



THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ADOLPHUSTOWN-FREDERICKSBURGH HERITAGE SOCIETY

Issue Number 13

October 2015

Unraveling our History

Sometimes creating a comprehensive picture of the past is a gradual process of building on "the known". In capturing the recent past, or building an understanding of events further back in time, it is

often a case of an initial account triggering an additional memory or path of critical analysis. An occasional column in *The Neighbourhood Messenger* is **And Furthermore...**, where contributors provide additional details or related information in response to a previously published article. This issue of the newsletter will be dedicated almost exclusively to building on knowledge shared in recent issues of *The Neighbourhood Messenger*.

Our Society

Members of the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society are your neighbours, your friends, your family. We are new to the area or have lived here all our lives. Some of us are descendants of the Loyalists who settled the shores of the Bay of Quinte. We all share a desire to deepen our knowledge of the history of our local community and to share our passion with others.

Our Executive

President:	Angela Cronk
Vice President:	John Gordon
Secretary:	Kathy Staples
Treasurer:	Stan MacMillan
Webmaster:	Susan Wright
Sales Director:	Peter Cameron
Communications Director:	Jane Lovell

Our Meetings

The Society meets every fourth Wednesday in the month at the South Fredericksburgh Community Centre at 6.30 p.m. All welcome!!

Our Website

<http://www.sfredheritage.on.ca/>

Contact Us

If you have questions or suggestions regarding any aspect of the Society, including *The Neighbourhood Messenger*, please contact one of the following-

- Angela Cronk, President (373-8888) angelacronk@gmail.com
- Jane Lovell, Newsletter Editor (373-0199) jane.lovell@kos.net

A Glimpse of the Past



AFHS Photo

Adolphustown
Early 1900s

Do you have an interesting photo of people, places or events that show things as they were in the past? Let us feature it here!

Events Calendar

October 24	Macaulay Heritage Park Bread Making Workshop Baking in wood-fired beehive oven Lunch cooked on hearth included 10am-4pm (613) 476-2148 ext 258
October 28	AFHS Annual Heritage Harvest Dinner South Fredericksburgh Hall Displays from 5:30pm Roast Beef Dinner at 6:30pm
November 14	Macaulay Heritage Park Bread Making Workshop Baking in wood-fired beehive oven Lunch cooked on hearth included 10am-4pm (613) 476-2148 ext 258
October 30	Macaulay Heritage Park Colcannon for Halloween Irish delicacy, dating back to the 18 th century, and usually served on Halloween. Traditional meal cooked in historic kitchen. Includes "Graveyard & Gallows" walking tour (7:30pm) 6pm – 9 pm (613) 476-2148 ext 258
November 4	The Marine Museum of the Great Lakes (at Currie Hall, Royal Military College, Kingston) The Wreck of Sir John Franklin's HMS Erebus Reception to follow 7:30pm (613) 542-2261
November 11	L&A County Museum and Archives Book Launch: "Extraordinary Women, Extraordinary Times" Canadian Women of World War II Presentation by author Sherry Pringle at 3 pm 2pm - 5pm
November 21, 22, 28 December 5	Macaulay Heritage Park Wassail by Candlelight Period decorations, heritage foods to sample 1pm – 6pm
December 6	Macaulay Heritage Park Yuletide Pudding Workshop (613) 476-2148 ext 258

ANTI-BOOZE

The Oriental Remedy

The New, Safe and Sure Cure for Drunkenness.

TREATMENT by the new remedy does not necessitate retirement to a sanitarium. It can be administered without the patient's knowledge, with his food and drink. Victims are cured without their knowledge, crediting the change to the force of their own will.

ANTI-BOOZE is put up in convenient form, and sells at \$1.00 per box. Three boxes \$2.50. It will be forwarded prepaid, sealed and in a plain wrapper, by remitting the amount to

ORIENTAL CHEMICAL CO.

20 St. Alexis St. MONTREAL

Napanee Beaver
April 23, 1897

The Neighbourhood Messenger is an electronic newsletter distributed exclusively to members of the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society.

As the receipt of our newsletter is one of the major benefits of Society membership, we ask that you NOT forward the newsletter to friends or relatives. Instead, we suggest that you encourage anyone you think might be interested in receiving a copy of *The Neighbourhood Messenger* to join our Society. A lifetime membership costs \$5, and in addition to ensured e-mail delivery of the newsletter, Society membership entitles those interested in our local heritage to be kept informed of, and participate in, all aspects of Society activities.

Anyone can become a member by sending a cheque for \$5 made payable to the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society, c/o Kathy Staples, 1105 - 828 Sutton Mills Court, Kingston, K7P 2S9.

If you are not currently an AFHS member please consider becoming one!

Featured Event – The AFHS Annual Heritage Harvest Dinner

The unearthing of many unbroken and stoppered “tonic” bottles is a tantalizing look into the past. In this case, the bottles were found at Ham House in Bath.



“Tonic” bottles found at Ham House

Dr. Miles Medical Co. of Elkhart, Indiana produced “Nervine” a popular calming tonic of the 1880s through to the 1910s. Nervine is a generic term for all medicines used to calm the nerves. Doctor Miles’ formulation, and others like it, claimed to treat all manner of maladies including sleeplessness and restlessness, exhaustion, hysteria, various forms of convulsions including epilepsy, spasms, and fits, as well as backache, headache, anxiety and depression. Kingston’s own “NERVILINE PREPARED BY THE CATARRHOZONE CO.” boasted similar benefits.

