



# NEWCASTLE VILLAGE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1988  
- JANUARY /FEBRUARY 1989  
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EXECUTIVE MEETING - MONDAY, JANUARY 16th, 1989 - There will be a meeting of Executive Officers, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of President, Francis Jose.

GENERAL MEETING - MONDAY, JANUARY 23rd, 1989 - Note that our next general meeting will be held, in the Council Chamber, Newcastle Village Community Hall. Mrs Dorothy Duncan, Executive Director of the Ontario Historical Society, will present a slide lecture dealing with "Ontario's Changing Food Traditions." All members are invited to attend, and to bring a jar or tin of food, to be placed in a hamper, for a "HEY! HO! -COME TO THE FAIR" draw, to take place in connection with this year's COLLECTOR'S FAIR. Please bring something out of the ordinary. No peas, or pork & beans, please!

COLLECTOR'S FAIR - SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, 1989 - Members of our Society and their friends are invited to enjoy the many private collections being exhibited at the FAIR, in the Newcastle Village Community Hall, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A few of the collectors represented will be the Rev Douglas Hall, the Rev Donald Stiles, Erla Jose, Jack & Gloria Gordon, Stan Powell and Annabelle Rickard. In addition to the private collections, memorabilia from area churches, Women's Institutes, and Historical Societies will be shown. You will be informed and entertained, you will see an artisan working with stained glass, you will be able to watch an expert bird carver at work, and there will be excellent displays of stamps, old tools, sugar shakers, old and interesting bottles, Indian artifacts, a marvelous hat collection, a fine doll collection, and much, much more!

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AGAIN, WE WOULD LIKE TO REMIND EVERYONE THAT MEMBERSHIPS FOR THE NEW SEASON WERE DUE, AS OF JANUARY 1st:

- Single - \$5.00
- Family - \$8.00

MEMBERSHIP IN THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS SUCH A GREAT BARGAIN! WHY NOT GIVE MEMBERSHIPS AS GIFTS TO FRIENDS. BRING YOUR MONEY TO OUR NEXT MEETING ON JANUARY 23rd, OR SEND YOUR CHEQUE, TO OUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:

Lynda Willsher  
Box 376  
Newcastle, LOA 1H0  
987-4845

MAKE OUT A GIFT LIST AND GET IN TOUCH WITH LINDA TODAY!

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# New Owners for Newcastle Grocery Store

This headline appeared in the Newcastle Independent, in October, telling us about a new store owner at the south west corner of Mill and King Streets! Currently known as Toms IGA, this building housed the Windsor Hotel, owned by Frank Bennet, when it was struck by fire, 93 years ago. At that time, Mr Bennet's neighbours were Richard Barfett who ran two shops, one a drygoods, the other a grocery store, and McClung & Bell's general store, which also contained the post office.

The Barfett Bros Hardware Store changed hands in April of 1907, and the new owner was Mr Joe Coulson, the father of Helen Lovekin Symons, who now lives with her son Richard Lovekin, at Kilcolman. It was understood at the time that the Barfett's were also selling their store at Colborne, and were to move to Cobourg.

An ad appeared in the Orono news at the time announcing that "Commencing April 1st, the Coulson Block, Newcastle, will close at 6 p.m. sharp, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, each week." Joe Coulson advised his customers to "Kindly do your shopping early." Staking a claim as "The Busy Corner," the Coulson ad appeared at the top left corner, on the front page of the Orono News, week after week. Shown here is the ad for Thursday, December 26th, 1907.

In 1945, Howard Toms bought the Coulson Block from Mrs Cowie, and the general store from Horace Ward. In 1951, Howard became a charter member of the Independent Grocer's Alliance.

The following year Murray Paterson started work in the store, and in September of 1952 Murray married Howard's daughter Marjorie. That same year, the grocery store was expanded, by moving the dry goods into what had been Keith Aiken's appliance shop. In 1955 Bud Wagar married Jean Toms, Marjorie's sister, and also joined the store's staff.

