



South Haven Nursing Home

By Marilyn Kent

As we walked to Newcastle Public School in the early 50s, we would pass a large empty house at 386 Mill St. S. and I often wondered what would happen to such a big, beautiful house.

The big brick house had been built in 1905 by Thomas Montague, who oversaw the construction of the Newcastle Community Hall. Reverend Scott Howard from St. George's Anglican Church, his wife Clara and their two children lived in the house with Montague for several year, and when Montague died in 1928, he left the house to the Howards. Reverend Howard died in 1939 and Mrs. Howard remained in the house until she died in 1952. It then sat empty for a number of years.

In 1955, Frank and Emily (Kent) Mace moved from Peterborough and purchased the house. It was their intention to create a nursing home, as there was a real need for one in the area. It was a huge job to renovate the house and create rooms for patients. They opened in 1956 as South Haven Rest Home, with 6 paying patients.

While they were renovating the house, Frank and Emily lived in the basement, a very unsavoury place. The Maces hired many local contractors to help with the renovation. Emily's son Vern had just been discharged from the Reserves in Kingston, Ontario, and came home to help. Little did I know that my future husband would have a part in this building. We met in 1957, and married in 1961.

Frank Mace found out that Whitby Mental Hospital needed to release patients to a safe place, so in time he took many new patients, as there was no limit on the number of patients one house could accommodate – that came later.

As Whitby kept wanting Frank to take more patients, they decided to add a new wing, in 1969/1970 increasing the capacity to 60 patients. Unfortunately, around this time, the government rules changed; they now had too many patients and were forced to upgrade



386 Mill St. circa 1930, when it was still a private residence.

beds and rooms, install a stainless-steel kitchen, and have full-time nurses.

South Haven under the Maces had been a great source of employment for many local people and it had many faithful workers, including some who had worked there as long as 14 years.

By 1972, as expenses continued to mount, the Maces found themselves financially unable to continue, and sold South Haven to Larry Wiseman and his wife.

In 1987 the by-then former operators of South Haven - the Wisemans and their son Stanley, were arrested for fraud. Stanley was convicted in 1988 for receiving phoney payroll cheques made out to fictitious names - some of them received while he was already serving time in Millhaven Penitentiary for other unrelated fraud. His father Larry was convicted in 1990 for fraud and breach of trust for skimming off about \$200,000 from the nursing home, the CIBC and the Ministry of Health, receiving 2 years probation.

Also in 1987, a foundation was created to run the home as part of a multi-care complex in association with Memorial Hospital in Bowmanville. Apparently that proposal didn't come to fruition, and in early 1990, South Haven closed its doors and ceased to exist as a nursing home.

In 1991, Kinrow Investments proposed that the home become the Newcastle Family Resource Centre, housing a daycare, dentist and doctors offices, and community oriented administration offices. Residents initially



Newcastle Funeral Home at 386 Mill St. S. today

objected, citing the potential noise and traffic the usage would generate, but in meetings between the staff of the (then) Town of Newcastle and the residents, they resolved their differences and it appeared the project would proceed. However, this project also failed to move forward and by September 1992, the property was listed for sale.

Once again the property became empty for several years, until 1995 when Carl and Joyce Good bought it and restored it to its former beauty and opened Newcastle Funeral Home in 1996. In 2012, Carl and Joyce retired, selling the business to Trevor Charbonneau.

In November 2023, my husband Vern Kent's funeral was held at Newcastle Funeral Home - the building that had brought him to Newcastle, allowing us to meet.



Daphne and Rudy on their wedding day in 1945.

A war bride comes to Newcastle

By Myno Van Dyke

Daphne Clapp was born in 1927 in the tiny hamlet of Grove Heath, near Ripley in Surrey, about thirty miles south of London, England. At the start of WW2, Daphne, her parents, sister and brother moved to Ripley. There was considerable bombing taking place in their area and Daphne ended up being billeted for a while.

Near the end of the war, Daphne was working at the International Store in Ripley. While working there, a number of Canadian soldiers would come into the shop and one of them, named Rudy, started coming in every day. He often showed up driving a Jeep which apparently was not allowed, and he sometimes arrived on a bicycle that was made from various bits and pieces.