In a time when the producers of “medicines” were not obliged to list ingredients, the active ingredients in these potions can be difficult to discern. Many such “cures” were alcohol-based, and often contained narcotics such as morphine, opium, or cocaine. However, in the case of Dr. Miles’ Nervine, the active ingredient was bromine, which while an effective sedative, is not safe in large or prolonged dosages. Over-consumption of bromine can lead to various psychiatric, neurological, gastrointestinal, and dermatological ailments. One might

speculate that the alcohol in these tonics might have more to do with over-consumption than their purported calming properties. Certainly, judging by the large cache of nervine bottles found at Bath House, these remedies were readily available, and consumed in quantity.

Advertisements for Nerviline appear in the Kingston papers from the mid-1880s to at least 1915, indicating a longevity of the tonic’s popularity. The Ham House Nerviline bottles likely date from 1880 or earlier, based on a bottle of the same shape and proportions in the collection of the Museum of Health Care in Kingston. Dr. Miles’ Nervine does not appear to have been marketed in the local papers, but obviously was well known, and well used. The Dr. Miles bottles are likely of the same vintage as the Nerviline bottles.

While titillating, the bottles have not been the most telling artifacts found at Ham House.

Perhaps the most exciting finds were a U.S. military button and a U.S. musket ball, both manufactured prior to 1800, suggesting that the foundation of the building was in existence when the American fleet engaged the Royal Navy at Bath during the War of 1812. The many coins and tokens found around the foundations hint at the building’s use as a store and later as a tavern, and as a port of call for Great Lakes shipping of manufactured and agricultural goods. Pottery fragments, broken clay pipes, and

barrel spigots are amongst the many artifacts found in and around the building. More such treasures comes to light daily. All give hints as to who the occupants and patrons of Ham House were and how they lived.



Household Items

Left: Bowl reconstructed from found fragments

Above: Dining utensils

Finding objects that tell a tale are the the rock stars of archaeological sleuthing. Other hints are harder to recognize and interpret. Unraveling the story of Ham House has been an ongoing process of inquiry and discovery for Ron Tasker and Bonnie Crook. The couple bought the building in 2010 and have spent the last several years in a quest to restore the structure. Stripping off layers of “modern” building material has revealed many clues as to the age of the house and its many uses over the years. Finding old newspapers underlying wallpaper was an easy way to date the application of a particular layer of wallpaper. The evolution in the manufacture of nails allows the dating of structural elements based on the shape of the nails used. Changes in the structure and the order in which the changes were made can be discerned in the same way. Big revelations accompanied elements that were *not* there. The outline of a molding on the wall can suggest a position of a counter or the height of a chair rail; the wine stain on a plank can hint at its former use as a shelf in the tavern; wear patterns on the floor likely indicate where the innkeeper stood behind the bar; and impressions on the east wall and attic framing most certainly reveal the original neoclassical elements on the east façade.

“Discovering Ham House” will be the subject of one of two special guest displays on view at the the Society’s annual Heritage Harvest Dinner on Wednesday October 28th. Ron Tasker and Bonnie Crook will be on hand to interpret the artifacts that accompany the display. The Society is also very pleased to welcome Jane Foster, Manager of the County Museum and Archives, who will be present to introduce a special display prepared by the Museum. This display also features an historic building – in this instance, the Casey House of Adolphustown.

Please join us!

The doors of the South Fredericksburgh Hall at 2478 County Road 8 will open at 5:30 p.m. to allow the the viewing of the guest displays and the dozens of other displays and artifacts depicting life from bygone eras. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$18 and are available from Kathy Staples at kathystaples0@gmail.com or (613) 767-3100.

“History isn't about dates and places and wars. It's about the people who fill the spaces between them.”

Jodi Picoult

Same Barn - New Look

Duncan Hough



Ruth Brooks' painting depicting Sillsville looking west circa 1904

This Ruth Brook's painting shows Sillsville as it was many years ago. Much has changed. The Card house, the cheese factory, the township hall, the Mellow orchard and the milk block are gone. So are the stone fences and horse and carriage. The church, now a residence, has no steeple. The house has an attractive addition. But what has stayed unchanged until recently? The weathered barn on the bay side of the road just received a bright red coat of steel, making it appear like a modern building.



The transformation over the summer of 2015

The fact is that the barn is over 150 years old, still in excellent shape and still in practical use. It has seen no major modifications in its lifetime – no silos, no additions, no stable cleaners, no grain bins. Just a simple functional structure, still in everyday use.

Lot 9, Concession 2, South Fredericksburgh, where the barn is located, was granted by the Crown to the Church of England and was known as Glebe land. It was rented out to various tenants to provide income for the Church. A house and barn were erected at some point. Just how that was arranged is

uncertain but they existed prior to 1866 when Samuel Mellow rented the farm. In 1871, the Church sold lots 9, 10 and 11 and the Mellows bought Lot 9.

Samuel, his son Arthur and his grandson Leslie operated the farm until they sold it to the Windover family in 1966.



Front of barn showing centre doors

The barn is a great example of barn history.

It is set into the slope, so that horses and wagons could be driven into the central barn floor (see the large central doors). On either side of the barn floor were 2 large mows extending roughly 25 feet from floor to roof peak. Along the peak is a track for a horse fork which allowed hay to be moved from the wagons into the mow.



