Cloyne and District Historical Society**

Box 228

Cloyne, ON K0H 1K0

Tel: 1 (613) 336-2203

Fax: 1 (613) 374-2170

E-Mail: [pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca](mailto:pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca)



Preserving the Past for the Future

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**Editors and Production Committee**

*Karyl Steinpatz*  
[steinpat@kingston.jkl.net](mailto:steinpat@kingston.jkl.net)

*Carol Morrow*  
[ncmorrow@sympatico.ca](mailto:ncmorrow@sympatico.ca)

**Advertising**  
*Marcella Neely*  
[kmneely@mazinaw.on.ca](mailto:kmneely@mazinaw.on.ca)

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**President**  
*Margaret Axford*

**Secretary**  
*Eileen Flieler*

**Treasurer**  
*Ian Brumell*

**Directors**  
*Dorothy Pethick, Karyl Steinpatz,  
Carol Lessard, Carolyn McCulloch,  
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**President's Message**

*Margaret Axford*

**H**ello! This an odd spot in the newsletter for me, but as Karyl is having an issue or two off, I am trying to fill in for her - not an easy task!

I thought you might be interested in hearing about the major project of the Cloyne and District Historical Society for the year 2007 - the reprinting of *The Oxen and The Axe*. For those of you who aren't familiar with our local history book, it is a collection of stories, interviews, poems, photos and drawings which was first published in 1974 by the Board of Directors of the Pioneer Club, the forefather of the C&DHS. The book has proved to be very popular over the past thirty-plus years, and is now just about at the end of its fourth printing. In my opinion, that probably makes this little book a Canadian best-seller! And so, this year, we must produce a fifth edition.

An editorial board comprised of Ian Brumell, the son of one of the original editors, Nadine Brumell, Carolyn McCulloch, Eileen Flieler, Carol Morrow, Karyl Steinpatz and myself have taken on this somewhat daunting task. It is our intention to keep the language of the original intact, while correcting the typing and spelling errors, to try to improve the photo quality, and to add a new introduction and an index, so that those of you who use the book for research will be able to find information more easily.

To date, we have been busy editing. Very soon, we will be visiting printing companies with an eye to finding one which will do the best job for us at a reasonable price. We have a few possibilities in mind, but if any of our readers have experience with a particular company, we would appreciate hearing about it. You can contact us at <[pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca](mailto:pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca)>.

Technology has so dramatically changed the publishing field since 1974 that our friends who produced the original edition would not recognize much of the process today! However, I like to think that they would certainly be happy to know that their work has stood the test of time and will continue to be appreciated by new readers. You will hear when the new edition is ready for sale!

Best wishes for a wonderful summer and don't forget to include a visit to the Pioneer Museum. □



## Noteworthy Events for 2007- Clip and Save!

**Saturday, May 19** - Yard Sale, Barrie Township Parking Lot, 9 am. Sale items welcome.

**Saturday, June 23** - Museum Opening/BBQ, 11 am at the Museum, Cloyne. 2008 Calendars available for sale at the museum.

**Canada Day** - installation of the Blake Island plaque, Skootamatta Lake.

**August 10, 11 and 12** - Display of Heritage Weaving - demonstrations and sales - Barrie Township Hall. MERA Weavers, 10 am - 4 pm.

**Saturday, September 29** - Fifth Annual Heritage Bus Tour to Denbigh and surroundings. Departs from Barrie Township Hall, 9:30 am.

**Saturday, October 6** - Thanksgiving Bake Sale, 9 am to 12 pm, Barrie Township Hall. Baking for sale should be brought to the hall by 8:30.

**Monday, October 15** - Annual General Meeting, 1 pm, Barrie Township Hall.

**Saturday, December 8** - Fourth Annual Toonie Christmas Party, 1 pm, Barrie Township Hall.

**\*\*\* Regular Monthly Meetings** the third Monday of the month (except July & August) at Barrie Hall, 1 pm. Everyone welcome!