A couple of years later, Toms' Ladies' Wear appeared, and in 1961 the store was enlarged into a house at the back, making more room for the IGA meat counter. Four years later the ladies wear store moved further west into what had been the Baskerville Store.

This past October the Wagers and Patersons sold to Mr & Mrs N. Gyalstan and their sons Tenzin and Jigme. Mr Norman Gyalstan who was born in Tibet, ushers in a new era at our local IGA.

**THE BUSY CORNER      THE BARGAIN CORNER**

## Coulson Block,

NEWCASTLE.

### All Ready

We have a full stock of Xmas goods all ready at lowest possible prices, all absolutely fresh and All quality

**We Have** Raisins, Currants, Dates, Figs, Nuts, Spices, Essences, Peel, everything to do your Xmas cooking and have it out of your way in time to get out and see our Xmas display of presents.

**For the Men.**

Handkerchiefs, Gloves, Ties, Pipes.

**For the Ladies.**

Furs, Hdks, Ribbons, and China.

To appreciate our beautiful stock of china you must see it. We have it in the following grades: Royal Vienna, and Haviland Limoges, Aynaley, Chinese and Japanese.

There are Fern Pots, Cups and Saucers, Plates, Dod-Bon dishes, Grumb Trays, Shakers, and numerous other articles.

— We have also a good assortment of

**SILVERWARE** all to be sold at lower prices than ever heard of before.

*Be sure and See Our Window Display.*

**CANDY** A LARGE and choice selection to open this week.

Give us an Xmas call even if not out buying. We are pleased to have your opinion on our display. It's open every night during the holiday.

## J. Coulson.

COMPUTERS MAKE HISTORY! - If they don't make it, they at least do a fine job of recording it! A booklet on display at the Provincial Archives, in Toronto, dealing with a computer program called "ROOTS III," suggests about 60% of the 600 members of the OGS (Ontario Genealogical Society) are making use of computers as they search for family history information. The ROOTS III program, is capable of handling 65,000 individual names, along with all the facts and figures dealing with place of birth, marriages, offspring, etc.

A report in the Toronto Star last July tells us that Ken Gowie, a member of the OGS, has developed his own programs for recording family history, and that he will give these programs away to anyone interested. Mention is also made of an eight week night course, given by the Etobicoke Board of Education, in "Computerized Genealogy."

COMPUTERS MAKE HISTORY IN NEWCASTLE! - Not to fall behind the times, our Society is exploring the use of a computer in recording Newcastle History. Several months ago, Helen Lovekin Symons copied by hand, all the names listed in an 1873-78 Lovekin Business Ledger. The list of 477 local families, was transferred to computer by Herb Taylor, and used as the basis for a "Newcastle Master List" of families, now running to 781 names. This "index" is still in the experimental stage. Plans are underway for a fall meeting, demonstrating uses of the computer, and showing what has been done to date in storing Newcastle historical data.

There are a number of useful projects that might be considered by our Society. For example, putting the local census records into a computer file. Here is what data from the 1891 census would look like; column headings are Sex, Age, Married or Widowed, Relation to head of family, Place of birth, Church attended:

1891 CENSUS *** VILLAGE of NEWCASTLE															
REC#	house	family	name	M/F	Age	M/W	self	thr	thr	chr	chr	occupn	empl	empl	code
1	A78	Barfett,	Robt	M	30	W		Ont	Eng	Eng	Meth	RetDealer/Dry G	12		11
2	A78	Barfett,	Clmton	M	16		Is	Ont	Ont	Ont	Meth				12
3	A78	Barfett,	Sidney	M	13		Is	Ont	Ont	Ont	Meth				13
4	A78	Barfett,	Ida May	F	11		Id	Ont	Ont	Ont	Meth				14
5	A79	Taablyn,	Thos	M	177										11
6	A79	Taablyn,	Sarah	F	172		w								12
7	A79	Taablyn,	Laura	F	115		Id								13

FIRE!! FIRE!! FIRE!! FIRE!! FIRE!! FIRE!! FIRE!! FIRE!! FIRE!!

