

# The Pioneer Times

NEWS VEHICLE OF THE CLOYNE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The McPherson House on Skootamatta Lake Road was built by Billans Snider, the oldest son of Charles Stewart Snider. Billans ran the engines of the steamboat used by the Canada Lumber Company to pull their booms. The steamboat was also used to take sight-seers on excursions up Mazinaw Lake. The glassed-in wheel house of the old steamboat stood on the brow of the hill on this property, looking out over the lake for many years. (The 911 number is 804 Skootamatta Lake Road – the house is still standing although much deteriorated). *Photo: CDHS Album, flickr. Information from "The Oxen and the Axe".*

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Cloyne & District Historical Society  
"Preserving the Past for the Future"

## The Pioneer Times

Volume 17, No. 2, Fall/Winter 2019-2020

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## President's Message

This has been a good summer for CDHS. We have had some interesting speakers as well as a fun "bring a thing, tell a tale" at our October meeting. One member related the fact that when he offered his niece a souvenir bottle opener of her favourite hockey team she asked, what's a bottle opener?

The July potluck luncheon was well attended and we had beautiful weather. The food was great. Thanks to all our fine cooks.

Susan Hopkins who was the secretary resigned due to pressures of work. We thank her for her service. I asked for a volunteer to fill the position and Ken Hook stepped forward. We welcome him and really appreciate his participation.

I hope to see everyone at the Christmas lunch and would remind everyone that the tickets will be available at our November meeting from Carol Lessard.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

*Shirley Sedore, President* ✿



The Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives staff for the summer of 2019 LtoR: Josie Heyman, Emma Benn and Rebekah Delyea. Photo: Ken Hook

## The Gift Shop

Shena McAuliffe, has released her stunning debut novel, and has chosen Bon Echo Park as the setting. An American, she visited the Park this summer to read to members of The Friends of Bon Echo.



*The Good Echo* fictionalizes the lives of the original owners of the park, Dr. Weston Price and his wife Frances. Through the sudden death of their son Ben, she created an imaginative ghost storyteller. This is the not-to-be-missed story of abiding love, pain and mourning.

The CDHS was fortunate to be able to obtain a limited number of McAuliffe's signed books for sale in the Museum Book Store. They are priced at \$29.95, and make a perfect Christmas Gift. If you live locally, *The Good Echo* can be delivered to you.

Linda Corupe is a careful researcher who presented the story of The Addington Colonization Road at a meeting of the CDHS last year. Her followers came from all over Eastern Ontario, and actually out numbered our members.



*The Hard Road Ahead* was pulled from a number of sources. Part 1 addresses the documents, letters and papers related to the survey, construction and early settlement in the area from 1851 to 1892. Part 2 consists of the appendices, photographs, maps and details of the lots along the road from 1856 to 1900.

*The Hard Road Ahead, the Story of the Addington Colonization Road*, is a must for descendants of original pioneers. The 2 volumes are sold as a set for \$50.00, and can be delivered locally.

For delivery of either of these books, call Carolyn McCulloch at 613 336-6858



The Museum in Cloyne has always been a place of discovery. Earlier this year two cousins, previously unknown to each other, met for the first time. The arranged visit took place both inside and outside the Museum where they celebrated their common ancestor Atewennarikhon (John Baptiste Bay).

Shown here are Phil Schwager, and cousin Jayne Crebolder with Laura Schwager, Phil's daughter. They are holding the artifacts produced by Atewennarikhon. Poet Laura Schwager produced the art and written tribute shown above them on the occasion of Canada's Sesquicentennial.

*Photo: Carolyn McCulloch*



# Museum Acquisition

The Museum is fortunate in being able to acquire nine original pen and ink drawings by Carla Miedema. The drawings were created on a combination of Bristol Board, Handmade Lokta and Malaysian rice paper. They represent buildings (a few of which are still standing) that were constructed in early times in our area.

There is a fresh supply of Hasti-Notes that are small copies of the prints and are available in the Book Store.

