

The Pioneer Times

NEWS VEHICLE OF THE CLOYNE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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Cloyne & District Historical Society

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We lose friends

Ken Armstrong rarely missed a general meeting of the Cloyne & District Historical Society. He would enter the door of the Barrie Township Hall on the third Monday of each month, with his best friend and dance partner, Grace Kenny, and his brother-in-law Graydon MacCrimmon. He always brought with him his trademark smile and sense of fun. He passed away quite suddenly at the Kingston General Hospital on January 20, 2013. We miss him.



The following is an excerpt from outgoing President Carolyn McCulloch's address at the Annual General Meeting of the Cloyne and District Historical Society on March 18 2013.

"It is with great pride that I speak of our faithful members who have achieved so much in this past year.

Of course, our biggest accomplishment is the construction of a 1400 square foot addition to The Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives. At this writing it is a work in progress, but we have great faith that the Contractor, our own Ian Brumell will have it finished for the Grand Opening on June 22nd. Come and see what promises to be one fine Museum. It will have room for our photography, display and storage space, an accessible washroom, space for preparing artifacts for display, and an area for classroom presentations and research. We hope that if you have not yet contributed to our Building Campaign, that you will find it in your heart to do so now.

Our year has been an exciting one with many events. Members were able to gain some new genealogical skills with Carol Lessard, Margaret Axford, and Carol Morrow's presentation: Pulling Your Family Story Together. We viewed 1968 Canadian Film Award's film of the year, "The Best Damn Fiddler from Calabogie to Kaladar".

Mark Milan of Gordon Sinclair Public School in Kingston brought his students to present their research "Finding Tom". Katie Ohlke of North Addington Education Centre added to the program when she enlightened us with her personal photographic collection of Tom

Thompson research. In our area, steeped in the history of The Group of Seven, it was rewarding to listen to young students unearth new secrets about the mysteries surrounding the death of Canada's most famous painter.

A record crowd stood to honour Flinton's own war hero, Gordon Woods when he entered our meeting to watch the film "Storming Juno" Gordon was with the Regina Rifles and landed on the beach on June 6th 1944.

The Land of Lakes Tourist Association produced a driving tour on a CD. It is available for sale in the Museum, and we can vouch that it is a winner, because we used it for our June bus trip. As we travelled to Skootamatta, Mazinaw, Vennacher, Griffith, and Plevna, we were able to stop and listen to fascinating tales of the past,

Journalist and story teller Gary Ferguson kept us laughing with his hilarious tales of the Madawaska Valley, and the Black Donald Mines when he presented "My great-great grandfather, the shanty cook".

In our organization there is a surprise around every corner. One day, Hugo and Mary Wiberg of Massachusetts googled their ancestor, John Bay, and to their surprise found out that he was a local Mohawk hero on our nineteenth century frontier. They got in touch, and local historian Bob Blatchford arranged a whirlwind tour of the area. We invited another of John Bay's descendants, Laura Schwager along with her Father and Uncle to meet them in the Museum. They joyously shared stories, photographs and legends of their common relations. This led to our discovery that Laura was a poet who has been published in Atlantis with "strong women stories" about her struggles to claim her ancestry. She later came to us to present "How we have travelled, my Grandparents and I, in my Home and Native Land". Chi miigwetch, Laura. We shall never spell Bay incorrectly again.

This Christmas we opened our Christmas Luncheon to the community. Thank you for both the good idea and organizing it, Sandra Sparks. Our favourite band, "Highway 41" along with our regular performers enriched our Toonie Christmas Party, planned by Eileen Flieler and Roxanne Bradshaw.

This is the first (but not the last) time that our area has ever had a Burn's Supper. Many thanks to Marg Axford,

Ian Brumell, Gordon and Sandra Sparks, Ernest MacChinski, Gord McCulloch, Graydon MacCrimmon, Joe Grant, Dallas and Randy Arney, Piper Mark Rowe and the whole Cuddy family for their wonderful contributions to making this a night to remember. Burns aficionados came from afar and pronounced it the best Burns Supper that they had ever attended!

When Director Catherine Grant joined our Board, we gained the friendship of her husband Joe. He has contributed greatly to the music, drama and liveliness of our organization and we particularly thank him for "A is for Axe", a presentation of the history of pioneer music.

To wind up our year, our own Margaret Axford took to the podium to present "The Dentist, the Feminist and the Writer....the personalities that shaped Bon Echo."