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 Most important for keeping warm on a cold January day, but always a threat, a great destroyer of life and property. We read in the Orono News of Nov 23, 1899, that "Tom Radcliffe, who resides in the old hotel block, came nearly having a blaze only the other morning, caused by a defective chimney. The prompt action of some passersby saved the fire brigade's job." That was a fire that didn't happen, but as most of us know, there have been a few very destructive fires in the village, and two of the worst were in the winter of 1896. The first destroyed the Windsor Hotel, now the IGA Store, and the Royal Park Hotel, now Buster's, and all the buildings in between!

# Fire in Newcastle.

## PRINCIPLE BUSINESS SHOPS DESTROYED

A fire started it is reported in the Royal Hotel stables Monday about midnight which demolished the whole block of business houses between the Royal and Windsor hotels, including those two buildings. It is reported that two dissolute women from this town were in the stables with men and are in some way accountable for the conflagration that has proved so disastrous. So far as we can learn the business places burned are:

Royal Hotel, stables and sheds, Mr Frank J. Bennett, proprietor; Mrs C. Clendenning, store and dwelling; Miss Wilson, millinery; Mr James Parker, boots and shoes; Mr Daniel Allin, two stores, stationary, undertaking, furniture, and Masonic lodge room on second flat; Messrs. Mclung & Bell, postoffice and general store; Mr R. Barfett's two stores, dry goods and groceries; Mr Frank Bennett's Windsor hotel, stables, sheds, etc; Mrs Gomme's residence. The buildings were all of brick and composed the chief business houses in the village. We go to press too early to get particulars of insurance, but it is feared the risks were very light. The furniture in the Royal was insured for \$1000. The fire appliances in the village are very insignificant and when the flames began to spread to the eastward, the Bowmanville fire brigades were sent for. Capt. Hoar had the bell rung and No.1 Fire Co. went down about 3 a.m. but could do little owing to want of water. The boys say whiskey was very plentiful and of the usual strength, however. We shall give further particulars next week.

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Just eight weeks later, in March, at three o'clock on a Saturday morning, a fire was discovered on the opposite side of King Street. It did almost as much damage as the January fire! An excellent photograph of the wreckage can be found on page 196, in "Out Of The Mists."

On the days following the fires, many people from the district visited the village to look at the ruins. It is reported that on the Sunday following the January fire, Newcastle was filled with people from Bowmanville.

For many weeks, the Canadian Statesman published information, made comments, and offered advice, in its Newcastle column:...."Mr Frank Bennett of the Windsor will resume hotel keeping in Barfett's block.. . . . . Many hope that not more than one hotel will ever be carried on here after this, as whiskey is responsible for the death blow from the recent fire. .... It was in 1877 that Newcastle was visited by fire that burned out the same block. .... Mr Thomas McClung has opened the post office in Farncomb's block. All mail matter was saved. .... A \$5000 insurance policy expired on the Windsor block a short time before the fire."

In its January 29th issue, the Canadian Statesman listed losses from the first fire:

- Daniel Allin, stationer and undertaker, building \$5,000; stock \$4,500; insurance \$4200.
  - Richard Barfett, two stores, dry goods and groceries, stock \$9500; insurance \$4000.
  - The Windsor Block, owned by the Jacobs' estate, was valued at \$800, upon which there was an insurance of \$6000.
  - F. Bennett of the Windsor Hotel lost \$2000; insurance \$1000.
  - Royal Hotel building \$5000; furniture and stock \$2000, insurance \$1000.
  - Jas Parker, boots and shoes, building \$2000; stock \$2000; insurance \$1700.
  - Mrs C. Clendenning, confectionery, stock \$500; no insurance.
  - Miss Wilson, millinery stock, \$500; no insurance.
  - Gomme, residence, contents, \$300; no insurance.
  - Methodist church sheds, \$150; insured.
  - Durham Lodge A.F. & A.M. over Allin's store, loss \$600(?); insurance \$800.
  - Thomas McClung, general store and post office, building \$2000.
  - Stores on north side of street suffered smaller losses.
- Canadian Statesman, Jan 29, 1896.