Here is a listing of what you shall see when you attend the opening of the Museum next spring:

Myers Cave Lodge	Myers Cave
Jerome Farm	South of Flinton
SS#1 Barrie School	Bishop Lake
Thompson's Store	Northbrook
Eagle Hill School	South of Denbigh
Vennacher Church	Vennacher
Wickware Hotel	Cloyne
Stewart House	Flinton
McPherson House	Cloyne

There are three different Hasti-Note packages each containing four different building scenes as pictured here.

## Pioneer Buildings # 1



Flinton School, Flinton



Myers Cave Lodge, Myers Cave



McPherson House, Cloyne



Vennachar Church

The Flinton School (Tin School) burned to the ground January 5, 1945; Myers Cave Lodge was built in 1892. Renovated and remodeled it continues operation as a resort; The McPherson house (see our cover) is still standing but is much deteriorated; The Vennachar Methodist Episcopal Church, built in 1875, and one house survived the 1903 fire. The church became a United Church in 1925 and operated until 1975. It was restored in 1987 and is now the Vennachar Community Memorial Church.

## Pioneer Buildings # 2



Wickware Hotel, Cloyne



Stewart House, Flinton



Thompson's Store, Northbrook



S.S.#1, Barrie School at Bishop Lake

The Wickware Hotel which had been located at the south end of Cloyne burned as a result of a chimney fire in 1963; The Stewart House Tavern was built in 1852 just outside the Flinton boundary because Flinton, at the time, was a dry town. It was destroyed by fire in 1989; Thompson's Store in Northbrook c1922 was located where the Foodland now stands; S. S. #1 Barrie (Bishop Lake School) most recently operated as an antique business.

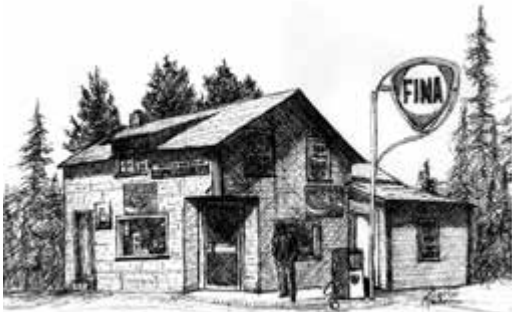
## Pioneer Buildings # 3



Jerome Farm, south of Flinton



Hotel Kaladar, at junction of highways 7 & 41, Kaladar



Neal's Grocery, Harlowe



Eagle Hill School

The Jerome Farm, Flinton; The Hotel Kaladar was moved to the corner of Highways 7 and 41 in 1934. It ceased operation in 2009 and was torn down in 2018; Neal's General Store in Harlowe c1950. It no longer operates as a store; The Eagle Hill School at Ferguson Corners operated, for many years, as Scott's Shopping Centre.

## THE LOON LAKE COLONY – 1922 - 2012

by James Osborne

On July 1, 2012, we at Skootamatta Lake (nee Loon Lake) will celebrate two anniversaries – 145 years of the founding of the Canadian Confederation (Canada Day) and the 90th anniversary of the building of the first permanent cottage on the lake at Osborne Island – and the Osborne Family will celebrate the 97th birthday of the last living person that was there at that founding by his father – J. Ross Osborne.

Born in Montreal in 1889, Alfred Ross (Tiny) Osborne was an inventor, an investor and manufacturer's agent who in his business travelled extensively in the U.S., Europe, and Russia. He was a graduate of St. Andrew's College, and as a young man loved adventure, fishing and hunting. His father, James Osborne, was a senior executive of The Canadian Pacific Railway. As such, Tiny had a free pass anywhere the CPR went. As of 1884, it went to Kaladar, and around that time, the railroad started promoting resort vacations to improve their business – St. Andrews By-the-Sea, Banff Springs Hotel and – Bon Echo Resort.

Travelling by rail to Kaladar, and then by horse drawn carriage, stopping overnight in Northbrook, Tiny or ARO eventually made his way to the Inn around 1910 – 1911. A side trip to fish brought him to Loon Lake. Travel during World War 1 could

then be done by car. During the period between 1915 – 1919, he cemented his vision to establish a summer settlement on Loon Lake.

With the able assistance of the Bey and Schwager Brothers, Tiny completed his cottage on Osborne Point (then an island) for occupancy on July 1, 1922. It was built with cedar, birch and pine, windows from Walter Osborne (a distant cousin) and cement floors. It had a dining room and a kitchen and living room as it stands today. There were 2 bedrooms along with a boathouse, storage shed, outdoor toilet, woodshed and ice house. He called it Sunset Lodge.