**Hand-hewn beams and weathered siding
Note mortise**

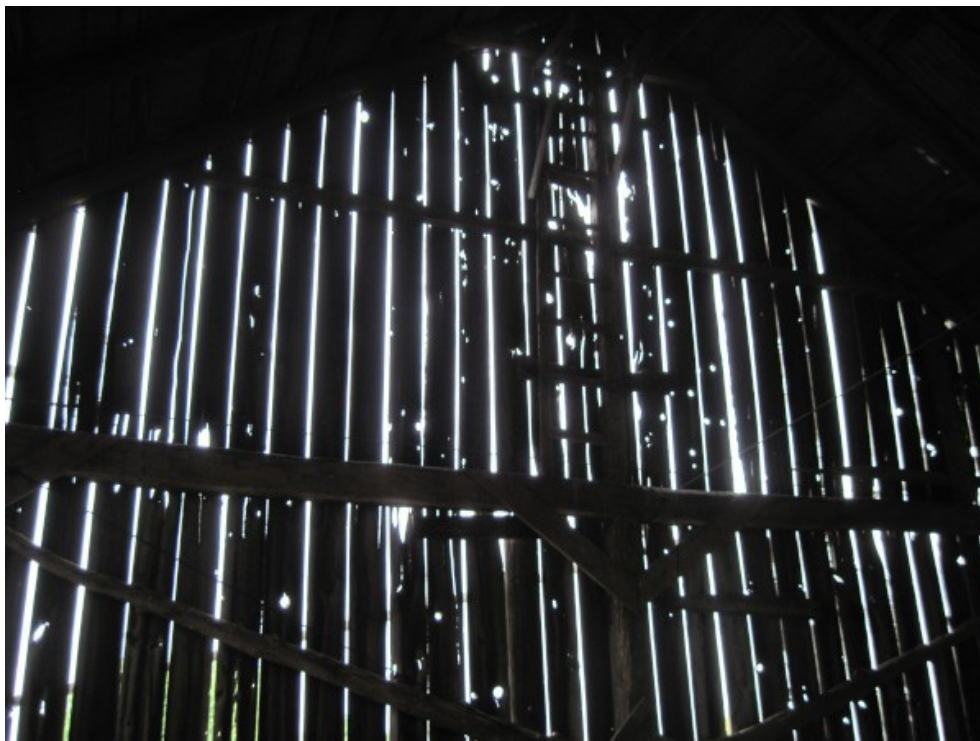


**Initials carved into barn – overlapping
A M
Arthur Mellow or Annie or Anne Mellow?**

Below is the stable with its thick stone walls which open out on the level at the rear. I am told that the barn was raised several feet to give more headroom in the stalls. Felix Mellow, (Samuel's son) was a stone mason who did several barn walls in the area. Whether there was already a stone wall and 2 feet were added or whether he did the whole foundation is open to speculation. In any case, nearly all the stonework is in good shape after so many years.

The barn is 30 feet by 50 feet, allowing for 2 rows of 10 cattle in the stable. (Cows were smaller then). A 2-foot by 2-foot opening in the north wall allowed manure to be pitched into an outside pile. The east part of the stable probably was pens for hogs or sheep. The horses were stabled in a drive shed just west of the barn.

The frame of the barn is hand hewn timber, some probably re-purposed from a previous structure. Note the mortises in one of the posts. The rafters are long poles supporting the sheathing boards and the roof. A few braces have been added to ensure stability. The siding is rough cut lumber, weathered but still in fair shape after a century and a half.



Sunlight through weathered siding

The barn is still very much in use today. Brian Windover has used the mows for hay storage for many years and the stable to house cattle. He has opened up the stable below into one large area where the cattle can run free. He has opened up the rear stone wall to allow mechanical removal of the manure pack. Otherwise the barn is essentially the same as it was when it was built.

The new steel siding gives the barn a new look and more importantly protects it for the long term future.

All photos supplied by Duncan Hough

Help Us Identify This:

Although identified as being at Sillsville on Hay Bay, the shoreline in this aerial shot does not look familiar. Do you know where Groves Cottages were located, and when they might have operated as vacation cottages?



AFHS Photo

Aerial Photography of H Oakman

Harry Oakman was a pioneer in Canadian commercial aerial photography. During the 1940s and 50s Oakman produced postcards from aerial photographs. Many of the postcards served as novel advertisements for establishments catering to the tourism industry, and make up a substantial portion of the over 2 million postcards produced by Oakman's Peterborough Post Card Co. The aerial shots were also sold to individual land owners. Such is the case for the Robertson farm on Hay Bay (see **Then and Now** from the October 2014 issue of *The Neighbourhood Messenger*). The Robertson family purchased an aerial shot of their farm taken in 1953 showing almost all of the 100-acre lot. Looking closely at the cars in the Groves Cottages postcard seems to suggest a 1950s time-frame, further suggesting that perhaps the Groves Cottages were captured at the same time as the photograph of the Robertson farm was taken.

Do you have an old photo for which you cannot identify the people, the place, or the occasion? Let us scan it and we can feature it in an upcoming issue of *The Neighbourhood Messenger*. One of our readers might know something that you don't!

Clippings

WHEREAS my wife Hester has left my bed and board without any just cause or provocation; this is therefore to forbid any person or persons harboring or trusting her on my account, for I shall pay no debts of her contracting after this date.

GEORGE HAM

Ernest Town. 24th May. 1814

British Whig
June 12, 1835

STAGE HOUSE AND STEAM BOAT MOTEL

THE SUBSCRIBER respectfully informs his friends and the public, that he has taken that well known Tavern and Hotel, in the village of Bath, formerly occupied by Mr. P. Davy, and earnestly solicits a continuance of patronage.

Every possible attention will be paid to the comfort of his guests, and a selection of the very best Wines and Spirits will be made.

A. ASHLEY Bath May 8, 1835

British Whig
June 12, 1835

NOTICE.

MR. DAVY begs leave to inform his friends and the public, that he has again opened his Hotel in Bath, where he hopes to merit a share of public patronage.

Bath, Dec. 30th, 1835.

59cm

Kingston Chronicle & Gazette
December 30, 1835

As a nod to the Ham House in Bath, this issue's clippings focus on capricious personal and business relationships in the village.