Soon, a romance blossomed but Rudy was sent off to Europe and Germany in 1945, near the end of the war. Finishing his tour of duty and on his way back to Canada, he took 10 days leave and went back to England to see Daphne. They decided to get married before he returned

to Canada. Daphne said her parents really liked him which was important to her since she was the only child left at home by then. Soon, the process started for her to get her paperwork ready to come to Canada.

In 1946, the year Daphne immigrated to Canada, there were 31,000 women and children designated as "war brides" that made the trip. They represented 71% of the total immigration to Canada for that year. War brides were given travel priority according to the status of their husbands. There were more than 60 ships assigned to bring the war brides to Canada. One of them was the SS Aquitania. Originally it was a troop carrier with a capacity of 4500 soldiers, transporting troops from the United Kingdom to the Indian Ocean area. The ship was in service from 1914 to 1950.

In 1946, Daphne was issued a travel certificate issued at the High Commission's office in London and provided with a ticket to travel from Southampton, England to Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The whole process took Daphne 9 months. Finally, in May, 1946 she boarded the SS Aquitania.

When they arrived, the Canadian Red Cross provided workers to assist the brides in reaching their eventual destinations. Daphne said when she stepped off the ship she saw several hand printed signs with women's names on them. Not to welcome them, but to tell them to turn around and go back to England. Apparently, some of the soldiers were already married. Daphne breathed a sigh of relief when she spotted Rudy St. Amand in the waiting room.



Rudy and Daphne St. Amand, 1990.

They went to Grand Falls, New Brunswick where Rudy was living with his family. Rudy was one of 13 children. They first moved into the large family home and had a bedroom there. The St. Amands had an extra building lot next door where Rudy built a small home for them. Rudy had started a small freight and express business moving items for the Canadian Pacific Railway around Grand Falls, New Brunswick.

After living there for about 4 years, Daphne was getting somewhat lonely and homesick. She had an aunt, Annie Clapp who lived in Bowmanville, Ontario. Her aunt asked her to come to Bowmanville for a bit of a holiday, so Daphne got on the westbound train with her two sons, John and David. She said the entire trip took about 24 hours with a long stop in Montreal.

After she was in Bowmanville for a few weeks, Daphne contacted Rudy and said she would like to move there. She said Rudy wasn't too happy about it, but he did sell his trucking business and soon joined Daphne and the boys in Bowmanville.

They first lived with her aunt on Liberty Street across from the Bowmanville Hospital. Rudy immediately got a job at Fiberglass Limited in Oshawa. This later became Duplate. In 1952, they purchased a building lot at the south end of Church Street for \$250 from Lionel Rogerson. They gradually started building their house starting with the foundation and then living in one room and adding on over the years. Daphne worked evenings in the kitchen and serving food at the old Queens Hotel in Newcastle as well as looking after the family at home.

Daphne has some interesting family connections. Her father's family came from Devonshire and his grandmother's name was Drake. There is apparently a direct connection to Sir Francis Drake who was the

English explorer best known as the first to navigate the world in one expedition between 1577 and 1580.

The other interesting connection is to the famous musician and songwriter, Eric Clapton. Clapton was born in Ripley, England in 1945. His mother was 16-year-old Patricia Clapton, and his father was a Canadian soldier, Edward Fryer (who was apparently already married).

Fryer went back to Canada after the war and Eric was raised by Patricia's mother Rose and her second husband Jack Clapp (Daphne's brother). In 1976, the St. Amands went to England and while there Eric Clapton visited with them.

Rudy St. Amand retired from Duplate and passed away in 1993. Daphne was always active in Newcastle and was involved in knitting and was a regular visitor and helper at the Newcastle Village & District Historical Society. Daphne passed away in 2018. Their youngest son Greg, now owns and lives in the same house they built on Church Street.



Daphne with Eric Clapton, in Ripley, UK, 1976.

Mark your calendars

Orono Fair

September 6 - 8, 2024

Join us at the the 170th Fair!

President's Potluck

Sunday, September 15, 2024, 12:30 p.m.

The society potluck returns after a four-year absence! We hope you'll all join us for a fun afternoon of good food and good friends. Watch your email for details.

General Meeting with speakers

Wednesday, October 16, 2024, 7 p.m.