Allow me to briefly tell you about the other things that happened in our March 2012 to March 2013 period

- we were able to hire students in the winter period to continue archiving
- we were able to send a member to an archiving workshop
- two members attended a general meeting of the Tweed Historical Society
- we had an exciting and profitable yard sale
- one member attended a Land O' Lakes Tourist Association Meeting
- produced a calendar that celebrated senior women and their contributions to the community. Most of them were 3rd generation descendants of pioneers
- a group attended Andrew Minivan's presentation in Denbigh where he unveiled his book Hardship Notwithstanding, Life in Denbigh Township from 1890 to 1914
- we followed through and retrieved records from Denbigh Public School that had been stored at AHEC
- we applied for and received a Heritage Organization Development Grant

- we kicked off our Museum Expansion Campaign again with Highway 41. Our BBQ was an unqualified success.
- had a booth at the Skootamatta District Ratepayers Association
- have started working on the second edition of “The Village on the Skoot”, the story of Flinton
- hosted a visit of the local Brownies, Guides and Pathfinders at the Museum
- created an investment Committee: Marcella Neely, Cathy Hook and Gordon McCulloch examined our practices, made three recommendations that were passed by the Board and will be carried out
- provided a history prize to Courtney Johnson at the North Addington Education Centre
- had a booth, and made sales at Northern Lights. Thank you, Elinor Duncan
- presented a wreath at the Flinton Cenotaph on Remembrance Day
- held a Strategic Planning Workshop in the middle of a snowstorm. Thank you Margaret Axford

It is such a pleasure to work with caring compassionate people where help is always near. Thank you for this memorable year.” ❀

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is a Government of Ontario agency which awards approximately 1,500 grants each year to community-based not-for-profit and charitable organizations in the arts, recreation, environment and human and social services sectors.



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And Then There Were Three!

We have all heard about the generosity of the Ontario Trillium Foundation; the Cloyne and District Historical Society knows intimately what a difference OTF can make.

Back in 2001, a decision was taken to turn the CDHS into a not-for-profit charitable organization. At the same time, it was recognized that the Cloyne Pioneer Museum, opened in 1982, was in great need of an upgrade and more space. Indeed more space! Some of you will remember those days – the crowded displays, the cement floor that, on a rainy day, became just like a wet rink. Not the best atmosphere for protecting fragile paper or textile artifacts! Plans were created; funding was sought. It soon became apparent that in spite of the generosity of the community, extra funding would be needed. And so the Board turned to The Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Preparing an application to OTF is at first a venture into the unknown - initially a dark tunnel filled with boxes needing information and disembodied voices at the end of the telephone or email. As the process unfolds, with answers to questions provided and dilemmas solved, the voices become almost friends, patiently leading the questioner through this somewhat mysterious procedure.

That first application resulted in a grant of \$22,100. These funds were used primarily to renovate the existing building and provide much needed supplies and furniture, with other funding from the community designated for the 1,200 square foot addition. That first application noted that it was hoped that the number of visitors would increase by 15%. Up to 2002, the museum was attracting between 650 and 700 visitors annually. By 2004, attendance over the 2 months of the summer had doubled to 1850. If you build it, they will come!

2007 was another special year in the life of the CDHS. For several years, Board members had been talking about republishing our local history book, *The Oxen and The Axe*, first published in 1974 and now in its fourth printing. With only about 30 copies left in stock, it was decided to begin the project by forming an editing committee. These 5 people read and re-read the book, correcting typos in the previous text and clarifying any inconsistencies. Taking advantage of the presence of new technol-

ogy, photographs were enhanced, the font modernized and an index added. Adding even more interest in the book were biographies of writers of each of the articles. This required some research, as many of those writers had died. But relatives were helpful, providing photographs as well as data.

At the same time, a decision was made to establish a Community Archives. For years, whenever someone enquired about a certain document or information about a family, they had received the answer "It's here somewhere!" Over thirty years of documents had just found a spot in a filing cabinet or box somewhere. It was time to get the issue in hand by creating an Archives. No one really understood what a difficult job it would be to start the business of Archiving, but the need was pressing and so a leap of faith was taken. Eventually, with the hard work of a consultant and the 2 young women who had been hired for the summer, the monumental task was begun. It still continues today, although the end of the backlog is in sight, some six years later.

And who financed these 2 crucial projects? Why, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, of course!

A grant for \$8,800 allowed us to re-print *The Oxen and The Axe* as well as purchase computer equipment and the assistance of the consultant to set up the Community Archives.

Our last application to The Foundation occurred in 2012, this time for help with the construction costs of yet another, and hopefully the last, addition to the Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives. It was time to put in a proper wheel-chair accessible washroom. The outhouse had done a great job for 30 years, but it's difficult to make an accessible outhouse! This extension will also permit a work area, a flexible location for displays and/or meetings and most of all a pleasing space for new displays. A narrow area within the extension will be perfect as a gallery for paintings and photos. The grant from OTF of just over \$39,000, together with donations in kind, many very generous gifts from community members and CDHS money, saved for the purpose, will ensure that the addition is properly finished and equipped.