November 4, 1835

On Monday Evening last, a man named McArdle was brought from Bath, in the Kingston Steamer, in custody of the proper officers, under a warrant of committal to Kingston Jail for having stabbed John Johnston at a horse race near the above mentioned town. It appears Johnston and McArdle had quarrelled some time ago at a camp meeting, in consequence of which a grudge had subsisted between them ever since. -They unfortunately met at a Horse race on Monday last, near Bath, when their mutual animosity was evinced, and a fight between the parties ensued. Johnston, who was a powerful man, was likely to become victor, when McArdle drew a knife and stabbed Johnston in the abdomen, inflicting a frightful wound, from which there is little hopes of his recovery. - We are informed to-day that Johnston is since dead.

Nov 11 1835

We are happy to learn, that Johnson, the unfortunate man who was lately stabbed by McCardle, in Bath, is still alive.

Kingston Chronicle & Gazette
November 4 & 11, 1835

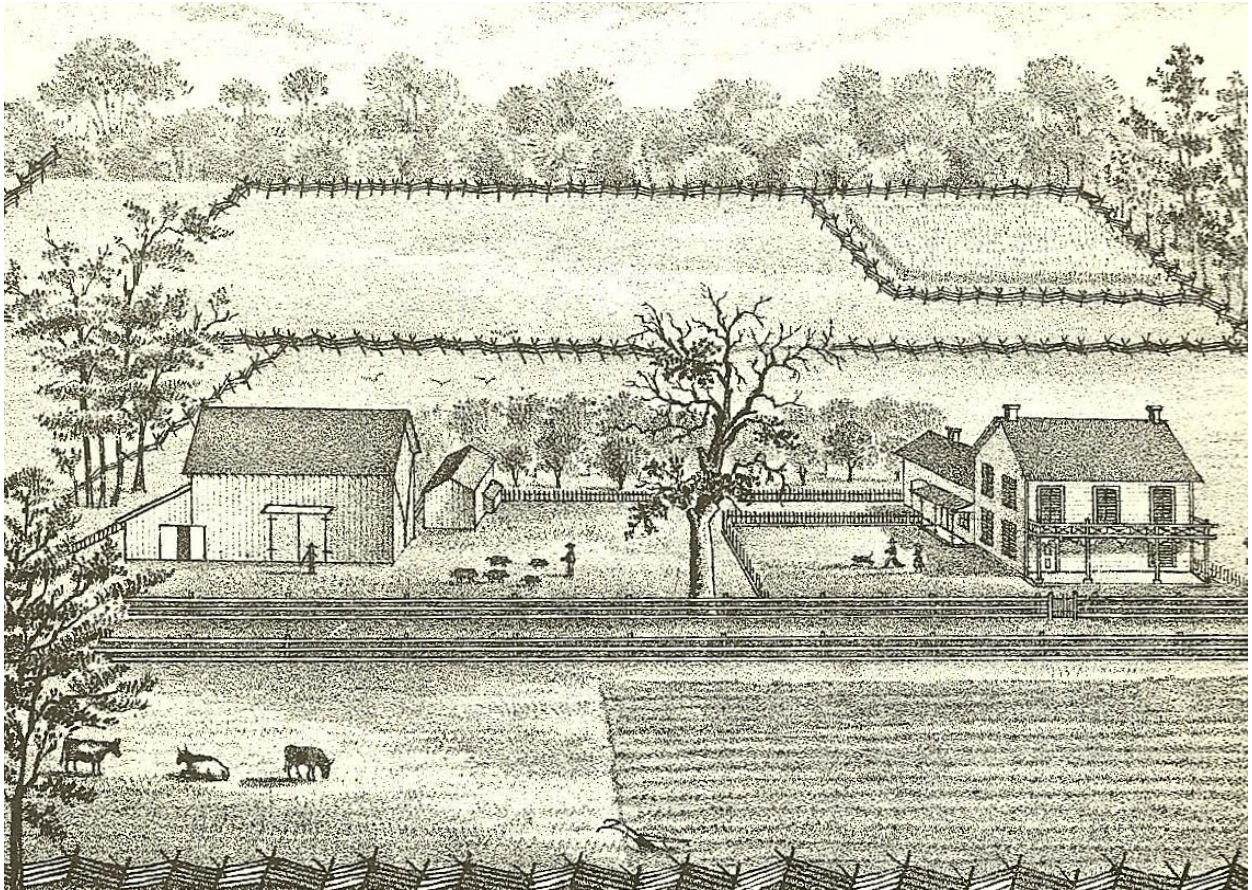
**Clippings courtesy of Susan Wright
and Jane Lovell**

To see more old newspaper clippings check out the
Articles page on our website:
<http://www.sfredheritage.on.ca/articles.html>

Then and Now

Kathy Staples

220 Third Concession Road



Sketch from the *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the Counties of Frontenac, Lennox & Addington*, 1878



AFHS Photo

1950s Aerial Photograph



AFHS Photo

2012

220 Third Concession Road

The east half of Lot 23 Concession 3 was deeded to William Moore in 1801. He gained title of the west half six years later. The portion of Lot 23 where the house at 220 Third Concession Road now stands had the following previous owners:

Stephen Roblin: 1851
 John D. Trumpour: 1872
 George L. & Sarah Ruttan: 1921
 Audrey Hambly: 1942
 Leo & Jean Mack: 1952

It is currently owned by Glen Mack.

The house in the 1950s aerial photograph is similar to the one appearing in the 1878 sketch. Fred & Maureen Mack lived in the back part until 115 Third Concession was built. At some point the barn burned, and in the late 1950s or early 1960s the old Ruttan house was torn down. Leo and Jean Mack built the house that now sits on the lot using timber from the old Ruttan house and from the Trumpour tenant house previously located at 304 Staples Lane.