Featuring speakers Judith Clapperton and James Breech on the life of Olive Wilmot

History repeats itself

By Don Brown

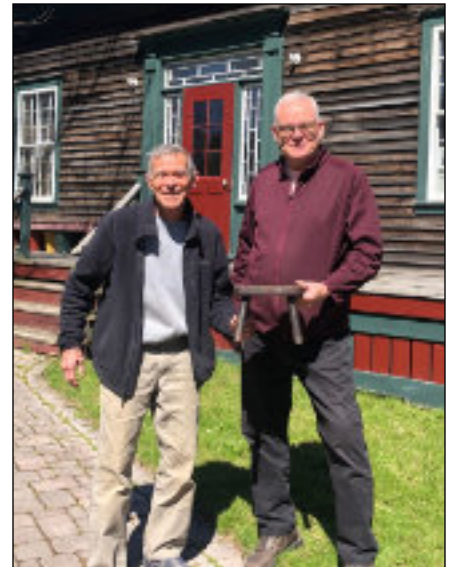


Constable John Garrod

During a chat on Skype in August 2023 with my cousin David Garrod, he shared a story with me about a small seat or stool he has that at one time belonged to my great grandfather John William Garrod (1883-1942). John Garrod was the caretaker of the Newcastle Community Hall and town police constable from about 1923 until his premature death in 1942. David is John Garrod's nephew - his dad William Garrod was the younger brother of constable John Garrod.

David explained that growing up in Suffolk he often spent time at his grandfather Arthur Garrod's farm in Nedging and as a child he sat on this stool by the fire, listening to the radio with his grandparents. David explained that each of Arthur Garrod's children had a similar stool with their name on it and that the stools were made by David's grandfather, Arthur Garrod. Sadly, David lamented that this is the only stool that survives. David, now well into his 90's wants the stool to remain in England, but he encouraged me to work with his son Ian Garrod to try and replicate the stool.

David's son Ian took precise measurements and emailed them along with high resolution pictures. My intent was to try and build the stool, but it seemed out of reach for my woodworking skills. Susan suggested contacting Dan Sturrock in town and asking if Dan would consider recreating the stool. I am very happy to say that Dan enthusiastically agreed to remake the stool, Dan would attempt to replicate a stool originally handmade in Suffolk England about 1885, by Arthur Garrod for his son John.



Dan Sturrock and Don Brown (holding replica stool).

We could not be happier with the stool and the way it turned out, Dan's attention to detail and his ability to recreate wear marks is remarkable, no doubt from knowledge and skills gained from decades working with period furniture.

The stool proudly sits in our living room, near our fireplace and is a great conversation piece. In a subsequent call to David and Ian with follow up pictures emailed to them, they were both very impressed with the remarkable likeness of the replica and the job Dan had done. Dan can be found on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/sturrockperiodfurniture/>



Original stool belonging to John Garrod as a boy on left, with replica made for his great-grandson, Don Brown, on right.

Meet our summer students

Abbey Hanks

This is my second summer here at the Historical Society and it has been an amazing opportunity to be able to work with all of these incredible people and learn more about our town's history through my work.

I am currently a History and Classics double major at the University of Guelph and am hoping to continue my education towards a Ph.D. in the future. This job is giving me valuable work experience in the field that will hopefully aid me in future careers.

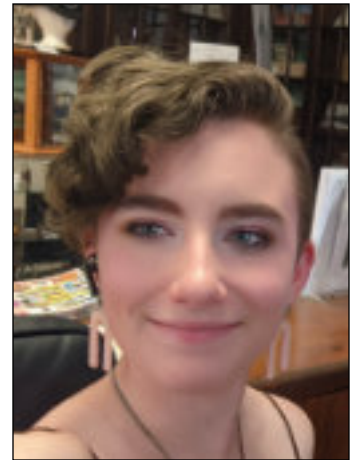
What I love most about working at NVDHS is all the people that I get to meet and talk to about the history of the town and all of the fun stories that I get to hear. I would say that the most interesting thing that I've learned on the job is all about the community hall from



our 100th Anniversary last year. When I'm not studying or working at NVDHS, I am an executive for a STEM International Competition team called iGEM where I code a website for my team or I am reading or writing poetry.

