

NEWCASTLE VILLAGE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

(Vol. 2 #1)

March 1, 1984

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S CHAIR

It was decided at the last executive meeting that we should have more general membership meetings of our society. It was generally felt that there are a lot of people out there who would like to be more involved. This could be by simply attending the meetings and keeping up to date with the business of the Society to heading up committees or running for office. We need you all.

We plan to have one general membership meeting per month. The dates for the rest of this season will be elsewhere in this newsletter.

Our bicentennial plans are coming along nicely with much interest in Professor Squairs book "The Townships of Darlington and Clarke". Like myself most people know this book and would like to have their own copy. At this time we have committed ourselves to reprinting this book, but we still have to set a price to sell it at. Also I would like to see someone write a short biography on Prof. Squair that we could use to publicize this book.

Plans are firm for a Bicentennial Ball at Newcastle Community Hall on June 16. This will be a gala affair with many people attending in period costume. I know some people who are already working on their costumes.

We have been very successful in organizing a Village of Newcastle Bicentennial Committee. This committee have met twice and are putting their talents toward making this a memorable celebration.

Although the weather was bitter cold on Feb. 6th, many people came and enjoyed The Kings Royal Rangers.

More plans are underway for '84 so please come out to the meeting and discuss them with us.

Ron Locke, President.

THE NEWCASTLE VILLAGE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

On September 20, 1982, the Newcastle Village & District Historical Society held its first annual meeting to elect officers under a new constitution and with by-laws approved by the Ontario Historical Society. At this meeting, which was hosted by Anne McFadden in her home at Bond Head, we elected six directors--three for one year and three for two years. Other officers elected were treasurer, secretary, vice-president, president and Pat Macdonnell as past president. This team has steered our Society well for the past year.

At the October meeting, plans were made to have a series of public meetings during the year to give interested people a chance to see what we do, and to present stimulating speakers. Our first public meeting was held on November 29, 1982. The programme committee of Grace Ruddell, Allan Haldenby and Jack Gordon invited Dorothy Duncan, Executive Director of the O.H.S. and she spoke on "Preserving Local History". Jack Gordon displayed photographs and memorabilia that drew much attention. This meeting was well-received and well attended.

In January, we began planning for Heritage Day 83. At the second general meeting, Allan Haldenby showed films illustrating how people across Canada are preserving their history and historical sites. As well, Vi and Rob Lambert displayed their excellent collection of lamps and candle holders dating back to the eighteenth century.

Our March meeting was very busy with Heritage Day fast approaching and plans being made for the publication of another first, a news letter which was later sent out in April to all members.

Our April general meeting brought us Barbra Schon, the Chief Librarian for the Town of Newcastle, who told us what the Library is doing in respect to preserving old newspapers on microfilm and the indexing of historical data. One of our Directors, Philip Hayman, displayed his fine military collection.

Heritage Day 83 in May was a success story with all hands pitching in to make it so. The Community Hall was full of displays (quilting, weaving, private doll, china and lamp collections, interesting displays from the Clarke and Bowmanville Museums, etc.) and the many visitors were also able to go upstairs and enjoy the Newcastle Historical Society Room, open for the first time. A special thanks goes to Charles Gray who was mainly responsible for the entertaining Variety Show.

One more executive meeting was held in June to complete the business for the year. Our second newsletter came out in July and my hope of a quarterly publication is much more of a reality.

At this time, I feel that I should thank the people who helped me this year but if I mention names, it is inevitable that someone will be left out. However, every executive member has helped to make this a memorable year for me. Thank you all!

Another of our achievements this year has been a membership programme with new membership cards. We also have our first international member, Ellen Morris of New Jersey, U.S.A.

I am happy to report that our Workshop for October 1 is all set to go. We expect about thirty-five people from all parts of this area to attend and to receive ideas from the Ontario Historical Society as to how best we can celebrate the 200th birthday of Ontario.