Recognizing that he was on to a good thing, and being a promoter at heart, he realized he needed to encourage



LtoR: Harry Gibbs, Alfred Ross (Tiny) Osborne and Harry Bellingham at Skootamatta Lake in 1922. *Photo from the Osborne Collection, Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives.* The Osborne cottage on Skootamatta Lake was completed in 1922. *Photos: Cathy Hook, 2010*



others to also build. Through business and relationships developed on his many visits to Bon Echo, he developed a list of friends who brought a variety of skills to this new community. Land could be purchased for as little as \$5 per acre (maximum of 5 acres per name). From 1919 – 1923 Tiny bought many parcels of land and registered them, on an interim basis, in the names of over 30 friends and acquaintances, his wife and two kids and even in the name of his secretary, until final registration was completed.

A sampling of the initial landowners encouraged to come to Loon Lake were Andrew Stevens (Simpsons Hardware in Toronto), Carl Schwenger (Toronto Hydro), George Pearson (Electronics in Chicago), Walter Osborne (Toronto Contractor), Dr. Ralph Williams (Ingersol), Tom Masson (Aikenheads Toronto), Frank Seddon (Electric Toronto), Art Ingram (Funeral Business, Toronto), Fred Stroud (Toronto Hydro), E.J. Harrington (Doors Toronto), E. Jacobs (Metal Windows), Harry Gibbs, Norman Mathew, Ray Chaffee (Detroit), Sprague Moore (Father of the Lone Ranger), Chris Rutland, R.H. Clark, Sid Ballard (Father of Maple Leafs executive Harold Ballard), and others.

Travel to the lake in the nineteen twenties was very difficult, a real journey. Highways 7 and 41 were not completed until 1933 & 1935 respectively. While automobiles were now used (first recorded auto was a Cadillac owned by Merrill Denison's father in 1911), the roads were bumpy. Each car carried at least 2 spare tires and patches for flats. The distance from Toronto was 175 miles, often taking the whole day. From Belleville, you travelled north through Tweed, Bridgewater (Actinolite), Flinton then turning at the Addington Road through Cloyne. Then you travelled along the Skootamatta and Jacques Bay road to Trails End where the road stopped. The final journey to your cottage was by boat. Ed Landon, who owned the store at the top of the hill, rowed people until motor boats arrived in the mid 1920s.

Many local families were involved in the construction and maintenance of the early cottages. The early cottage builders included Bill and Mike Schwager, the Bey Brothers (Charlie and Pete, who worked at Bon Echo), Jim Meeks and others. Andrew Meeks built the ice houses with Leo and Elburn Meeks Sr. filling them every winter. Mike Schwager specialized in making the fireplaces

and beds. Charlie Bey made cedar and birch furniture. All lumber came from the mill in Cloyne (behind the museum). Materials were put on a 30'x 30' barge at the landing, then pulled over to the property being built by a metal boat with 2 ½ HP motor. All materials came from Cloyne by wagon along the Addington Road.



Mike Schwager lower left, Peter Bay standing middle, Bill Schwager standing right. The Bays and Schwagers were involved in the construction of many of the original cottages on Skootamatta Lake. Date approximately 1925. *Photo from John Schwager.*

Life at the cottage in the 1920s & 1930s was substantially different than today (we did not get hydro until 1953). Most people bought their staples at Wheelers store in Cloyne (now Grand's). One could buy everything from eggs, bacon, and potatoes to nails, axes, hammers and saws, as well as clothing. Andrew and Martha Meeks raised chickens and vegetables. Joe Reid ran the local blacksmith shop in Cloyne (where Nowells is now located). He made fireplace screens, grates and tools while his wife made rag rugs for cottages. Martha Meeks grew a variety of vegetable.

Wilfred Lessard collected the local taxes on the lake by canoe. The Archie Meeks family owned many boathouses at the Landing which stored motor boats (Boston whalers) in the mid 1920s as well as renting skiffs and boats to fisherman and hunters.