Through all three of these timely and fruitful connections with OTF over the past decade, the CDHS has managed both OTF funds and its own responsibly. Each of these

projects had a considerable amount of CDHS money invested in it. In addition, over the years volunteers have played a significant role. They have sold tickets, planted and cared for the flower garden, hammered and nailed, cleaned, washed curtains, kept all the required records, made sure that everyone was aware of what was going on, and performed many tasks too numerous to mention. We have always felt pride in the work of the society, confident that OTF and others would recognize the level of commitment of both our members and our community.

The Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives is a much different building now than the one that was opened in 1982 and would be a wonder to those who began the organization in 1972. Its operation is more sophisticated than it used to be, but the artifacts are still representative of the community from which it sprang and hopefully the atmosphere continues to be as welcoming as it always has been. Thanks to a huge extent to the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the CDHS has been able to move the museum and its archives into the present, with a facility designed for the future while acknowledging the importance of the past. Thank you, OTF!

Margaret Axford, Curator and Archivist ❧

Museum patrons

There has been a change of personnel in this committee with the recent resignation of Marcella Neely as Chair. She has been leading this group for eight years and originated the idea of having patrons. The Society owes her a sincere vote of thanks for her dedication and hard work. The year 2012 ended with 85 Museum Patrons who made a substantial contribution to the operation and expansion of the Museum.

Thanks are also due to Trudy Deacon who is stepping down. Red Emond joined recently and the Committee continues to benefit from the hard work and dedication of Roxanne Bradshaw and John Bolton.

At the end of March we had received renewals from twenty-three patrons and we recently sent out reminder letters. We hope to maintain last year's number and attract some new ones.

Gordon Sparks, Patrons Committee Chair ❧

The Old Order Changeth....

.....yielding place to new. How grateful we all were when our recently appointed Director, Red Emond, stepped to the plate and said that he would be our new President. Jean Jacques Emond is a retired Air Force Officer who settled on beautiful Kashwakamak Lake years ago. He is well known in our community for his get-it-done attitude and enormous enthusiasm. He has volunteered many hours to the Land O' Lakes Garden Club, the Friends of Bon Echo, and The Lion's Club. We shall try to make the transition an easy one for him.

We had many other changes at our Annual General Meeting on March 18th 2013.

Our Directors are: Red Emond, President
Carolyn McCulloch, Secretary
Ian Brumell, Treasurer
Eileen Flieler, Director-at-large
Elinor Duncan, Director-at-large
Catherine Grant, Director-at-large
Shirley Sedore, Director-at-large

The Board of Directors says a fond farewell to Carol Lessard of Flinton. Carol has served us well since 2007, and fortunately is not going to be far away. With her reliable attitude and steadfast presence, hopefully you will see Carol wearing many hats in the years to come. We are grateful to her.

Shirley Sedore lives in Flinton where she has been a long standing volunteer in The Flinton Community Club and the Land o' Lakes Pastoral Charge of the United Church. She saw a need and was a founder of the original ambulance service in this area. She is in charge of our Northern Woods Quilt raffle.

Board of Directors: Opportunities: One more director, as per our by-laws. We need a Vice President

We are enthusiastic about our future events and time together. With the convener of each committee bolded, here are the working groups that we have put together.

Calendars: Eileen Flieler, Red Emond, Wendy Hodgkins, Gordon McCulloch, Dave Woodruff

Christmas Luncheon: December 9 – Sandra Sparks

Communications: Marcella Neely, Elinor Duncan, Cathy Hook, Carolyn McCulloch

Gardens: Red Emond, Wendy Hodgkins

Historical Road Trip:

June 17th: Carolyn and Gordon McCulloch

September 28th: **Convener Needed**

Interviewers: Red Emond, Eileen Flieler, Joe Grant, Gord McCulloch

Museum and Archives: Marg Axford, Ian Brumell, Eileen Flieler, Catherine Grant, Carol Lessard

Museum Opening: June 22 – **Convener Needed**

Pancake Breakfast: July 13 – **Sandra Sparks** and many many others.

Patrons: **Gordon Sparks**, Roxanne Bradshaw, John Bolton, Red Emond

Pot Luck Luncheon: July 15th – Eileen Flieler, Joan Flieler

Refreshments: Carol Lessard, Roxanne Bradshaw

Toonie Christmas Party: **Convener Needed**

Yard Sale: May 18th – Carolyn McCulloch and many many more

As you can see there are many opportunities in your organization. Most of our jobs are suitable for the snowbird crowd. Call anyone on the Board for more details. ❧



We are celebrating yet another anniversary. Ten years ago, the Cloyne & District Historical Society produced the very first Pioneer Times. We thank Margaret Axford and Carol Morrow for the countless hours they spent in producing this fine journal two times each year.

