



NEWCASTLE VILLAGE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 585 NEWCASTLE ONTARIO

NEWSLETTER.

May / June 1988.

GENERAL MEETING - Monday, May 16, 1988 at 7.30 p.m.
Community Hall, Newcastle.

Please bring a Treasure or two to display - not necessarily Canadiana. This is a "share your knowledge evening". In public school it is called 'Show and Tell'. The last one was very successful.

EXECUTIVE MEETING - June 20, 7.30 p.m. at Lynn Lovekin's.

COLLECTOR'S FAIR - September 17. The Parish Halls of both churches - St. George's Anglican and the United Church will be home for the day to some excellent local collections. These fine old churches will also be open, and guided tours will be given by Historical Society members. More details coming.

GOOD NEWS - Tom Webb has, in a short time, raised 3/4 of the \$4000. needed to restore the lovely piano in the Bowmanville Museum, made in 1904 by the Dominion Organ and Piano Company, Bowmanville. Congratulations, Tom.

THANK YOU FOR WRITING - The Reverend Allan Haldenby reports from Barrie that he and Grace are not twiddling their thumbs in their 'retirement'. Allan is taking a photography developing and printing course at Georgian College. This will help him reduce his expanding pile of old negatives. He is also investigating his ancestors in Dublin. Grace's book, to be published this year, chronicles the large volume of work performed by women through the years, for the Anglican Church of Canada. Allan included many items of Historical and Genealogical interest, and it was a pleasure to hear from him.

FROM AN ADDRESS GIVEN BY FRED KIMBALL GRAHAM - on the occasion of the Anniversary (163 years) of Newcastle United Church, Nov 15, 1987. Quote : "In pioneer days, planting God's word was a mighty struggle. The Bay of Quinte circuit of the Methodist Church was organized in 1788, thanks to the efforts of Paul and Barbara Heck who established a Methodist community near Bath, east of here. The Hecks had been integral to the growth of Methodism in New York, and had fled to Canada in the Revolutionary War.

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The first Methodist service in this township was held in a room outfitted by Major Samuel Street Wilmot in the tannery building on fishery Creek, one mile west of this village. That was 1823, and the service was conducted by the Rev. John Ryerson, elder brother of the renowned Egerton Ryerson. By the following year, Rev. Anson Green had been appointed to care for souls in this area; he had one assistant and a circuit of 400 miles. It was not until 1851 that a building was opened, the guest speaker being the Rev. S.S. Nelles, the Dean of Victoria University." End of quote.

Fred, the son of Lena and the late Alfred Graham, is an organist of distinction. His last post was at the Anglican Cathedral of Halifax. He is presently completing his Doctorate in Theology.

WE VISITED the Town of Markham's excellent Museum (Ph 416-294-4576 closed Mondays), there we found this quotation by Cicero. "not to know what happened before is to remain always but a child. For what is man's life if it is not linked with the life of earlier generations by the memory of the past?"

THE EDITOR IS GRATEFUL to the typists of the four Newsletters - Lorraine Lover, Lynda Willsher, Grace Rudell and Mabel Goode. We welcome ideas and / or contributions.

THANK YOU HERB TAYLOR for the excellent research you've done on your property, and Bond Head. Your home is grey with white trim, almost hidden by a high cedar hedge, and it is directly south of Mr. Reg. LeGresley's house. The results are enclosed with this Newsletter.

Editor : Pat Macdonnell
987 - 5411

EARLY PROPERTY OWNERS IN BOND HEAD

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John James Robson, and his wife Phebe, were the first people to live in the two story home on village lots 26, 27, 28 on Mill Street, that is generally referred to as "Harbour House." In census records, and local directories, John is variously called a farmer, forwarder, contractor, and gentleman. For years he owned a grain elevator on the Newcastle waterfront. He was also a ship owner, at one time president of the Newcastle Harbour Co, and in the late 19th century he served as both councillor and reeve for Newcastle. When Robson bought the "Harbour House" property he was likely buying a one story dwelling, but as his business grew, he was able to build the present, more spacious, two story house. The original one story frame building appears to have been built by Stephen H. Vaughan, but ownership of the land went back several generations beyond the Vaughan family.

Rachel Crookshank was the first owner of this property. She and her sister, Mrs Catharine McGill, were close friends of Lt Gov and Lady Simcoe, and in Novemever of 1796, Rachel Crookshank received a grant of 1400 acres in Clarke Twsp, which included all of what is now the village of Bond Head, that lies east of Mill St. Rachel Crookshank married James MacAuley, an officer of the Queen's Rangers and surgeon to Gov Simcoe, and as the "widow MacAuley," she sold her Bond Head land, consisting of Lot 27 Broken Front and and the south half of Lot 27, First Concession, to John Every, Yeoman, of Clarke twsp, on November 10th, 1817. The land then passed into the hands of Benjamin Clarke, of Coburg, and George Manners, the latter being one of the first persons listed in public records as "living in Bond Head." On January 9th, 1841, Clarke and Manners sold all but 8 acres of their Bond Head holdings to George Strange Boulton, of Cobourg. Boulton was a very influential man in the Newcastle area, a member of the Upper Canada legislature from 1831 to 1841, and he owned and sold much of the land on both sides of Mill Street, and on the north side of the street that bears his name on the Newcastle waterfront.

Stephen H. Vaughan, a carpenter of Bond Head, spends only a moment on the pages of our history, and then passes out of view. On February 26th, 1846, he completed his purchase of the two "Harbour House" village lots, 26 and 27 from George Boulton for fifty pounds, paying half of what Boulton had paid five years earlier for approximately 140 acres! In the spring of 1849, Stephen Vaughan sold the property back to Boulton, and then he disappears from our records! Daniel Massey arrived from Grafton to work with R.F. Vaughan at the laters Bond Head foundery, in 1847, and it is likely that R.F. Vaughan and Stephen Vaughan were related, but as yet, there are no records to prove this. In October 1851, John James Robson bought the "Harbour House" village lots from Boulton for 175 pounds, three times the value of 5 years earlier, so the property likely contained the "single story frame" dwelling noted in the 1861 census.

John James Robson was born in Leeds, England, the son of Robt William, and Hannah Robson, who c.1840, owned a farm of 90 acres, north of Newcastle village. John James Robson had 2 sisters, Mary, and Jane, both born at Pierce Bridge, Co Durham, England. All became neighbours in Canada, as Mary married William Edward Coldwell, and Jane married Frederick Farncomb. The Farncomb family purchased Mill Street village lots 29 & 30 from Boulton in September 1856, and lived next door to the Robsons. John James Robson lived in Harbour House until his death in 1892. His wife, Phebe Harnden died December 27th, 1907. At least 10 other families have lived in Harbour House since then, but that is another story.

Herb Taylor