Napanee Beaver
 April 30, 1897

AFHS News

Jane Lovell

The big AFHS event over the summer was the presentation of the Daverne Farm Bicentennial Plaque.

The Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society prides itself on celebrating our local history and heritage. Community has always been central to our heritage, and the heart of community is family. The Daverne family have shown tenacity and perseverance in maintaining their farm through the good times and bad and have been vibrant participants in the community over the years. In recognition of the Daverne family achievements as embodied in their bicentennial farm, we commissioned a commemorative roadside plaque.



Members of the AFHS, municipal and federal representatives, the Daverne family and their friends and neighbours all gathered on the lawn below the Daverne farmhouse under gloowering skies on the Saturday of the August long weekend. It was in 1815 that Richard Daverne purchased a farm along the shores of Adolphus Reach, and two hundred years later the Daverne family still work and enjoy the property. Just as the skies opened, Alice Carlson and Gerry Daverne, Richard's great-great-great grandchildren, stepped forward to recount some of their family's two century-long journey.

Following a retreat to the barn, presentations were made by Deputy Mayor Marg Isbester on behalf of the Town of Greater Napanee, and by Councilor Mike Schenk representing the Greater Napanee Heritage Committee.

It is not just our local heritage group and our municipality that celebrate the longevity of the family farm. The recognition goes province-wide through a plaquing program run by the Junior Farmers of Ontario. They issue plaques for centennial farms and for each quarter-century thereafter. The Davernes have amassed the entire collection; the full complement of plaques are prominently mounted on the side of the barn.



Photo Courtesy of Elva Aitchison

Deputy Mayor Marg Isbester presenting a plaque to Alice Carlson and Gerry Daverne



Photo Courtesy of Elva Aitchison

Councilor Mike Schenk and Gerry Daverne

Taking the recognition one step further, the Daverne Farm has not gone unnoticed nationally. On hand to present a congratulatory letter on behalf of the federal government was the Honourable Member for Prince Edward – Hastings, Daryl Kramp.

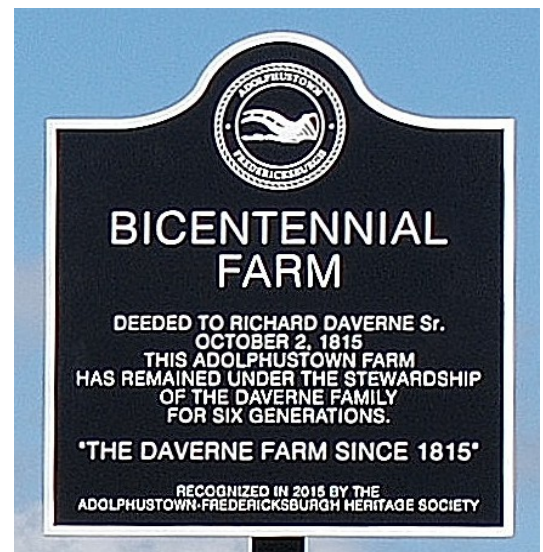
By the time the proceedings had progressed to the grand finale, the rain had stopped and the sun was blazing. We emerged from the shelter of the barn and reassembled at the roadside where our Society's President Angela Cronk invited the current and next generations of the Daverne family to assist her in the unveiling of our commemorative plaque.

Refreshments were served in the barn following the unveiling. All present were invited to join the Davernes in celebrating family and community and 200 years of farming life in Adolphustown.



Photo Courtesy of Elva Aitchison

**AFHS President Angela Cronk unveils plaque with the assistance of three generations of the Daverne Family
Dan Carlson and daughter Brenna and Gerry Daverne and grandson Lukas Thompson**

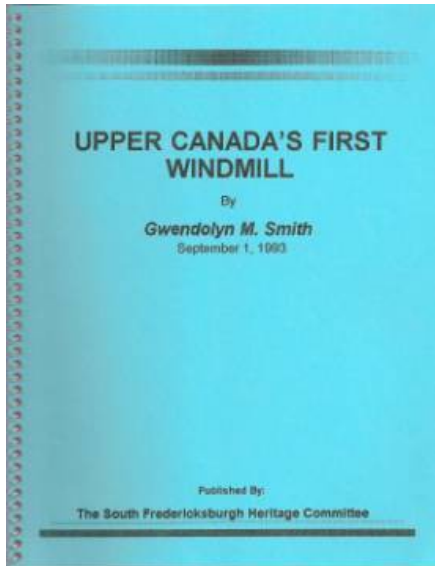


Dry Stone Wall Tour

At the end of August Dave Sexsmith and Duncan Hough led a number of AFHS members and their families on a tour of the dry stone walls on the Sexsmith farm. Duncan's article on these intriguing walls appeared in the February 2015 edition of *The Neighbourhood Messenger*.



From the Book Shelf



Upper Canada's First Windmill

Gwendolyn M. Smith

Research and documentation confirmed a windmill was constructed on the Bay of Quinte shore adjoining the Upper Gap. This windmill also served a military use against the American Fleet during the War of 1812.

Of Interest...

In the summer of 2012 the AFHS erected a plaque commemorating Upper Canada's First Windmill. The official Loyalist Parkway Historic Plaque signs that now direct travelers to the windmill site were reported on in June's issue of the *Neighbourhood Messenger*. Just to the east of the windmill site, opposite the Lennox Generating plant, more Loyalist Parkway Historic Plaque signs were put in place this past September. These new signs direct those traveling along Highway 33 to the newly established Upper Gap Archaeological Site. Prominently placed in the park overlooking the the Upper Gap is an massive rock on which three plaques have been affixed. The plaques, one each in English, French and Mohawk, tell the history of the area. On hand for the unveiling of the plaques were representatives from the Town of Greater Napanee, The Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, Ontario Power Generation and the Loyalist Parkway Association – all of whom had roles to play in the two decades from inception to completion. The resulting park is a handsome testament to the vision, perseverance, and collaboration of the parties involved.