Up until 1953 when Hydro arrived, cottage life was rustic and basic. You were lucky to have running water via a hand pump. Wood stoves were your oven and heat in the early mornings. Most people had ice houses and ice boxes. Leo and Elburn Meeks Sr. cut the ice on the lake and using a horse drawn sleigh, took the blocks to the cottage ice house each winter. They spread sawdust on the ice to

help it survive the summer heat. The ice box in the cottage was zinc lined and made of oak. The ice was put on the top level, food inside. There was a tray on the bottom to collect water. The ice had to be replaced every 2 days. Light was supplied via coal oil lanterns as well as very large hurricane lanterns and flashlights. These hurricanes were vital and they provided a beacon for motor boats at night guiding them to your property (a hazardous journey in fog and rain, especially around Mike's Island and Osborne Point). Cleaning sheets, towels, and clothes was done with yellow sunlight soap on a washboard down by the lake, and then dried on clotheslines. Hot water was boiled in a kettle on the wood stove.

During the day, people did chores – cooking, baking, cleaning, carrying water, filling the ice box and wood container: constant building and repairs, hauling rocks, wood cutting and splitting, lots of swimming, some fishing. In the evenings, some congregated at the Landing or Schwengers on the weekend to sing, dance and tell stories. Many stayed at home relaxing after a hard day playing records on wind-up phonographs, or playing games like snakes and ladders, crazy 8s, crib, gin rummy, old maid, hearts, fish etc. Bed early, rise early. No TV, computer, phone – not bad but pretty remote.

People in the early days of the 1920s went to the lake to get away from their jobs and city life. Just like today. While their daily and weekend activities were different then in July and August, some things remain the same 90 years later:

- the lake is still beautiful and clean
- we still go there to get away from the city but now can do it for weekends
- many still have wood stoves
- there are still chores and building activities
- kids today still enjoy the lake as much as their grandparents did when they were kids.

May we enjoy the pristine beauty of our lake for many generations to come.

## DID YOU KNOW

1. The first permanent cottage was built by Alfred Ross (Tiny) Osborne on July 1, 1922. Today the 5th generation still enjoys time at Skootamatta in the original compound.
2. Until the mid 1950s, the lake was known as Loon Lake. As there were many lakes in the province with the same name, to prevent further confusion, the government renamed our lake Skootamatta. Skootamatta was named by the Mississauga or Ojibwa tribe meaning "burnt at the forks" or "burnt shoreline". The lake encompasses 3015 acres, has a perimeter of 49 kilometres, and has a maximum depth of 99' and mean depth of 23'. Fed by artesian wells, the lake eventually drains into Lake Ontario. Another tribal translation, the one we prefer is "Land of Shooting Stars".
3. Mike Schwager (Mike's Island) had the local post office on Loon Lake in 1927 – 1928. It was called Festubert named after a famous WWI battle where many of Tiny Osborne's school mates at St. Andrew's died. It served 22 cottages. People would row up to the cabin and receive their mail in slots on a cabinet. Thereafter, mail service was transferred to the mainland and run by the Yanch family.
4. Locals and area cottagers did most of their shopping at the general store in Cloyne owned by the Wheelers, then Harvey and Rachael Spencer in the 1920s & 30s (now Grands). Supplied weekly from Tweed, the store offered drugs, lumber, paint, equipment, clothes, boots, and gas. Many items were offered in bulk – eggs by the case, bacon by the slab, beef by the side and potatoes by the bushel. Tomatoes cost 10 cents/tin and dry beans were 25 cents for 10 pounds. Credit was offered between paychecks.
5. Highway 7 was completed in 1933, and highway 41 in 1935. Both were government make work projects during the depression.
6. Rutland Lodge (now owned by the Tait family) was the first fishing lodge on the Lake. Built in mid 1920, it employed many local people.
7. The original lake association was incorporated as a provincial company in 1928. It was formed to get dis-



counts on fishing and hunting equipment. *The Greater Loon Lake Fishing Club* had a board of 8 chaired by Tiny Osborne, and 33 chartered members.

8. The last lumber operation on the lake, the Wilson Lumber Co. closed its doors on the north shore in 1949. The property was bought and developed by the Lazell and Moir families in the 1950s.