The story of the first fire continued:..."Mr R. Warren has been engaged by the Insurance Companies to repaint the shop fronts on the north side of King St., damaged by the fire....The number of thieves that stole property while the fire raged Tuesday morning was beyond conception in a moral community like this. Several of them are known and are being watched. Much sympathy is felt for citizens who lost property and had no insurance. Most of them could ill bear the loss....Two hotels are to be re-built here. Citizens should protest....The Standard Bank is being closed in Newcastle - another result of the fire....Mr Frank J. Bennett was in town Thursday, "contemplating the scene"....Mr C. Glendenning has moved into the store lately occupied by J.W. Tuff....No empty dwellings or stores in town now. Rents are advancing....The Masons are prospecting for a lodge room. Where is the goat stabled now, or was he cremated? No one saw him brought out....Mr Lewis Bennett, Port Hope, bought the Windsor property and will rebuild immediately.... This village needs one good hotel to afford accommodation to the travelling public. More than one would be superfluous....The council will defer purchasing a fire engine until the return of Reeve Rickard from Los Angles, California....After the horse is stolen, lock the stable door, after the village is cremated provide fire protection. Wisdom comes late to some....Rev G.H. Copeland preached a sermon Sunday evening on the late fire that should not soon be forgotten."

Daniel Allin was very much a victim of both fires. Soon after the January fire it was reported that Mr Levi Morris, Undertaker, Bowmanville, had been attending to Mr Allin's funerals. Later reports stated that "Daniel Allin has opened business in the house lately occupied by Mr Bell," and it was thought likely that "Messrs James Parker and D. Allin will re-build their blocks." However, readers of the Canadian Statesman of February 12th, 1897, were told that "Mr Daniel Allin, undertaker and newsdealer, died Monday from an attack of pneumonia contracted during the late fire. He will be buried Thursday with Masonic honors. He was one of our most worthy citizens. He was a native of Sutcome, Devonshire, England, coming to

Canada about 50 years ago. He was member of the Methodist church, a Reformer in politics, a P.M. of Durham Lodge No 66, A.F. and A.M., and a charter member of Home Circle. His wife, two sons and a daughter survive him. Miss Maud Allin is at Denver, Col. The sons are Mr.T.D.Allin, National Bank, Chicago, Ill., and Mr A.E.Allin, manager Western Bank, New Hamburg, Ont. Funeral services begins in Methodist church at 2 p.m. cortege to leave at 2:30 for Bowmanville cemetery. He was in his 63rd year."

ICE /// ICE \\ ICE /// ICE \\ ICE /// ICE \\ ICE  
For many of us, the only ice we are interested in, is the ice we find in our lemonade! However, many citizens can remember when ice was harvested at the waterfront, and packed in sawdust, for use in the summer months. Reg LeGresley knows about ice in the lake at Bond Head. One year, Reg helped cut ice between the piers at the harbour that was already two feet thick, between Christmas and New Years!

That was the same year, Reg says, when he had so much trouble getting his 1923 Buick to start! "It had an engine as big as your dining room table," says Reg, "and it would pass anything on the road except a gas station!" With very cold weather, he had to drain the oil out of the car and take it in the house to keep it warm. To get the Buick running, Reg would hitch up his team, tow the car down Mill Street, and around the block, to loosen the engine so it would start!

Thomas Conant! We had his name spelt wrong in our last issue, but thanks to Horace Walton Ball, we now have the correct spelling. And quoting from Thomas Conant's book again, "Life In Canada," we have a fine view of old fashioned Canadian winter ice, along the Lake Ontario shoreline: "Immense ice hummocks form upon the banks of our large lakes. Daily, as the cold strengthens, and the winds dash the billows upon the ice-banks as if they would destroy them, they gather from each wave, a little more frozen from it, and so work out from the shore, solid and immovable, as if to entirely close over our inland sea's surface."

Before the ice starts its march up Mill Street, some of us will fly off to warmer zones. Not a bad idea! Very best wishes to all for the coming New Year. See you when the ice melts!

HERB TAYLOR, JANUARY 1989.

NEWCASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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