Photo Courtesy of Kathy Staples

And Furthermore...

At this time last year we were in the throws of the municipal election. That election was the inspiration for an article on the long enduring civic engagement of the citizens of Adolphustown and Fredericksburgh. Part of the article appearing in the October 2014 issue of *The Neighbourhood Messenger* listed the many men from our townships to serve in the federal arena. The member to hold the seat for the counties of Lennox and Addington in the 2nd Parliament of the Province of Canada was Benjamin Seymour, a shopkeeper from Sandhurst. He held the seat from 1844 to 1854. Nearly three decades later it was Sir John A. Macdonald who won the seat for Lennox, if only briefly in the summer of 1882, in the hotly contested campaign of the 5th Canadian Parliament against David Wright Allison of Adolphustown.



Gertrude Macdonald

MRS. H. J. MACDONALD.

From a photograph by Farmer Brothers, Toronto. Kindly furnished by her husband.

Gertrude Agnes, second daughter of the late Salter Jehosaphat Vankoughnet, Esquire, K.C., and his wife, Agnes, daughter of Hon. Benjamin Seymour, Senator, was born in Toronto and educated at Miss Dupont's School, in that city. She married, April 23rd, 1883, as his second wife, Hugh John Macdonald, Esquire, K.C., only surviving son of the late Right Honourable Sir John Alexander Macdonald, G.C.B., Prime Minister of Canada, and his first wife, Isabella, daughter of Alexander Clark, of Dalnavert. Her husband subsequently entered public life, was sworn of the Privy Council, 1896, and became afterwards Premier of Manitoba, but has now retired from active participation in politics. Mrs. Macdonald is a member of an old and distinguished Loyalist family. She was a leading spirit in the movement for presenting a wedding gift to the Prince and Princess of Wales, and also in starting a war fund for the soldiers in South Africa. "As a social leader," says *Harper's Bazaar*, "Mrs. Macdonald's *metier* lies, as did Madame de Stael's, in the *salon*." Residence: *Winnipeg, Manitoba*.

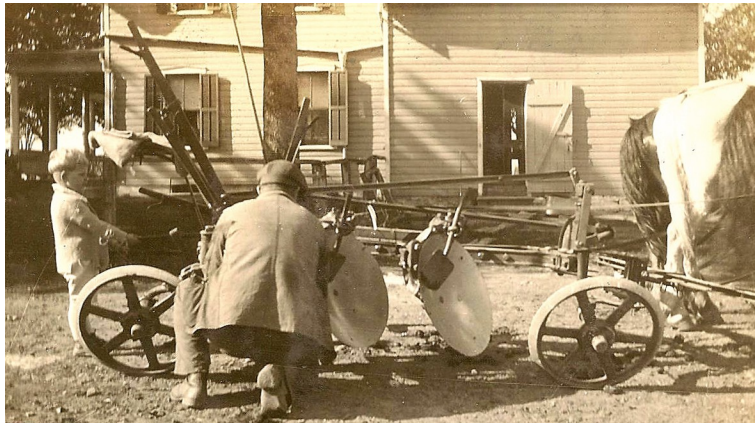
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Seymour and Macdonald share not only a seat in parliament but also kin. The two men were linked through the marriage of Macdonald's son Hugh John Macdonald to Seymour's granddaughter Gertrude Agnes Vankoughnet. The union was recorded in the curiously titled book *Types of Canadian Women and of Women Who Are or Have Been Connected With Canada* published in 1903.

As pointed out in the February 2015 issue of the *Neighbourhood Messenger*, Sir John A. Macdonald had several connections to Adolphustown and Fredericksburgh. His son Hugh's political career has a connection to Adolphustown too, although a rather circuitous one and only by association. Hugh Macdonald, born in Kingston, was a resident of Manitoba for only eight years when he was elected Premier of that province in 1900. A brief eight and a half months later, another Ontario expatriate would become the Premier of Manitoba. Macdonald's successor was Rodmond Palen Roblin who had moved to Manitoba a quarter century earlier from Prince Edward County where his family had been successful millers for generations. It was Rodmond's great-great-grandfather Philip Roblin who first established a mill at Green Point in Sophiasburgh, just across Long Reach from the north side of Hay Bay in the township of Adolphustown where Philip had received land in the original Loyalist land grants. Also noteworthy is the fact that Casey House, to be profiled at our annual Heritage Harvest Dinner, was erected just two lots to the west of Philip Roblin's Adolphustown lot on land first granted to Philip's brother Owen.

The **Glimpse of the Past** from the June issue of *The Neighbourhood Messenger* showed Wilfred Ackerman and his plow and team of four.



The photo elicited the following comment from Ross Morton.

As a matter of interest is the picture of Ackerman's plowing with a disc plow - widely used in the western provinces I was told but not in the heavy clay soil of the Quinte. I was also told my father had the first disc plow in the district but I can't confirm.



BAKING

Your Cakes now makes them all the better for Christmas, and if you use our

Enterprise Raisin Seeder

you will find it only amusement instead of hard work in preparing the Raisins. The price is reduced for the Holiday season.

M'KELVEY & BIRCH

Brock Street.

Daily British Whig
December 6, 1897

And More than Furthermore...

With the Daverne Farm Bicentennial celebrations occupying a major position in the AFHS calendar this summer, several articles on the family and life on the farm appeared in newsletters leading up to the event. Perhaps not too surprisingly, there is still more to tell. A central component of the proceedings marking the Daverne Farm's bicentennial was an address given by Alice Carlson and Gerry Daverne. In covering the family's history in Adolphustown, Gerry and Alice set the stage with respect to the times and the fortunes of the family and the community in which they found themselves. The insight they add to the narrative is worth pondering in the context of the longevity of the family farm.