Julie Druker, journalist with The Frontenac News, has taken a particular interest in our actions and has turned out some splendid stories about our events. Many of our readers do not receive this community paper, and so we are taking this opportunity to reproduce some of her accounts of our activities.

We look forward to your reactions, comments, and input in the Pioneer Times of the future.

Remembering Johnny Bay appeared in the Frontenac News October 4, 2012

Robbie Burns Supper appeared January 31, 2012

The Big Three Who Shaped Bon Echo Park appeared February 28, 2013

These and other articles can be found online at the Frontenac News website <http://www.frontenacnews.ca> in the archives section or go directly to the archives at http://www.frontenacnews.ca/2013/_archive_13.html

Remembering Johnny Bay

by Julie Druker



Photo: Laura Schwager, great-great-granddaughter of Johnny Bay

After much research into her family tree, and in particular her Mohawk ancestry, Laura Schwager presented her findings in a presentation she gave at Barrie Hall in Cloyne on Sept. 17 as a special guest of the Cloyne & District Historical Society.

Schwager, who has numerous relatives in the Mazinaw Lake area and who is the great-great-granddaughter of Johnny Bay, currently lives

and teaches at the Quinte Mohawk School in the Tyendinaga Mohawk territory. She became interested in her Mohawk ancestry after hearing stories from her grandparents, Earl and Cora Davison. "My interest in my Mohawk ancestry comes first from a photograph of my great grandmother, Matilda Bay Schwager...and what would stand out perhaps most for me...was an image described for me of the day Matilda was buried...how a huge flock of geese in their V formation flew down low and loudly above everyone, as if to carry away her spirit."

Schwager's research with family members, local historians and genealogists has brought to light the lives of Johnny Bay and his wife Anne Laforce, who eventually settled on the shores of Mazinaw Lake on Levere Road (Indian Point). During his time there, Bay helped build numerous cottages including the Obornes', Blatchfords' and Pearsons' cottages, and also Skootamatta Lake Lodge. Schwager's research uncovered Bay's earliest roots, which originated with the Hotinonshonni People of the Longhouse, also known as the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy who lived on land in Upper New York State and southern Ontario. Each longhouse was comprised of a married couple, the wife's extended family, and was led by a clan mother.

Johnny Bay was born in 1850 and died around 1924. He is buried in the Flinton Catholic cemetery along with his wife Anne, his daughter Matilda and his son John. Laura said that she is not sure how he died. There are two canoes in existence that he made, one at the museum at Bon Echo Provincial Park, and one that was used in the Tyendinaga landing ceremony for many years and that is now stored at a private residence on the Tyendinaga Mowhawk Reserve.

Schwager was able to trace Bay to the Akwesasne Mohawk Reserve, which "consisted mostly of Mohawk people wary of warfare between the French and the English, the British and the Americans, and Canada and the United States and that was formed to 'identify, categorize and control the people that lived off the land through the area that would become 'Akwesasne'". Schwager was able to find records of Johnny Bay's grandparents on both sides of his family from the late 1700s and records of his parents from the early 1800s. Bay's parents, Peter Bay and Mary Cook had 11 children, all born on the reserve. One of the questions that Schwager was most

interested in was why Johnny Bay eventually left the reserve, where she believes he lived from 1850-1876, to end up on Mazinaw Lake. Part of the answer she said was based on her academic findings. In her presentation she highlighted the plight of Aboriginal peoples throughout the country as “new diseases swept through the reserve and the Canadian government worked to build a nation without ‘Indian interference’, a time when rapid change-making procedures were run to guarantee types of culture extinction”, which she said likely played a large role in Bay’s move off the reserve.

“By the time Johnny Bay was married he was faced with definitions foreign to his ancestors; he was forced, though he might not have known to the extent that I am aware of today, to fall from a place he knew, and into categories of ‘identity’, ‘community’ and ‘ownership’ as defined by Euro-Canadian society.” Schwager also cited unrest within the reserve as a motivating factor for the Bays to leave it. “I am told by the genealogist at Akwesasne that the Mohawk people had asked the Canadian government to assist them in having the families who were of mixed nations leave the reserve in order to keep the Mohawk blood line pure.”

She also referred to the book, *The Oxen and The Axe*, and said, “It is around the same time that the Bay family was known to have considered an offer made to them by the Canadian government to move to a large area of land around Effingham and Weslemkoon Lakes - if 24 families would agree to settle there. The project was dropped because only five families wanted to go. But apparently the Bays liked the area and decided to stay.”