The sudden death of Keith Barr in the spring was a shock to us and to the whole community. This public-spirited man gave generously of his time and knowledge to causes in which he believed and our new Historical Society was one of them. He was a founding member and first treasurer and we shall miss him very much.

In addition, we are sad to report the death of Sarah Carr, mother of Dorothy Brown, our secretary.

I have much faith in the preservation of history in this area if this organization continues to work hard and to grow as we have in the past year. My best wishes go to the new Executive.

Ron Locke
President.

Prayer-Poem

Father God:

We keep forgetting all of those who lived before us.
We keep forgetting those who lived and worked in this community.
We keep forgetting those who prayed and sang hymns in this church before we were born.

We keep forgetting what our fathers have done for us.
We commit the sin, Lord, of assuming that everything begins with us.
We drink from wells we did not find,
We eat food from farmland we did not develop.
We enjoy freedoms which we have not earned,
We worship in churches which we did not build,
We live in communities that we did not establish.

This day, make us grateful for our heritage,
Turn our minds to those who lived in another day and under different circumstances, until we are aware of their faith and work.
Today we need to feel our oneness, not only with those of a recent generation who lived here, but those of every generation in every place, whose faith and works have enriched our lives.

We need to learn from them in order that our faith will be as vital, our commitment as sincere, our worship as alive, our fellowship as deep, as many of the devout and faithful who lived in another time and place.

(Prayer displayed in the historic
Covenanter's Church in Grand Pre, New Brunswick)

MEMBERSHIP

All organizations must have members to exist. We are no exception. So each year we ask last years members to renew their memberships and invite new memberships.

A membership gives you the right to come out to our general membership meeting and air your ideas for historical good in our community. It also gives you the right to vote on the issues. All members receive the newsletter quarterly.

Membership is available for five dollars single or eight dollars family and runs for the calendar year.

Next General Membership Meeting

Place: Community Hall, Centennial Room

Time: 7:30 p.m. Date: March 15, 1984

Guest: Dianna Lang, Curator of Clarke Museum.

Clarke Museum has asked Newcastle Village and District Historical Society to join them in putting on a house tour this fall. Dianna is coming to give us some idea what is involved and what we will have to do to get involved.

I am sure Dianna will also answer any questions that we have about Clarke Museum.

Business: There is much to be discussed and decided on as bicentennial year is upon us and plans to be finalized.

Fun: Everyone is asked to bring one item of historical significance to this meeting. We will have a table set up to display the artifacts. Maybe if you have something that you don't know much about someone may be able to fill in the gaps for you.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS FOR '84

All meetings will be at the Community Hall unless publicized differently.

April 5th 7 p.m.

May 3rd 7 p.m.

June 7th 7 p.m.

Sept. 20th 7 p.m. (annual meeting &
election of officers)

Oct. 18th 7 p.m.

Nov. 15th 7 p.m.

Dec. 13th 7 p.m.

A PAGE FROM THE PAST

In order to make this newsletter interesting we will try to include a story or some facts that are not generally known about our community.

We invite everyone to write an article for us and it will be included in a future newsletter. If each of our membership wrote just one article there would be stories for years to come.

This story is about a long forgotten ledger found by Ray and Mable Goode in the building that housed their hardware store in Newcastle.

Simply marked Ledger on the cover this book has no other title. Upon closer inspection it appears that it has been an account book for an organization of men around the village, a club of some sort but more than likely a fraternity of business men.

Inside the front cover is a list of names with a page number next to each name. There are seventy three names in all. Some of these names are quite familiar and common in the area to this day. Others can be recalled by some of our senior citizens and still others are not familiar at all.

The first entries are made in 1903 when each member seemed to be paying a fixed rate quarterly. The rate varies from \$1.13 to \$2.15. The final entries were made in 1916 accompanied by a note "See New Ledger".

When a member passed on the last entry in their column would read as John Bellwood's did.