## Tribute to Bill Scott

*Submitted by Margaret Axford*

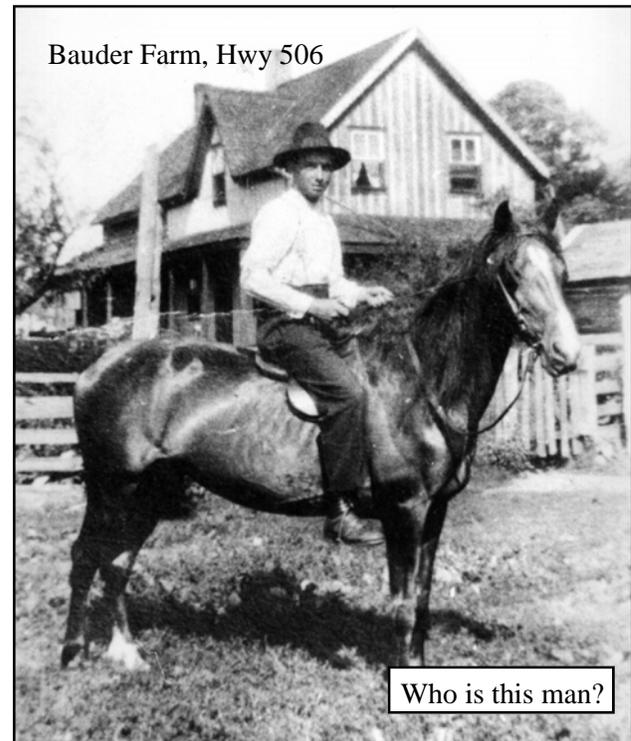
If I were to describe the perfect person to be involved in, or working for, a heritage organization, Bill Scott would come instantly to my mind. Bill was a fund of knowledge about his family and his community, and most unfortunately, we have lost him all too soon.

“Bill’s Museum” was the way I thought of the third floor in his house - full of memorabilia from his family and the wider community. Everything was displayed attractively, with an eye to its appeal to the viewer. An indicator of Bill’s pride in his collection was his standing invitation to come to see his latest additions, often closing up the store for a few minutes while he took you across to the house to show you a new treasure.

Bill was a generous man as well. His telephone exhibit was the first “visiting display” which graced the museum’s large display case. In addition, he donated items to HS events, always saying that he would like to come to help at the event, but couldn’t leave the store. For visitors, his store was a good place to pick up a copy of *The Oxen and The Axe*, or a HS newsletter, and of course to learn about the historic significance of the building

itself.

His gentle laugh, his infinite curiosity, his generous spirit - these are the qualities I will remember most about Bill. To his family, the Historical Society offers its most sincere condolences. We will all miss him. □



## Financial Report

*Ian Brumell, Treasurer*

The year 2006 will be of significant importance to the future of the Cloyne & District Historical Society. Our community suffered a significant loss in the death of Isobel Stewart. She is missed a lot by all who knew her.

However, Isobel's death revealed that she was indeed a benefactor and patron of our society. She bequeathed a significant sum of money to the organization for its further expansion, enrichment and service to our community. Her bequest, for the most part, has been set up as an endowment in the form of the **Cloyne and District Historical Society Fund**, a charitable fund to which anyone can make a contribution. This endowment will help to assure that our society will endure, with great thanks to our wonderful friend, Isobel Stewart.

Over the past year the tourist trade has again been significantly lower, causing our museum to lack the funding source it has seen in years past. However, with this having been said, the Society realized revenues in excess of \$18,000 and expenses around \$13,000. Our net income for 2006 was \$5,516.

In addition to this, we have been able to set up a reserve fund (an investment portfolio) made up partly from our profits and some from the bequest mentioned above. Hence, with the year-end bank balance and the reserve fund, we have around \$17,000 in accessible funds which hopefully will be put to use with the re-printing of *The Oxen and the Axe*.

The maturation of our Patron's program has given a much needed financial boost to the historical society. We are very grateful for the faith and interest people have in our efforts to "Preserve the Past for the Future". In addition, our fundraisers have assisted greatly in warding off the threat posed by decreased tourist traffic. Sincere thanks go out to them as well.

If you are interested, detailed financial accounting is available to all members. An email request to the society is all that is needed for us to send one out.