Schwager also pointed to how the move likely led to Bay and his family losing their native status. “The Bay family, having left Akwesasne, were now enfranchised, which legally or by government definition means – to lose one’s identity, breaking up a so-called community (reserve) to ‘own’ land. There would be no distinction between an enfranchised non-status Indian and other non-Native citizens. The Bays would be protected from alienation and would supposedly escape the ‘baggage’ of having ‘Indian status’ or being of the ‘Indian problem’. There are records of information that suggest to me that Johnny Bay may not have even been aware that he had lost his status ‘identity’ and that the land he had acquired would never really be ‘owned’ by him or his family.”

Schwager, who is also a poet, brought her own creativity and imagination into the presentation, which made it powerful and extremely moving.

“There is a second voice that speaks to me and I feel it is one that weaves together all the pieces, known and unknown. I feel, as I still do sitting with my grandmother Cora, who shares with me her stories of another time, that I am sitting with Johnny Bay himself. After all, it is your memory or our fascination with his existence that allows for all the spirits of all the Bays to continue and for their descendants to have an opportunity to reclaim any lost or unknown part of ourselves.”

I have included here a short section of the extensive poetic section of Schwager’s presentation - a creative and imaginary dialogue she had with her great-great-grandfather which she said came to her from a place of deep knowing.

I am Johnny Bay
I was a good Indian
I was civilized, hardworking
No status, off reserve, built a house
Worked for the white settlers
Shared my medicines
I wore their clothes, lived in their world
Hard labour for a bit of tea
A pair of shoes for my children who would not go to
residential schools
But whose minds would be residents in their school of
thought
We worked as a family
We built our canoes
And they danced to the sounds of our fiddles
I was away from my family for seasons at a time
I travelled to find work, traded
Walked the roads in my bare feet
Some remember the creaking wagon and the team of horses
My wife’s beautiful baskets
She would speak only Mohawk
Her body would be lost to the housefire
You would know only very little of her
There are no longhouses here
No clan mothers.
A good supply of fish
A good many people I knew
Sharing stories and laughter
I would take a drink of ginger in a dipper of water

I was the guide, the prospector
 My name beside the Ore Chimney Mine
 I moved into another world
 The pioneer-Indian
 The priest would baptize us all
 Our language would rest on the great rocks along the shore
 Our music can be still heard on the breeze
 And
 I remain legendary

Thanks to Schwager, many have now come to know the history of a man who means so much not only to Laura Schwager and her family but to countless residents of the Mazinaw Lake area. Her extensive work and research, coupled with her poetic soul, have helped to keep both the legend and the life of her great-great-grandfather Johnny Bay alive. 🌿



Robbie Burns Supper

by Carolyn McCulloch



Photo: Gordon Sparks, addressing the haggis, and Pat Cuddy offering a wee dram. *By Marylin Bolender*

Robbie Burns would have been proud of the Birthday Celebration held in his honour in Northbrook on January 26. Gordon Sparks, enthusiast of all things Scottish, and Ian Brumell arranged the high spirited, sold-out evening of fine dining, poetry readings, music and Scottish Country dancing. It was sponsored by the Cloyne & District Historical Society. The Lions Hall was transformed into a romantic venue where Piper Mark Rowe of Denbigh piped in a delicious haggis that was addressed “cut up wi’ ready slight” and served with a wee dram.

Contributing to the program were the Men’s Chorus (Gordon McCulloch, Ernest MacChinski and Gordon Sparks) Ian Brumell, Joe Grant, Eileen Flieler, Graydon MacCrimmon, Dallas and Randy Arney, Margaret Ax-ford, Sandra Sparks, Ken Hook, and Carolyn McCulloch.

The exuberant occasion was a “first” for this area, and hopefully will become an annual event. It was a fundraiser for the extension of the Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives. The expanded building will provide more display and storage space, as well as a wheelchair accessible wash-room, space for preparing artifacts for display and an area for classroom presentations and research. The construction, under the leadership of Ian Brumell, is on track in every way. The addition will open in the summer of 2013. 🌿



CDHS Archive Moment

Preserving the Past for the future

This picture of Johnny Bay paddling his birch bark canoe adorned the cover of several Bon Echo Inn brochures when Dr. Weston A. Price was the owner. The brochure on the left is from 1906.

The Big Three Who Shaped Bon Echo Park

by Julie Druker

Long before it officially became a provincial park in 1965, the flavor of Bon Echo Park had begun to take shape decades earlier, thanks to the influence of three distinct personalities.

In a presentation titled "The Dentist, the Feminist and The Writer", local historian Margaret Axford spoke of the influence these three people had on the park, which continues to draw visitors from across the country and from all over the world.