9. There were two properties with telephones in the 1920s – Bon Echo Resort and Pearson's Skootamatta Lodge.

10. Bon Echo Provincial Park, on land donated to the Province of Ontario by Merrill Denison, was officially opened in 1965.



Mike's Island barely accommodated Mike Schwager's cabin which operated as Festubert Post Office in 1927 and 1928; Mike Schwager was also foreman for the construction of several of the first cottages, under the supervision of 'Tiny' Osborne, including the massive stone Skootamatta Lodge, owned by the Pearsons and now the Halperins. *Photos from the Cloyne and District Historical Society Album, CDHS flickr website.*

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## Cloyne Pioneer Museum Seeks New Curator

Established in 1983, the Cloyne Pioneer Museum is seeking a new Curator. The Museum is operated by the not-for-profit Cloyne and District Historical Society. The Society's catchment area is the Highway 41 corridor from Kaladar in the south to Denbigh and Griffith in the north, as well as Flinton to the west and Harlowe to the east. Museum collections, both in artifacts and doc-

uments, reflect the history of this area beginning from settlement times in the 1850s, with emphasis on such themes as settlement and pioneer life, mining, logging, tourism and the building of the Addington Road.

The Museum is open mid-June until Labour Day and receives over 1,000 visitors during the summer. Students are employed throughout the summer to ensure the Museum is well staffed to receive visitors.

Margaret Axford has been serving as volunteer Curator for the past 20 years and is retiring from the position. The Curator liaises between the volunteer Board of Directors, students, membership and visitors. Exhibit maintenance, receiving photos, documents and articles for display as well as archiving are part of the Curator's duties.

If you wish to be a vital part of preserving our local history please apply to [pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca](mailto:pioneer@mazinaw.on.ca) or call 613-336-2203 for more information.





Top LtoR: Linda Corupe, seen here with CDHS members Carolyn McCulloch and Ian Brumell, has done extensive research on the Addington Road and spoke at our April meeting. Kevin Goodfellow is writing a book about the Gilmour Logging Company and spoke at our May meeting. Middle: The band *Red Eye Monday* performed at the Pioneer Museum opening in June. Lower LtoR: OPP Police Constable Curtis Dick spoke at our September meeting about telemarketing, online and email frauds and scams. *Photos: Ken Hook.* Margaret Axford is retiring as Curator and Archivist of the Pioneer Museum and CDHS members showed their appreciation for her dedication to our organization at the potluck luncheon. During the period of 2001 to 2019 Margaret held positions of Secretary, President, Director, Curator and Archivist. Thank you Margaret. *Photo: Trevor Bethel*



## We lose friends

Eleanor St. Amand (nee Jackson)  
September 9, 2019 (in her 88th year)



Eleanor was a busy and willing member of our organization before moving to Napanee. She sat on the Board of Directors for 2004 and 2005.

During our Lumberman's Picnic and official opening of the first expansion of the Pioneer Museum in

2003 Eleanor ran the Old Fashioned Tea Room. It was a hugely successful event and very busy. When her son stopped by to see when he should give her a ride home, she handed him a tea pot and asked him to help out.

When we held our first "Patron Appreciation" event she organized and supervised another successful event.

That was Eleanor. Always willing to help and participate. We missed her when she moved to Napanee and respectfully remember her.



## D'thea Webster and Maureen O'Neill

D'thea Webster and Maureen O'Neill died tragically in a car accident on November 10, 2019. They were traveling Highway 7, on their way to a family birthday party in Ottawa.

D'thea was the Minister at Land O'Lakes Emmanuel United Church. She created the Community Choir that performed at the Sesquicentennial Celebrations at The Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives in 2017. Maureen, a native of England, sang the songs of Canada with great enthusiasm on that day.

When Maureen and D'thea were new to Eastern Ontario, they were excited to know that there was an organization that celebrated the heritage of the area and immediately became members of the Cloyne & District Historical Society. An enthusiastic and spirited pair, they offered their home to host our annual potluck lunch.

We always looked forward to seeing Maureen arrive with their beautiful white and well-behaved poodle, Otis. He attended all of our meetings.