## Patron Committee Report

*Marcella Neely*

Just about this time in 2004, several of us recognized the passion in our community for local history, genealogy and artifacts. This was evident in the enthusiasm and eager support exhibited by so many whenever we solicited a pair of helping hands, a bag of ice, a door prize or a monetary contribution.

Past residents and descendants frequently visit our museum in search of information on ancestors or just to browse and remember. This kind of enthusiasm confirmed our belief that we owe it to our supporters to keep them informed and in touch. Thus the Pioneer Museum Patron Program was launched.

Museum Patrons receive this newsletter twice a year, are given a window decal, and have access to all meetings and activities of the Cloyne and District Historical Society. Many become quite immersed in our heritage projects. We appreciate all input and participation.

One of the many ways folks can contribute to preservation of heritage is by helping us build our genealogy files. Most of us have, at minimum, recorded our immediate family tree. Many have extensive ancestors documented. We would like to have the genealogy for as many families, past and present, as possible. We have a museum grade file cabinet that is fireproof and rodent/insect proof in which we store this information for the children, grandchildren or other relatives that will come searching through the years.

You can bring your information to the museum or to one of our meetings. We will copy it and return your originals. We collect photos, journals, letters, newspaper articles, certificates and simple hand-written records. We look forward to the day when our files contain the complete genealogy of all the families that have ever lived in this area. Please help us by sharing your family information with us.



# Museum Product List

*Carol Morrow*

Besides the special events which the Historical Society schedules to raise funds, we have products for sale at the Pioneer Museum, some of which are listed below.

Books:

*The Oxen and the Axe*, by Gene Brown and Nadine Brumell

*The Mazinaw Experience*, by John Campbell

*Bon Echo: The Denison Years*, by Mary Savigny

*Well-Worn Steps of Time*, a book of poetry

*Away Back in Clarendon and Miller*, a history of that area by Charlie Armstrong

*The Rock*, by The Friends of Bon Echo Park

Coffee Mugs: featuring C&DHS logo

2008 Calendar: featuring area scenes of yesteryear, with descriptions

Note Cards w/ envelopes: from original pen & ink drawings by Carla Miedema

Framed Prints: from the original painting by Carol Brown, donated last year and on view in the Museum.

Note Cards: from original paintings by Carol Brown; choice of 3 scenes

To purchase any of these products, contact us at [pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca](mailto:pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca) or visit our website: [www.pioneer.mazinaw.on.ca/pioneer/](http://www.pioneer.mazinaw.on.ca/pioneer/)



Summer Cottage, Bon Echo Inn, Lake Massanoga, Ont.



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## Memo Regarding Tax Receipts

When charitable donation receipts don't add up to a significant tax reduction, the Canada Revenue Agency allows receipts to be kept up to five years and to be used on the return of either spouse.

## Genealogical Reminder

To save a whole lot of time, be sure to "Bookmark" those important genealogy websites to your computer.

\* Ed.'s Note: Margaret Aikins and her husband Jim were long time cottagers on Mazinaw, until just a few years ago. We don't often hear from cottagers, so this look at a time past is much appreciated. Thank you, Margaret!

## **Does Anyone Remember when CB Radios Were Active on Mazinaw Lake?**

*by Margaret Aikins*

“**Break One O.....Break.....1.....0**”: a familiar sound over the air waves on Mazinaw Lake in the late 1970s.

In those days we didn't have telephones. Instead, we had CBs, a radio band with an open line with many channels that you could use to talk to one person at a time. We used Channel 10 on the lake.

Because many of us didn't have big boats to hop in to visit a neighbour or other friends on the lake, contacting someone by CB very often became a way of seeking help, or just a way of keeping in touch. Life wasn't as easy in those days but it sure was a lot of fun !!

A typical morning would bring more news to each of us than any phone call. The CB was one big open party line. Most cottagers kept their CB turned on and most cottagers had good reason to use them during the day, be it an emergency, the need of a recipe, or just plain loneliness.

Each CB had its own handle, a handle being a name, and each handle had a story. I won't expand on that today but at another time we can talk about handles and stories.