Photo: Dr. Weston A. Price
courtesy of Ian Brummell

The first was the dentist, Dr. Weston A. Price, who was born in Newburgh, Ontario, but who lived and worked in Cleveland, Ohio. Price's wife was from Brampton, Ont. and she taught in Ardoch. In 1898 Price began renting land in what is now Bon Echo in the summer months from a farmer named David Weese. In 1899 the couple acquired land in the area and Price de-

cided to build an inn modeled on the tourist hotels of the Adirondacks. Axford stated, "He [Price] knew that the setting of the Mazinaw Rock would be a natural draw and it was the Prices who gave the name 'Bon Echo' to the area, and who gave birth to tourism in the region."

Price, who was described by one observer at the time as a "wiry man, always rushing somewhere with a hammer in his hand" used local labor to build the inn, which consisted of the main building, five cottages, a separate staff house, a boat house, a laundry house, an ice house, numerous docks and a bridge across the Narrows. By the end of Price's second summer after purchasing the land, the Bon Echo Inn was complete. In 1901 a telephone line that originated at the Kaladar train station and ran along the old Addington Road became the first telephone line in the area.

Price hoped to attract like-minded nature lovers to the area, and because he was a teetotaler and a religious man, the inn was dry until Merrill Denison took it over decades later.

In 1901, Flora MacDonald Denison arrived on the scene at Bon Echo with her husband Howard and son Merrill, first as guests in the tower room suite of the inn. Axford said that "she would have bought the place at that time if Price had been selling it" but instead she bought a lot south of the Narrows, where she built a summer cottage. Flora and her family would spend the next nine summers there. Flora MacDonald Denison was born in 1867 in Actinolite, worked as a teacher near Actinolite, and as a dressmaker in Toronto. She later was a writer on women's rights and the suffrage movement.

It was on her annual trip to Bon Echo in 1910 that Flora learned that Dr. Price wanted to sell the inn. Differing reasons are given for Price's reason for selling. One was that his 10-year-old son Donald was ill at the time; he later died either of spinal meningitis or from a diving accident.



Photo: Flora MacDonald Denison
courtesy of Ian Brummell

Flora paid Dr. Price \$13,000 for the inn, Big Bear Island and numerous acres of land, and Flora's husband Howard ran the Inn from 1911-1913 until the two separated and their marriage ended. Flora then took it over and her intent was to create "a haven for artists and philosophers in an inspiring natural landscape with an incredible view of Mazinaw Rock, where visitors could renew their souls, their energies and their creative instincts." Flora also celebrated the teachings and writings of Walt Whitman, the famed 19th century American poet. According to Axford, Flora "was caught up in his [Whitman's] democratic ideals and she saw Bon Echo as being a symbol of democratic freedom...that would always be enhanced by the spirit of Walt Whitman."

It was Flora who had a large rock face on the lake inscribed with a dedication to “Old Walt”. As a practicing spiritualist and part of a group whose members claimed they could communicate with the dead, Flora held numerous séances at Bon Echo. One observer at the time recalled that guests at Bon Echo “often preferred a séance at midnight to a Sunday morning church service.” Under Flora's command the inn housed many notable guests, including James Thurber, Morley Callahan, Frank Lloyd Wright and the painters from the Group of Seven; the latter would often be guests when Flora's son Merrill took over ownership. Financially the inn ran at a loss, with “Flora's dreams always outstretching her financial capabilities”.

Flora died at 54 years of age on May 23, 1921 and a bronze urn holding her ashes was deposited in Mazinaw Lake just below the Whitman inscription. Her son, Merrill Denison, a writer and later a well-known radio personality, inherited the inn and its 10 square miles of property, and began some much-needed repairs. His contacts at Hart House and the Arts and Letters Club in Toronto put him in touch with many famous Canadians artists of the time, many of whom would become regular visitors to Bon Echo. Merrill's partner, Muriel Goggin, whom he would marry in 1926, ran the inn from 1923-1928 “like a general”, and it prospered during this time until the stock market crash of 1929. From then until 1934 it was closed to the public at large and became Camp Mazinaw, a boys' camp for Trinity College School in Port Hope.

In 1936 the inn burned down after being struck by lightning. A Toronto woman who was working at the inn at that time, when she was 16 years old, sadly recalled watching it burn. Though the inn was never rebuilt, Merrill and Muriel continued to spend the summers at Bon Echo after selling off some of the land. They kept less than 100 acres for themselves. Merrill's aim still was to preserve the area as “a meeting place as it was for the Alonquins, a center to which people would come to learn and discuss ideas in an inspiring natural surrounding.”

In 1959 he turned over the buildings and land to the provincial government to be used as a provincial park. The official ceremony did not take place until 1965. Merrill died in 1975 at the age of 81.