D'thea jumped in with both feet, offered the Church for the Board of Director meetings and became the Recording Secretary for a year and a half. It did not take long for us to realize that we had gained an amazing Director who had a wealth of experience in organizational behavior. She added logic, colour and flair to everything that we did during that time.

Rest peacefully Maureen and D'thea. We miss you terribly.

*Carolyn McCulloch,  
Photo: Teri Woods*





Thank you to Shirley Sedore for hosting our 2019 July potluck luncheon. Back row LtoR: Cathy and Ken Hook, Mary Ruth, Carolyn McCulloch, Warren Anderson, Dave Woodruff, Cathy Credicott, Doc Ruth, Eileen Flieler, Roxanne Bradshaw, Marcella Neely, Catherine Grant, Elspeth McCulloch, Joe Grant, Janet Wilson, Bill and Beth Campbell, Wendy Hodgkin, Ian Brumell. Front row seated LtoR: Marg Axford, Gord McCulloch, Gaile Bethel, Carol Lessard, Shirley Sedore, Sandra and Gordon Sparks. *Photo: Trevor Bethel*

## 2020 Calendar

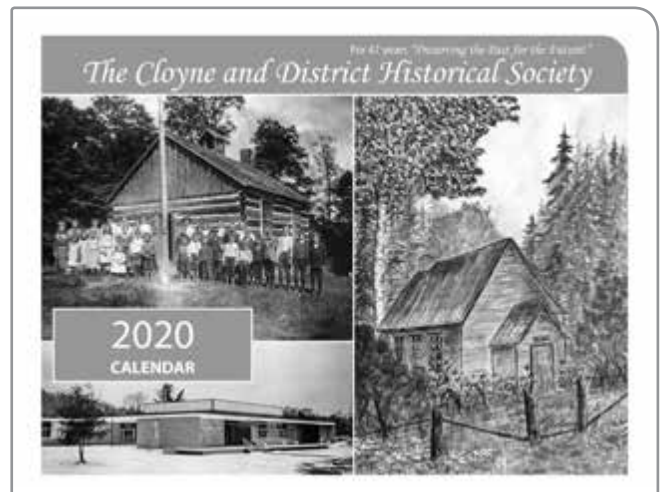
The CDHS 2020 Heritage Calendar is on sale now and features schools past and present in the Kaladar/Denbigh corridor.

\$15.00

Our calendars make great stocking stuffers and can be mailed to purchasers.

To make arrangements for a calendar leave a message for Wendy at 613-336-2580 or visit our online book store at

[www.cloynepioneermuseum.ca](http://www.cloynepioneermuseum.ca)



*Cover Photo 2020 Calendar*

## Events - 2019/2020

### 2019/20 CDHS meetings Barrie Hall – Cloyne, 1PM 3rd Monday of the month

**November 18** – In the First World War, there were recruiting stations in Flinton, Tamworth and Verona. These young men from Frontenac and Lennox and Addington formed the 146th Battalion and after training in Barriefield and Valcartier were shipped to Europe. Monday November 18 we shall meet at noon at the Barrie Hall and car pool to the South Frontenac Museum in Hartington to see and hear Doug Lovegrove's story of the 146th Battalion, the boys who came from this area to fight in WW1.

### **December 2 – Monday, 11:30AM** **Harlowe Hall** **CDHS Christmas Luncheon**

Pat Cuddy is the chef for the CDHS Christmas Luncheon on December 2nd in the Harlowe Hall. Arrive at 11:30 for noon. Tickets are \$18.00. Contact Carol Lessard at 613-336-2570 before November 30th to reserve. Bring an item (like canned pork & beans, pasta, spaghetti sauce) for the Land O'Lakes Food Bank. Our 2020 calendar will be available for sale.

**January 20 (Strategic Planning)**

**February 17**

**March 16 (Annual General Meeting)**

**April 20**

**May 18**

**Are you on our email list?** If you provided an email address with your membership form we will send a reminder prior to meetings and events. You can also check the website prior to meetings for information on Guest speakers.

The Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives is now closed for the season. Stay in touch through our website: [www.cloynepioneermuseum.ca](http://www.cloynepioneermuseum.ca), follow us on flickr and visit our Youtube channel. We now have 353 followers on flickr viewing 1099 photos. We have 34 subscribers on Youtube.