Having guests arrive at the cottage was an exciting event for us all. There were usually two ways to know if a guest had arrived. The first was accomplished by the honk of a car at an open spot off the highway. Each cottage had its own number of honks. If that method didn't work usually Norma Douglas from Bon Echo Villa would come on the CB and announce the arrival of the company. We would all likely peer out and watch a boat go over for pickup. It was fun to see how many arrived and with how much luggage. You could usually tell that by the way the boat sat in the water. Then if it was rough most of us would be ready to jump in our own

boat to help out if needed.

If there was a pending storm, Norma Douglas would probably announce that she had lots of room in her freezer if the power went off on the East side.

Mr. Moe and Sugar Shack could be heard daily talking about newsy bits on the lake such a bear spotting, roof problems or any subject that seemed to be interesting to most of us. They both had wonderful voices and it still surprises me that they were not snatched up by the CBC or other stations. I know of one senior lady who couldn't decide which one she liked best, she was so taken with their voices.

Then there was Black Bark who had stories to tell of the old days that would knock your socks off - he sure knew how to hold your attention! And...the Goofy Newfie...full of fun.

Yes, we depended on each other but we respected our privacy. There was a bond with us all even though our only contact might be a wave going by in the boat.



The early days were hard...lugging lumber, supplies, people, but there was no prettier sight than a barge coming across the lake, bringing a bit of home to someone building their own dream castle.

We played together, worked together and laughed together. Now that I am in my senior years I have great respect for each ache and pain and every wrinkle that I worked hard for.

And I can tell you the memories are bountiful and the friendships have lasted. If you are part of the cottage scene, you too will know the feelings you share with family and cottage friends. Isn't it just the best!!!!!!!!!!!!

**"Fibre to Fabric:  
Pioneer Textile Production"  
August 10, 11, and 12  
at the Barrie Township Hall  
in Cloyne**

The old expressions "to raise your hackles", "dyed in the wool" and to "spin a yarn" will be more easily understood when visitors see the exhibition "Fibre to Fabric; Pioneer Textile Production". This fascinating exhibition will be presented by McDonald's Corners and Elphin Recreation and Arts, otherwise known as MERA, in partnership with the Cloyne and District Historical Society, August 10, 11, and 12.

The production of textiles for clothing and household use was a major domestic endeavor of the early pioneers in this area. This exhibit will feature many old pieces of equipment used by the settlers to produce textiles from local resources. The growing and processing of flax to produce linen for clothing, household items, sewing thread, and rope will be featured. Transforming sheep's fleece into yarn for knitting and weaving will also be presented. This yarn was knitted or woven by the pioneers to produce rugged, warm clothing, blankets, coverlets, and carpets. There will be ongoing demonstrations of this old equipment by members of MERA throughout the weekend. Demonstrations will include "beating" and "hackling" flax and spinning wool and flax into yarn.

Afterwards, visitors are encouraged to walk to the Cloyne Pioneer Museum next door to see the pioneer handweaving loom and pioneer artifacts on display there.

MERA has an active group of spinners and weavers. The MERA Schoolhouse Heritage Weavers specialize in weaving pioneer inspired textiles. Items woven by the weavers will be available for sale during the exhibition. There is no charge for admittance and refreshments will be available.

The exhibit will be open Fri. and Sat., Au-

gust 11 and 12 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sun., Aug. 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. These hours coincide with the hours of the Cloyne Showcase Art and Crafts Show and Sale which is an annual event held at North Addington Education Centre. It should be a fun weekend for the entire family.



Ellen Good of The Schoolhouse Heritage weavers demonstrating one of the many steps required to transform locally grown flax into linen yarn. The photo, taken by David Zimmerly, is provided courtesy of Ellen Good.

**It's Spring House Cleaning Time !!!!**

Bring your unwanted items to the

**Pioneer Museum**

On Friday afternoon, May 18th

for the

**May 19th Yard Sale of the Year**

## **Communities of Rose Hill, Ferguson Corners and Glenfield**

*As written by Ellanora Meeks*

My mother, Cora (Rosenblath) Rose, was raised at Rose Hill in a family of four boys and five girls. Mom was the daughter of Archie Rosenblath and Sarah Ellen (Jackson) Rosenblath.