Abby (Gale) Timms

I'm Abby but prefer to go by Gale. I have just graduated from Clarke High School and will be attending Algonquin College in September. My program is applied museum studies so having a job with the historical society is excellent preparation for what a future career could look like.



I love history and make it a point every time I travel to visit new museums and historical sites. One day I hope to work in restoration of fine art in the National Art Gallery of Canada located in Ottawa. While I'm not working I enjoy spending my time at the library reading books of all sorts and sharing new facts with my family and friends whether they want them or not.

Remembering Leslie Wilson

October 23, 1948 – April 29, 2024

Leslie Wilson, was, as my mother would have said, "a character." She had an extraordinary, encyclopedic knowledge of Newcastle and its physical history, its families and its significant and not so significant events. She loved figuring things out – genealogy puzzles of all sorts fascinated her. Her many research contributions to the NVDHS over the last quarter century will be her enduring legacy, continuing to inform and educate future generations.

Leslie was generous, direct, down to earth, funny – with an often-biting wit, and she didn't suffer fools gladly. She was also fiercely independent, and her avoidance of bureaucracy was sometimes to her own detriment. She was, as she always said, "a Stephenson – stubborn as a mule."

In addition to her various historical pursuits, Leslie was an avid and knowledgeable gardener, growing much of her own produce for many years. When she and Brian moved into town in 2021 following a devastating house fire at her family home on the 4th Concession, she turned the small strip of barren ground at the back of the parking lot behind their apartment into a thriving garden, which Brian continues to tend and add to. She adored cooking and baking, and in her last few months, made a particular effort to stock the freezer with as many dinners as she could for Brian, anticipating a time when she would no longer be able to spend hours in the kitchen.



Leslie & Brian Wilson on their 20th wedding anniversary.
Photo: Robert Monaghan

Facing her cancer diagnosis with a characteristic stoicism, Leslie rarely complained or felt sorry for herself. As she quipped, “what’s the point of that?” When the prognosis turned grim, her only wish was to see her beloved spring flowers, which she managed – just, though by then it was through pictures Brian took of their garden and brought to her in hospital, along with some bouquets, which she enjoyed immensely.

Leslie’s impact on the NVDHS and those of us who were lucky enough to have known her is indelible. She will be greatly missed.

Paddy Duncan

I first met Leslie a year or so after I joined NVDHS in 1999. She and Brian were still living in Toronto, and she came to one of our evening speaker events and talked about the oldest families that settled here. I was impressed with her knowledge, but it was readily apparent that she was a much better “researcher” than a speaker. When she and Brian moved in with her father, Ken Stephenson, at the farm on the 4th Concession, we began to see a lot more of her. Eventually, she was a regular attendee at the Historical Room and certainly filled in the big shoes left after Ken passed away.

I have always fancied myself as a writer, so about 30 years ago I started writing various articles and stories. I learned early on that it is better to write what you know. Consequently, for the first few years, I concentrated on antique vehicles and policing type articles. I then started writing local historical stories for the NVDHS Newsletter, Clarington This Week, Clarington Promotor and The Orono Times.

Once I started writing stories about local people, buildings and events, I suddenly received several comments, essentially, “you are wrong.” Leslie, bless her heart, never did that. She would simply show me (in excruciating detail) what was not correct. Never did she say, “you are wrong,” just, “here is what I think happened.” Soon, she became my main resource and often I would show her the stories before I published them. She had an amazing brain, being able to recall from memory exact dates, names, maiden names, addresses and so on.

Leslie served a term as President of our Society as well as representing us on the Clarington Heritage Committee. This wasn’t really a good fit for her as she was much happier behind the scenes doing the important work of researching and helping people with their genealogical and building research. She sat on our curator committee for many years but didn’t want to be an official member. She could evaluate items and identify everything including art and pottery. She always



Leslie (left) at the Room in June 2022, with Paddy Duncan and Eria Jose.

did this in a calm and respectful way. And certainly, all of us learned to value and respect her opinion as it was always accurate.

I know that she was overwhelmed by the way the community (especially the NVDHS family) responded to the terrible fire at their home and later her serious health issues. Leslie continued her work right to the end. She never expected financial rewards, only the satisfaction of knowing that she did her best to find out as much as possible about the history of our wonderful community. This was her passion. There will never be another like her. God bless you, Leslie.