Alice and Gerry have graciously allowed us to reprint their remarks for the benefit of AFHS members who did not have the opportunity to attend the Society's presentation of the plaque commemorating the Daverne Farm's bicentennial. The portions delivered by Alice are in blue; Gerry's comments are in black.

Two Centuries of Stewardship on an Adolphustown Family Farm **Alice Carlson and Gerry Daverne**

We thank you for being here to recognize our 200 years as a family farm.

Gerry and I feel privileged today and we ask for your patience and indulgence as we share some ideas about our farm and its place in history.

First, it may be interesting to realize that when our great, great, great Irish grandfather, Richard, and his wife, Catherine, purchased this farm in October 1815, Napoleon had recently been defeated at Waterloo; Britain and the U.S. were ending the War of 1812; John Macdonald was an infant in Glasgow; all of Upper Canada had a population of just over 95,000; five decades would pass before Canada would become a country at Confederation; and Mount Tambora had erupted in the Dutch East Indies.

Richard purchased this 200-acre Lot 16, the original Crown grant, from Conrad van Dusen, Mary Kay Morris' great, great, great grandfather. Today, the farm comprises the 100 acres of the east half of that purchase—75 acres under cultivation, 20 acres of hardwood, and 5 acres of houses, buildings, and gardens.

What is one acre? An acre is one chain by one furlong. Literally, a chain was the survey measuring tool dragged across the land to determine distance. According to tradition, an acre was deemed the area that a person could plough with a team of oxen, in one day. Our 100 acres is one furlong wide and 10 furlongs long. At school in Adolphustown, a young neighbor, John Macdonald, would have learned that a furlong equals 10 chains, equals 40 rods, equals 220 yards, equals 660 feet.

Later, as we walk across the field to the plaque, you'll see the length of a chain.

As custodians now, we are grateful to our ancestors who managed to keep this land intact as a family farm.

The first and second generations worked hard to survive. From our father, Dick's, family history, "times were tough, money scarce and markets few." Richard wrote home to Limerick that he would like to return to Ireland "as farming is very hard work."

Early on, during an April week in 1815, the Mount Tambora eruption had propelled enough aerosols into the atmosphere to cause the "volcanic winter" of 1816. Our 1st and 2nd generation ancestors experienced what is known as *The Year without a Summer*—the same crop failures, hunger, and snow in June and July that affected so much of the rest of Upper Canada, North America, and, for that matter, many other areas in the world. Another part of our family history—that of Richard's son, Daniel, in Perth—was particularly significantly affected by the terrible year of 1816. That's another story, told in Clark Theobald's history, *Duty, Conspiracy, Obsession*.

After 1815, the newly-purchased land had to be cleared. From diary records of the grain production that Richard kept, we suppose that by the time Conrad van Dusen, primarily an innkeeper, sold his farm, he had cleared the front 30 acres. As new owners, the Davernes then continued the arduous process of carving the farm out of the forest. In our father's history, he notes that the family would have cleared about 4 or 5 acres a year and that "burning was a fast way of clearing the fields" and "acrid smoke from settlers' fires hung over the land on quiet days in the early 1800s."



The reward for their hard work, though, was what they found as they cleared their land—good clay soil, a decent grade, and an advantageous micro climate that often extends our last frost in the spring to the first frost in the fall by 1 and ½ to 2 months longer than areas just east and north of us. As you know, the climate here can be dry or wet but never considered extreme, for too long.

In spite of this progress, troubles followed for the 2nd generation. Specifically, in the 1830s, the family was hard-hit by an outbreak of cholera as was another Davern family, who had followed from Ireland and lived on the western half of Lot 16. Richard, Catherine, their son, Daniel, and at least 3 other Daverns on the adjacent farm died of the disease, leaving Richard's son, Richard, to help raise several of that neighboring family's children as well as his own three. Besides the tragedy of cholera, the farmhouse partially burned in 1869.

The 3rd generation of Davernes and their families prospered during the famous "barley days"—the lucrative 1860 to 1890 period of the American Civil War and a reciprocity agreement when the price for barley approached \$1 a bushel. This farm, along with others this side of the ferry and in Prince Edward

County, prospered, shipping thousands of bushels of good quality wheat and barley to Oswego for flour milling and for the huge American brewing industry. Perhaps a mark of these good times was the reconstruction after the fire of the storey and a half farmhouse. Later, in 1913, the "roof was raised" to add the full second storey, to accommodate our grandparents' George and Elva's growing family.

By the last century (now a blended United Empire Loyalist family, when George Daverne married Elva Bruner, great granddaughter of the original Loyalist, William Ruttan) it was the 4th and 5th generations' challenge to keep the farm during the worst of times, the Great Depression of the 1930s. Published in last February's edition of the Heritage Society's *Neighbourhood Messenger*, are excerpts from our father's history and the letter that our grandfather, George, wrote to the provincial agricultural board asking for financial assistance after several bad years.

Dick wrote of the complete fall of grain prices after the stock market crash in 1929; the coldest winter on record – 1933-34 – when "clovers, wheat and apple trees died"; and the drought that brought grain crop failures the following year. Then, with only the luck of the Irish, on St. Patrick's Day in 1935, the main barn blew down in a 70-mile-an-hour northwest gale. In his letter, Grandfather George adds that two of their four working horses died in that same spring.

During WW2, produce prices rose, but then seemed to remain static for decades. Father talked of selling milk in the 1950s at stagnant prices – this at a time when farms still carried a higher taxation load than towns and new standards for dairying required investment in refrigerated milk storage for bulk milk collection. Locally, the cheese factories closed.