Dad's (Nelson Rose) family lived only a mile or so down the road from Rose Hill. He was the son of Charles Rose and Emma Ida (Warlick) Rose. There were 2 boys and 4 girls. They farmed, and a few worked for John Flake at his sawmill at Rose Hill. There used to be a school at Rose Hill, between Rose Hill and Ferguson Corners. Ferguson Corners was named after Bill Ferguson whose son Everett was a game warden in the Denbigh area for many years.

My uncle Raymond Rose married Lilly Rodgers, a sister to Jimmy Rodgers who played the violin for dances. They lived at Ferguson Corners between Glenfield and Rose Hill. Glenfield at one time was a little village. My Uncle George and Aunt Florence Thompson lived there till their house burned down. Just next to the trout creek lived Chelsea and Vern Snider, and then came the farm where we lived after our home on the Matawatchan Road burned on April 15, 1947. (It had been the former Alex Jackson homestead.)

Living next to us at that time were Ellsworth and Sarah Presley and just over the hill from them lived Tom and Olive Thompson. At the base of the big hill, just a couple of miles around the hill, lived Samuel and Barbara Ellen Presley. Barbara Ellen was a half-sister to Bob Thompson who owned the sawmill. The Thompsons also owned a small store where the men could buy a plug of chewing tobacco or tobacco and papers to roll their own smokes. They also stocked some canned goods, sugar, tea, coffee etc. This little store was located in a part of the cookhouse next to the bunkhouse where a lot of the men that worked in the sawmill stayed. The mill was located behind the

cookhouse approximately 500 ft. and it sure was a noisy spot.

My dad was a scaler at the mill. Bob Thompson worked the saw that cut the lumber. Bob's brother, Ed Thompson, worked in the bush. He was cutting down trees when one got lodged or hung up and when he went to dislodge it, a huge maple fell on him and killed him.

Next to the cookhouse was Glenfield graveyard, then came the home of Bob and Irene Thompson. Irene was sister to Viola Seitz who owned the Circular Saw Museum in Denbigh. The sawmill in Glenfield employed quite a few men and was known as Robert (Bob) Thompson's Lumber Company. During a storm the mill caught fire and burned to the ground. It was never re-built. Bob declared bankruptcy which left many of his workers out of a job.

Just up from Bob and Irene Thompson about a mile, was Glenfield school. I can remember when Orle Johns from Denbigh was the teacher there. When it closed the children went to Vennachar school.

I remember my dad driving the horse and sleigh to take us to school. Mom would heat bricks in the oven and wrap them in cloth. These were put in the sleigh, plus lots of hay, and Mom made blankets for the small children to cover up with and keep warm. Us bigger ones would run behind the sleigh to keep ourselves warm. In the summer the school bus was a wagon drawn by a team of horses.

I remember doing my homework by oil lamp, because when it was still daylight on summer evenings we would work in the hayfield after the farm work of milking the cows, feeding the pigs and looking after the hens and the horses.

The young people today sure don't have the work to do that we used to. Just think. Today you flip a switch and you have a nice bright light.

We didn't have that back then. □



\* Ed.'s Note: Since the following months promise at least one election In Ontario, perhaps even two, you might like to read this very amusing account of a long past election "back North"!