Axford ended her presentation defining the legacy that these three personalities left behind for all who continue to visit and enjoy Bon Echo Park. “The legacy they left was that the democratic spirit should prevail and the ordinary person must continue to have access to this wonderful place.” For those wanting a more detailed account of the history of Bon Echo and the personalities who helped to create it, a number of books on the subject are available at the Cloyne Pioneer Museum. They include “The Oxen and The Axe” (Brown, Brumell and Snider), “The Mazinaw Experience: Bon Echo and Beyond” (John Campbell), “Sunset of Bon Echo” (Flora MacDonald Denison), and “Bon Echo: The Denison Years” (Mary Savigny). ❧

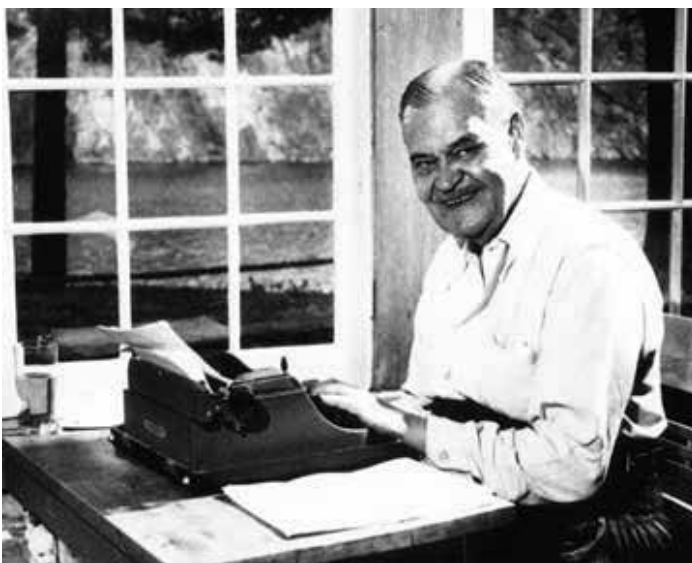


Photo: Merrill Denison *courtesy of Ian Brumell*

For Sale at
The Cloyne Pioneer Museum
and Archives

Books, 2014 Calendar, Massanoga DVD
Note cards, Generations print,
Audio Driving Tour

These items can also be purchased through
our online Book Store at
<http://pioneer.mazinaw.on.ca/store.php>

Cloyne and District Historical Society Financial Statements to 31 December 2012

Profit & Loss

Balance Sheet

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenses</u>		<u>Building/Expansion Project</u>		<u>Assets</u>	
Historical Society Income		Historical Society Expenses		Expenses		Current Assets	
Misc & Museum Donations	\$1,260.09	Advertising & Promotion	\$61.21	Fund Raising	\$3.40	Bank Account	\$7,010.07
General donations	\$8.00	Meeting Expenses	\$137.00	Administration	\$262.21	Reserve Funds	\$11,030.01
Charitable Donations >\$10	\$41.00	Bank Charges	\$8.60	Preparation	\$424.78	Inventory	\$2,050.00
Patron Donations	\$165.00	Patron Expenses	\$336.98	Labour	\$12,024.32	Total Current Assets	\$20,090.08
Calendars	\$3,525.00	Museum Operating Expenses	\$844.89	Foot/Found/Floor	\$11,894.36	Fixed Assets	
Calendar Advertising	\$1,620.00	Outside Services Purchased	\$3,125.18	Permits	\$730.00	Buildings & Property	\$14,350.00
Book Sales	\$1,399.36	Photocopier Expenses	\$110.72	Septic	\$4,538.62	Display fixtures	\$6,253.09
Other Item Sales	\$753.00	Maintenance & Repair	\$149.40	Walls	\$1,913.21	Computer & hardware	\$2,600.90
Memberships	\$336.00	Postage & Shipping	\$67.41	Roof	\$9,779.83	Office Equipment	\$4,044.44
Patrons	\$1,775.00	Website re-do	\$500.00	Total	\$41,570.73	Equipment	\$1,514.57
Fed. Gov't Grants	\$7,555.22	Expansion Fund Raising	\$152.00			Museum Artifacts	\$21,562.19
Prov. Gov't Grants	\$2,641.00	Office Expenses	\$91.76			Total Fixed assets	\$50,325.19
Municipal Grants	\$1,000.00	Petty Cash	\$0.00			Total Assets	\$70,415.27
Special Events	—	Grounds Expense	\$150.08				
Toonie Party	\$125.25	Artifact Maintenance	\$95.00			Equity	
Yard Sale	\$751.50	Archival Copying/Digitizing	\$33.98			Equity	\$20,127.74
Bus Tour	\$550.00	In Memorium Expenses	\$100.00			Payroll Liabilities	\$3.58
Museum opening	\$426.00	Fundraising Expense	\$1,319.91			Opening Balance Equity	\$58,738.59
Christmas Luncheon	\$835.85	Newsletter	\$656.31			Retained Earnings	(\$509.03)
Draw	\$440.75	Professional Development	\$282.50			Net Income	(\$7,945.61)
In Memorium donations	\$170.00	Misc. Expense	\$163.77			Total Equity	\$70,415.27
Misc. & Interest	\$44.62	Professional Memberships	\$231.50				
Expansion Project Income		Calendar Expenses	\$2,386.11				
Charitable Donations	\$20,782.50	Misc Sales Items	\$625.00				
Patron Donations	\$1,531.00	Brochures	\$343.97				
McLean Foundation	\$5,000.00	Book Purchases	\$438.95				
		Museum Wages & Salaries	\$5,962.36				
		Museum Payroll Expenses	\$736.43				
Total Income	\$52,736.14	General Expenses	\$19,111.02	Net Income	(\$7,945.61)	Total Liability & Equity	\$70,415.27