Myno Van Dyke

Leslie had encyclopaedic knowledge of the history of Newcastle, Clarke Township and beyond which conveyed not only her remarkable grasp of detail, but also her skill at historical interpretation and analysis. Her view of history was clear, but never clinical, and her great passion for the personal stories which are the mosaic of our local history brought it to life as she recounted vignettes from past eras.

Brian Jose

In July 2023, I reconnected with Leslie, on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Newcastle Community Hall. We were in the same grade at the old School Section (SS) #9, a one-room school between the 3rd and 4th Concessions - also known as “Lockhart’s.” In 1959, our family moved to Lindsay, and we lost touch.

Sixty years later, we were sharing memories of school, classmates, Home and School Association trips, picnics in Orono Park, square dancing on Fridays, hot soup in our mugs in winter, and the long walk to school.

In February of this year, Leslie requested a country drive and a 1950's picnic in the car. I made egg sandwiches and wrapped them in wax paper. Leslie found cookies - Fig Newton, ginger cookies and Whippets, a chocolate and marshmallow delight. Leslie knew the dates and owners of most of the houses, inns, schools and churches on our drive along the Lakeshore Road. Eventually, we reached our destination, which was a side road at Starkville.

As we savoured our childhood lunch, in the cozy car, a hawk flew by, and we glimpsed the sun shimmering on Lake Ontario. A memorable day, indeed. Although, our visits were brief, I know we both were enriched by each other's company.

Elizabeth Glenney

Leslie was a walking encyclopedia, known for her extensive knowledge and attention to detail. She could effortlessly provide accurate information on the history of Newcastle and its surrounding areas whenever asked and had an exceptional memory for family stories.

Leslie generously shared her time and was an invaluable member of the Newcastle Village & District Historical Society, giving people a sense of place and connection to the past through educating and promoting history awareness. She was truly one of a kind.

Crystal Yaki

One of the things I remember about Leslie was her ability to recall almost anything that pertained to the history of Newcastle and surrounding area. She seemed to know who was related to whom, their approximate age and date of death, where they lived and where they came from, including occupation, and number of children. Leslie will always be remembered for her kind and unwavering love of local history. We will miss you, Leslie.

Greg Forget

Unlike many of you, I've known Leslie Wilson for only 20 years or so. We had very little in common - I was a town girl, and she was a country girl. She had a higher education, and I went only through Grade 11. But we always found something to talk about. Mostly, we talked about the past (what else do members of an historical society talk about?) and compared our school days, our recipes, our travels, our hobbies...and all the while appreciating what the other had to say.

Leslie had a big heart and was always doing something nice for me and I tried to do something nice for her too, especially in her last months of life. It was in these last few

months that we grew closest and became good friends.

Leslie was not a person to give a belly laugh when she heard something funny, but every now and then I'd say something that made that little smile into a "real" laugh - she had a wicked sense of humour, that lady! I miss her.

Sher Leetooze

At 10:15 a.m. April 29, 2024, at Bowmanville Memorial Hospital, Leslie Wilson, (nee Stephenson), with her usual quiet dignity, passed away with her husband and love of her life by her side.

Leslie was born and raised on Clarke Concession Road 4, Orono, where she and Brian returned in the early 2000s after living in Mississauga and Toronto for many years. They moved into Newcastle for the last several years, after a devastating fire destroyed their beloved farm and left them with nothing but the clothes on their backs. They started over and made a lovely home for themselves with help from many friends in the community.

At the tender age of 7, Leslie could be found either riding her horse "Misty" or ambling around the countryside searching out local cemeteries. She experimented with cutting away the wood on one side of a pencil, so she could "rub" the exposed lead over the time worn names to make them more readable. She had a keen fascination with connecting these names on the tombstones to create a family tree. One day Leslie found a thigh bone, likely unearthed by a gopher digging. She made a private ceremony and re buried the bone in the cemetery.

Leslie is responsible for accurately transcribing, documenting, and eventually cataloging all the tombstones in the old cemeteries in Clarke Township. This has made it possible to identify and connect families and genealogical histories and is critical as these headstones are no longer readable. She published *Settlers of Durham County 1793 - 1813* in 2003 based on this research.