## Election Time

by Gene Brown

We just got back from the local polling booth  
And helping Mom in from the car, she said to me,  
"It seems to be so tame a thing these days, somehow,  
From what it was in Grandpa's day.  
I well remember him and those pals of his  
A-telling of the early days of voting in these parts  
When all this North part was a sort of no-man's-land  
To politicians and the like.  
My how they'd laugh about the carryings-on.  
If such things would be done these days  
There'd be some fancy howdy-do, I'm telling you.  
The story most they laughed about  
Happened oh so long ago it's likely been forgot  
By all but just a few of us older ones.  
It was when he was just a lad  
And his folks just moved in the settlement.  
'Wall, you young folks jist don't know  
Bout all the fun that comes with votin' time.  
Why I kin' member when the very first they 'lowed  
Us folks back in the Northern Wilderness  
Could have a say in anything a-doin' out The Front  
An' when that got spread around out there  
There was some folk as sent back word to any  
Orange Protestants to not set foot out there to vote  
Or all that would go crawling home  
Would be their carcasses plugged full of holes.  
Now I'm a-tellin' you that got our dander up  
An' 'fore you knowed it them young fools  
Had talked themselves into bein' fightin' men  
An' a wagonload of them set off on 'lection morn  
Afore the sun was up, an' all were vowin' loud and clear  
They'd git their vote or there'd be fur a-flyin'  
Mighty thick out there.  
They all meant well fer good sturdy lads they were,  
But when Eldon's brother got himself shot up  
It sorta took the starch right out of them somehow  
An' back they come all scared and sorry like.  
All Eldon said, when they brought his brother back like that  
Was them out-front fellers would find out a thing or two  
Should they stick their faces back this way  
'Specially any kin of the Brady that had done the deed.  
He bided well his time an' one night late that fall  
He'd gone down to the settlement  
To spend an evenin' at the bar with all his pals.  
'Twas "Shanty-gatherin' Time" an' he and all the lads  
Were waitin' fer the word from Gilmour's hirin' boss  
Afore they started in fer the winter's work.  
Hadn't more than had a snort or two

When in walked some shanty-men a-headin' back  
To camp somewheres themselves;  
They shoved up to the bar a-sorta cocky like  
A' ordered up a round.  
Our lads jist set back quiet like a-bidin' time  
A-wonderin' jist who they were an' where they hailed from  
When in come one of the lads who'd been  
On that wild votin' trip last spring.  
He sat down with the rest of us an' started sizin' up  
The strangers same as we had been.  
He kept a-squintin' at one lad fer quite a spell  
But when that lad turned 'round an' put his elbows on the bar  
Threw back his head an' started up a shanty song  
He quick came up to Eldon's side an' whispered in his ear  
"If that ain't that there Brady lad what shot yer brother down  
Election Day, it's some close kin o'his'n  
I'd swear upon my Mother's Bible book."  
Twas all that Eldon needed then to start the party rollin'.  
He waited fer the lad to end his song  
Then asked him quiet-like  
"Be you a Brady man from out the Front by any chance?"  
"Why yes," he says, "Me name is Brady  
An' what's that to you bye anyhow?"  
"A dirty Brady shot my brother down last spring  
On 'lection day, is what it's all about me lad  
An' I vowed then he'd pay an' pay he will or my name's  
Not Eldon Green."  
Why 'fore the rest of us could catch a breath  
He had that feller by the neck  
An' shoved him out the door, while all the time  
The poor lad was a-tryin hard to say that 'twasn't him  
That fired off the shot, but Eldon 'lowed that  
Any Brady was as good as t'other was to him.  
They jist got past the light a-shinin' from the barroom door  
When Brady he broke free an' started leggin' up the road  
With Eldon right behind his heels,  
The rest of us a-trailin' on like Jim Brown's cows.  
He didn't git too fur, 'till we could  
Hear a scuffle and a yelp,  
An' by the time we reached the spot  
Why Eldon had that lad strung up  
By that long woodsman's sash of his'n  
Around his neck an' over top the nearest limb.  
Some of us wrestled Eldon to the ground  
Whilst others cut pore Brady free  
Afore he choked to death for shore.  
Back we straggled to the bar  
But Brady's pals all gathered up their gear  
An' slipped away into the night.  
"I reckon's how our lads kin vote  
Wherever they've a mind to now"  
Says Eldon, quiet-like, an' that proved true  
Fer come election time agin  
We had our own poll clerk an' ballot box.  
We've had our times a-funnin' since,  
But can't say as this settlement forever will  
Fer all its days, fergit the "Hangin' of the Brady Kin".

## Irish Immigration & Grosse Île

Carol Morrow

Being a subject near and dear to my heart - one I have done a fair amount of research on - and because almost every Ontarian with pioneer roots must have a drop of Irish blood coursing through his veins, this will be a two-part article on one of our country's most poignant links with the past.