Financial report for spring 2013

As reported in newsletters for 2012 the main financial concentration of the Historical Society has been the goal of acquiring sufficient funds to complete, furnish, equip and open our 1450 ft.² addition.

The response from both the public and membership in general has been nothing short of astounding. Whereas our initial estimate of construction cost was close to \$100,000, of that amount, we have accumulated very close to \$30,000 from financial donations. In addition to this we have had innumerable contributions of free labour, free materials and of course, free advice – all of which we have taken very seriously.

The fund-raising committee had committed to contacting membership, local businesses, granting organizations and other sources which we felt might contribute towards our project. The results have been outstanding. In addition to this, we have received substantial funding from the Maclean Foundation and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, totalling \$44,800. We started 2012 with in excess of \$35,000 in our investment account. With all of these funds, it means that we should be able to complete the addition debt-free.

The 2012 financial report in this newsletter reflects both revenue and expenses that the CHDS has put through

its books under the headings shown using its own funds. The 2013 accounting will reflect the grants, and expenses applied to those grants through the year.

We ended 2012 with a bank balance of \$7010.07 and the reserve fund, managed by Raymond James Investment Managers in Kingston, had a balance of \$11,030. We did draw down this investment account in 2012 by approximately \$25,000 for the construction. In addition to this, our endowment fund was not drawn upon in 2012 however, it will contribute in excess of \$1200 in 2013.

The Cloyne and District Historical Society decided part way through 2012 to set up a committee of trustees to oversee the handling of investments. The committee consists of the President, Secretary and Treasure and will oversee our outside accounts to ensure that investment are made in a secure manner. The bylaws now reflect the organization and duties of this committee. It will meet on an irregular basis when decisions need to be made regarding excess funds. There will be more on this endeavour in the fall newsletter.

We have included our year-end financial reports with this newsletter and would encourage anyone with questions about our finances to contact us at any time, via email to <pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca>.

Ian Brumell, Treasurer ✂



Northern Woods



Carol Morrow creatively responded to living north of seven by designing and making a magnificent folk art quilt. "Northern Woods", her gift to the CDHS is a one-of-a-kind piece of exemplary workmanship. To see it, is to be-

lieve that the oldest of pioneer art forms is alive and well in the Land O' Lakes. One very lucky person (who does not have to be present) will own the 60" x 80" work of art when the ticket is drawn at our October 21, 2013 meeting. The tickets are \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00, and may be purchased from any member of the Cloyne & District Historical Society.



Events

June

Grand Opening of the Museum Hwy. 41 - Cloyne

Saturday June 22, 11AM

Everyone is invited to come out and see the new addition to the Pioneer Museum Barbeque. Live entertainment.

Bus Trip to McDonald's Corners

Monday June 17

We shall visit the Wheeler Pancake House and Chainsaw Museum at McDonald's Corners, and the MERA Schoolhouse. See the Purdon Conservation Area where the largest colony of Showy Lady's Slipper in Canada exists.

Bus leaves Cloyne at 9AM and Northbrook at 9:15AM Cost is \$20.00 per person, and you will be able to order and pay for your luncheon preference from the a la carte menu at the Pancake House. We shall be home by approximately 4PM.

Call Gord McCulloch at 613 336-6858 to reserve your place on the bus.

July

Pancake Breakfast Barrie Community Hall - Cloyne Saturday July 13, 9AM

Pot-Luck Lunch

Monday July 15, 12 NOON

Members are invited to a pot-luck lunch at the home of Eileen Flieler at 3642 Highway 506.

July and August

Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives Hwy. 41, Cloyne Ontario Open Daily from 10AM - 4PM

You will enjoy your visit to the cabin in the pines!