In 1966, Leslie attended Fulmer School of Equitation in England (also attended by Princess Anne). There, she excelled in her riding skills and developed a deep knowledge and gentle manner with her equine friends.

Leslie and Brian met at the Great Pine Ridge Festival Youth Theatre in 1968, where Brian was Technical Director, and Leslie was acting in the one of the productions. Brian was very interested in getting to know Leslie better; he described being "completely knocked out" by his feelings. However, given that Leslie was a student working under his direction, Brian, ever the gentleman, gave no indication of those feelings.



Leslie (standing, in maid's uniform, third from left in second row) as part of the cast of the Admirable Crichton in 1968. Brian is second from left in back row.

Leslie's mother hosted a Christmas party for Leslie and her friends from the previous year's Festival at her home. To Leslie's delight, and certainly Brian's dream come true, two of the invited guests also invited Brian to join them in attending the party. From that moment, Leslie and Brian were inseparable. Before long, Brian approached Leslie's father to ask for his blessing to propose, and Leslie's father was delighted to grant it.

Leslie and Brian were married in a small ceremony on June 20, 1969. In 1970, as Leslie was training a difficult horse, she suffered a catastrophic accident when "Miss Guinness" reared and rolled on Leslie during a training session. A very long and painful recovery followed, the result being that Leslie was no longer able to ride, losing both her passion and her career.

In 1974, Leslie gave birth to a precious daughter, Martha, and their family was complete.

In 2011, Port Hope commemorated its 210-year anniversary with a celebration reenacting the landing of the "original settlers" depicted by prominent local townsfolk, who were to ceremoniously arrive by ship in the harbour. The true original settlers were actually the Indigenous peoples who first lived, and currently live on the traditional territory of the Mississauga Nations, and the fur traders who traded with them, most notably Wilhelmus Peake. As Leslie was on the Planning Committee, she had invited descendants of the original settlers to attend the functions. As one story goes, there were a number of Indigenous peoples in full dress present at the celebration. As the ship was landing and the "original settlers" were preparing to depart the ship, they were met and welcomed by the descendants of the actual original settlers.

One official who was attending was Phyllis White, a

senior member of The Ontario Genealogical Society, and of The Toronto Historical Society. Phyllis met Brian and asked if he was related to Leslie Wilson. When Brian informed Phyllis that Leslie was indeed his wife, and would so much like to meet her, Phyllis became very animated and stated that she had recently become aware of Leslie's work and was very impressed and was looking forward to meeting her. Brian was delighted to share with Leslie how much Phyllis wanted to meet her! They met and Leslie said, "I have always been interested in your work! Your work is magnificent!" Needless to say, they became lifelong friends.

Brian was with Leslie to the end. When he arrived at the hospital on the last morning he whispered, "Thanks for waiting for me". Leslie was aware that Brian was with her. A nurse came into the room and Brian moved to the end of the bed to allow care to be provided for Leslie. He gave Leslie's toe a little squeeze, and her toe twitched in response, a touching gesture they shared for so many years together.

I lived down the road for 34 years, and only came to know Leslie and Brian after the fire. Leslie was a caring, thoughtful and dear friend, and I will miss her.

Vicki Breech

On behalf of Leslie and himself, Brian would like to express their gratitude for the characteristic generosity and compassion of the members of this society and the people of Newcastle during the past year of Leslie's illness.

Newcastle Village and District Historical Society

The Newcastle Village and District Historical Society was formed by a group of citizens in 1981 to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the former Village of Newcastle and its immediate environs. Today, we have an extensive collection of artifacts, documents and photographs and offer help with research into the history of the area, including its businesses and families.

We are located in the former public library in the Newcastle Community Hall. We have permanent and special displays in the historical room and are open to the public twice a week. We are a registered charity, supported by our members, local sponsors and donors, with some additional assistance from the Town of Clarington and the Government of Canada (Canada Summer Jobs). We welcome all new members and donors!

20 King Avenue, Unit 3, Newcastle, Ontario, L1B 1H7
Open: Tuesdays & Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to noon
Website: newcastlehistorical.ca
Email: info@newcastlehistorical.ca

Individual, family and corporate memberships are available for \$15-30/year. Memberships may be purchased or renewed on our website, in person or by mail.