*As the immigrant ship 'New World' prepared for anchor, Sean Flanagan stood on its forward deck marveling at the misty purple mountains rising on the mainland's north shore in the distance beyond The Island. Fertile plains and farmlands spread out along the south shore, evidence to him of thriving communities in this land that would become his new home. His destination, though, was many miles farther west in the heart of Upper Canada. Six weeks on the storm-tossed Atlantic had been no picnic, but at 22 years old Sean was healthy, and more important, he was a driven man. He had been forced, out of necessity, to leave the old life behind. The sole survivor of a tenant family of six, he had luckily been away for the summer season of fishing. In his absence, the others had contracted the typhus, and the rough home and its deceased contents had been torched by local authorities to "purge the air". Devastated, Sean had taken himself and his earnings to Belfast, and bought passage on the first available ship. As luck would have it, he was on his way to a new life in Canada, and not Australia.*

Sean's case is atypical in the sense that landowners didn't often burn the tenant family home, yet in all other ways he is typical. Landowners found the cheapest solution to get rid of their unwanted tenants who were now too poor to pay their tax or their property rent. They and their agents paid passage in the foulest of foul conditions to get their starving tenants off the island. Ireland's history is that of a proud but oppressed nation. For 700 years before the Famine, invading foreign armies sacked the monasteries and churches, and confiscated the land, giving it to their noblemen leaders as reward. Stripped of their wealth, their positions, their estates and their homes, the Irish chieftains and their people became tenants working for their oppressors on what used to be their own land, allowed only to raise a small crop of potatoes, turnips and cabbage for their family. The Flanagans are synonymous with counties Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare, and descend from one Flanagan of royal stock whose line held the hereditary post of

steward to the mighty Kings of Connacht. Sean represents the dispossessed native Irish.

The Island mentioned in Sean's scenario is Grosse-Île, a small island in the St Lawrence River about 30 miles east of Quebec City. It served as Canada's entry point for immigrants coming from Europe, and is a link with Ireland's Great Famine of 1845-1851. From 1829 to 1914, a total of 661,000 Irish emigrants arrived at the port of Quebec and in the 22 years from 1829 to 1851 the Irish accounted for 60% of all immigrants via Quebec. Grosse Île was first used as a quarantine centre in 1832 when a cholera epidemic struck European immigrants. It was re-opened for the expected influx of Irish immigrants in 1847 and initially it housed 50 beds and enough straw to sleep a further 150, and a medical staff of three. Week by week, more arrived needing the help at Grosse-Île. Only two weeks after opening, 850 patients were in its hospital and a further 500 on board ships awaited admission. Over 100,000 immigrants arrived between Quebec and Grosse-Île in 1847 alone. It is estimated that over 3226 Irish emigrants died at Grosse-Île and a further 2198 died on board ship that year alone.

Canadian authorities weren't prepared for the numbers of cholera and typhus victims on the ships who would require their medical aid on arrival. Neither did they realize the very poor condition of the passengers and the numbers who had died at sea or on ship before disembarking, nor the ones who would die on Grosse-Île during the quarantine process. On the Island is a plot of approximately one acre - The Irish Cemetery. In it, lie over 6,000 Irish souls of the 7,480 officially reported people buried on the island, the last resting place of hope and despair, joy and heartbreak. Ridges of the mass graves can still be seen. According to some accounts, coffins were sometimes stacked three deep in the trenches. A 50-foot high memorial Celtic Cross commemorates "the sacred memory of thousands of Irish who, in order to preserve their faith, suffered famine and exile, and, victims of typhus, ended their sorrowful pilgrimage here". The Irish cemetery accounts for over 80% of the total buried on Grosse-Île and there is evidence of mass graves required in 1847. In that year alone four doctors sacrificed their own lives caring for the fever-ridden immigrants.

The island has many buildings still in good repair but only The Lazaretto is still standing from the year 1847. The oldest building on the island, it was constructed originally to house healthy im-

migrants, but the flood tides of fever victims soon turned it into an infirmary. There are two chapels—Catholic and Anglican. Ministers of both denominations served on the island from its opening but the chapels were a later addition. Other houses included the Medical Officers', Nurses' and Traders' residences, the wash house, a disinfection centre, workshops, guard towers, a summer kitchen, a school, and a battery that was installed to remind ships that they had to stop at Grosse-Île. Over the years three hotels were added in varying degrees of luxury. Disinfection sheds with their huge metal furnaces, their large wire cages built to hold the clothing and property bags, and the little shower cubicles with multiple showerheads is a reminder of a concentration camp.