Bro John H. Bellwood
Died
February 1910

Under expenditures we find Sick Benefit the most common, but others are interesting like, "Ad in Independent" Jan. to June 30th \$1.00, Treasurers Salary \$1.50 and kindling wood \$1.00 or how about Electric Bill .31¢ on Feb.6 and .51¢ on Mar.7th but down to .25¢ on April 4th.

Now that I have your interest in this book I will tell you if you have any information about it or can shed any light on its previous owners, or if you would like any information from it. Please call Mable Goode at 983-5514.

THE KING'S ROYAL REGIMENT OF NEW YORK.
(KING'S ROYAL YORKERS)

In the year 1775 American troops from the rebellious 13 Colonies occupied all of the major towns in the Loyal Province of Quebec, except Quebec City itself. On New Year's Day they launched an attack against that fortress city and were repelled by Loyal citizen soldiers and British Army Regulars.

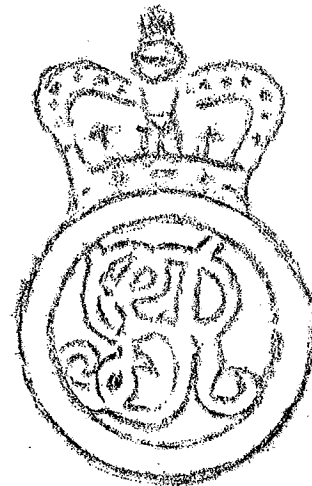
In the spring of 1776, the Governor General of Canada, Sir Guy Carlton, mounted an offensive against the rebels and steadily pushed them out of Canada. On June 19, Sir John Johnson, a Loyal native North American with 200 of his friends and tenants joined Carlton at Chambly, Quebec. As many of them were experienced soldiers and hardy frontiersmen, Carlton immediately gave Sir John a commission to raise the First Battalion of the King's Royal Regiment of New York. At once the embryo Regiment participated in it's first campaign, the pursuit of the retreating American rebels. Their tenacity and fighting qualities soon made them known and feared by the Americans as 'Johnsons Royal Greens'.

In July 1777, the Royal Yorker's, now expanded to 300 men, in company with Loyalist Rangers (Butler's, Jessup's and Roger's) and Loyal Iroquois Indians, took part in a signal victory against a large force of rebel American militia. This battle known as Oriskany is considered to be the bloodiest fought during the Revolutionary Wars.

The years 1778 & 79 saw the Royal Yorkers with other Loyalist, British and German Regiments building forts throughout the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes areas to strengthen the defence of the Province.

In 1780 in the Mohawk and Schoharie Valleys the Royal Yorker's were instrumental in saving numerous Loyalist families from persecution and vast quantities of grain scheduled to feed the rebel armies of George Washington were destroyed, causing rebel morale along the frontier to drop alarmingly. In this same year, a Second Battalion was commissioned making the Royal Yorker's the largest military unit in Canada. In 1781 the Second Battalion struck deep into the Mohawk Valley attacking Johnstown. Meanwhile the United States was growing in strength and confidence. To protect Canada from a possible combined Franco/American invasion, the new Governor General, Frederick Haldimand, directed the Second Battalion to occupy and fortify Oswego in the spring of 1782. The First Battalion were garrisoning the forts in the St. John/Montreal area. In July one last raid was led by the Mohawk Captain Joseph Brant, with the Royal Yorker's in support and then all hostilities ended.

In 1783 & 84 the Loyalist Regiments that had fought so long, hard and tenaciously were disbanded. Those which had fought in the Central and Southern States settled in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The Royal Yorker's, Butler's, Jessup's and Roger's Rangers and many Iroquois with their families settled in Canada along the north shore of the St. Lawrence and in the Niagara Peninsula. The King's Royal Yorker's, now a Canadian History project is recreated and perpetuated by the Museum of Applied Military History, King City, Ontario.



Phil Hayman.