This island was closed as a quarantine station in 1937. During WW2 it was used as a secret experimental station for weapons of biological warfare. After the war it was used again as a means of quarantine, this time for European cattle being imported 'on the hoof'. Since 1984, the island has been recognized as a National Historic Site and designated as a National Park, dedicated to the memory of all those Irish who perished in exile within sight and feel of the first freedom they had known for centuries. Its focus is three-fold: 1) the importance of immigration to Canada, particularly through Quebec City, from the early 19th century until World War I; 2) the tragedies of Irish immigrants, especially due to the 1847 typhus epidemic; and 3) Grosse-Île's role from 1832 to 1937 (a century +) as a quarantine station for the Port of Quebec, the main point of arrival for immigrants coming to Canada.

A century and a half of history infuses Grosse-Île with a unique atmosphere that will capture in the imagination the moment of setting foot on the island. An air of wonder accompanies a visit to the monuments, burial grounds, structures and historic buildings. The Physicians' Monument, the oldest commemorative artifact on Grosse-Île, presents the names of doctors who gave their lives through their devotion to sick immigrants.

For more information on Grosse-Île and pictures, go to the Parks Canada web site and take an online tour: [[http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhnhhs/qc/grosseile/index\\_e.asp](http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhnhhs/qc/grosseile/index_e.asp)]. There is a ton of interesting information. Other information in this article has been culled from various online sources, too

numerous to list here. If you want to step back into history, take a drive up the north shore of Quebec to the old walled city, and book passage out to The Island. A tour of Grosse-Île will be a symbolic voyage, making the visitor relive the emotions provoked by the anxiety of a trying crossing—conclusion of a merciless famine, and the desire and hope of discovering a new land. For a follow-up to this article, stay tuned for our Fall Issue. □

## An Invitation Into the Past

If you haven't been to see us recently, please include a visit to the Pioneer Museum in your summer plans. Operated by the Cloyne and District Historical Society, the Museum is home to over 1,000 artifacts which illustrate the history of the area, from its beginnings in the lumbering industry of the 1850s, through the ups and downs of the mining booms, to the importance of tourism. Included in the collection are clothing and household items from pioneer families, books, photos, and documents which demonstrate their way of life. If you are interested in a particular facet of local history, such as Bon Echo lore, you will want to check out the latest artifacts and information, including a riding crop inscribed with "Camp Mazinaw, 1929". This is a fascinating piece of Bon Echo history, unearthed last summer. The collection grows and changes, so even if you were in last summer, it's worth repeat visits.

To provide a spot to highlight the many collections which are owned by local people, a large showcase is dedicated to one collection per month. Don't forget to check out what's scheduled for this summer!

Because many people are working on family histories, genealogy files are being developed. If you are doing research, these files and other reference books are at your disposal while the museum is open.

Located in the centre of the village of Cloyne, on the east side of Highway 41, across from the Post Office, the Museum is open during July and August, 7 days a week, from 10 AM to 4 PM. During the shoulder seasons, times of opening are by chance or by appointment. Admission is free, but donations are welcome. Please drop in to see the collection this summer!

If you have connections with the area, and information about some aspect of our history which you would like to share, please let us know. Photos or documents can be scanned. You can come by the Museum, or call Margaret Axford at 336-2203 or 336-1428, or Eileen Flieler at 336-9593. Any contributions which will allow the Historical Society to have a more complete picture of life in the area would be very much appreciated. □

**The Cloyne and District Historical Society**

**Box 228**

**Cloyne, ON, K0H 1K0**

**We invite you to show your support for local history by becoming a patron of the Cloyne Pioneer Museum, and/or becoming a member of the Historical Society. For all donations, including Patron fees, charitable receipts for income tax purposes will be issued for amounts of \$10.00 or more. Membership fees are ineligible by law for charitable receipts.**

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I wish to become a Patron of the Cloyne Pioneer Museum.

The annual fee of \$25 includes 2 newsletters, mailed free of charge, and a window decal.

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