In the next decade of the 1960s many family farms were sold, or the land left under-producing or idle. More positively, by the 1970s and 1980s, farms were incorporated into larger agricultural units and farming rejuvenated.

You may know the *Wingfield Farm* plays of Dan Needles. In those, the hero, Walt Wingfield, a Toronto stockbroker, buys a farm and takes up farming in fictional Persephone Township somewhere northwest of the city. In one episode, as an innocent in rural Ontario, Walt Wingfield asks “What is a Century Farm? His senior, seasoned neighbor replies: “A farm that hasn’t had a good offer in over 100 years.”

Maybe so. However, Gerry and I have some other ideas about why and how we’ve lasted as a family farm for 6 generations. These reasons are not unique to this family but somehow they have helped.

First, these earliest generations did not have too many children—dissimilar to the overpopulation that so devastated Ireland in these years. However, like many other farm families here, often 2 or 3 generations shared the farm work at any one time. So, there may have been strength in cooperation.

Second, there may have been strength in the farm’s modest size. This was a small, mixed farm, similar to many others in the area: livestock, grain and fruits and vegetables. In the early generations farming was labour-intensive, relying on manual labour, a good team of horses, and the strength and endurance of the family to both feed themselves and to have extra crop to sell as income.

In other cases, supplementary income was generated away from the farm—again because the farm was not so large, family members could leave (and had to leave) to work elsewhere: great grandfathers went north to do winter logging; great grandparents and grandparents went to the prairies on the new railway to work in the grain harvest; Father quarried stone to build the new 33 Highway; Mother worked at Conway Store; and I left to work at lumber and paper mills in British Columbia. These are a few examples from among many.



A third reason may have been the truly various nature of our small, mixed farming—over the years, dairy cattle, chickens, a cow/calf beef herd, tomatoes for the canning factories, apples, hay, lumber, garden vegetables, maple syrup, even ducks, geese, and turkeys. Now Jutta and I have added squash and honey bees to our repertoire. Today, as well, the farm produces about 200 tons of hay and over a thousand bushels of grain.

Fourth, and this might be a chicken or egg argument—pardon the pun—because the family farm endured, family members of the 5th generation—referred to in our family as “The Group of Seven”—from the 1930s to the 1960s—returned, at some times because the farm was a safe haven from unemployment, and at other times, to help out. During the Depression, our grandfather wrote that “two sons and three daughters are home. The boys are doing farm work without wages.” Neither were his daughters being paid, but, in those days, that goes without saying.

During the war, Florence came home to help Dick with milking; later, Elda, Cummings, and Nora and their families in Napanee all helped to look after their elderly parents; Helen, Lorne, and Florence and their families visited regularly, especially during summers, from Toronto, Regina, and Kitimat. Summers in the 1950s and 60s here were wonderful times for family—in our generation, often 20 cousins came with their parents for summer family reunions.

Beyond these reasons, we believe there's the important abstract notion at work here—that of valuing the family farm. Father often mused that "entailment"—the kind of Downton Abbey bequeathing of land and restricting its sale or use into future generations—no longer existed in Canada. Without that

imperative, it fell to him, in particular, to live and teach the value—for heritage, for community, and for agriculture—and the privilege of keeping a family farm. Gerry and I are fortunate that our parents and the 5 generations preceding us did that. At this point, we'd like to thank our cousin, Elva, for her dedication and persistence in compiling our family tree, down to the very last baby born this year.

We are also blessed with spouses, Jutta and John, and our families, who have supported us. No longer just a matter of manual labour and a good team of horses, their cooperation and shared values have been essential in keeping this farm. In fact, our celebrations this weekend are a good specific example of extended family effort and teamwork. We are hopeful . . . confident even, that these shared values and cooperation will continue into the future with the 7th and 8th generations who are here today.

In 1815, the world population is estimated to have been about 1 billion. When our family celebrated the farm's 100-year anniversary, world population had reached 2 billion. Today, on our 200th anniversary, over 7 billion people live on earth. In just the past decade the world population has increased by 1 billion. The preservation of good farmland is essential to sustain our world's population growth.

In the future, because of climate change, we should not depend on places such as drought-stricken California to provide us with fruits and vegetables. We expect that our farm, and agriculture in general in our community, will become even more important.

This weekend, it's our extended family, our larger community, and the Heritage societies who are recognizing these values of heritage, community, and agriculture and for this we are truly appreciative.

Alice Carlson and Gerry Daverne
August 2, 2015

Ed. -- The photos accompanying this article are of the encampment at the Daverne farm erected by reenactors on hand over the bicentennial weekend.



A Curious Thing

Angela Cronk



June's Curious Thing

Ruth Hough correctly identified June's **Curious Thing** and supplied the following:

Your mystery object is a cream skimmer used to separate cream from whole non-homogenized milk. I have 2.

One was given to me by my mother-in-law Jean Hough, between 1975 and 1980 for skimming cream. I used the cream for desserts and making butter, and the skimmed milk for general use and for making cottage cheese and yogurt. I have used the skimmer in the 21st century and the 20th century. It was very old when given to me so would have been used by her mother Clara Trumpour or her mother-in-law Marion Hough. It was probably

used even before the turn of 20th century and during the 1800s. Milk was left to stand in low pans and when the cream had separated the skimmer was used to skim the cream into a separate container. This was not a perfect system but fairly effective. If I wanted a purer sample I could let the cream separate again. I also use it to skim the scum formed in making some jams and jellies. The second one I received when the items were distributed at Don and Jean's house. This was the one she used -- and others before her.

The one I used had had the edges crimped a bit over time before given to me. The one Jean used had the edges sharpened thin with use. These would have been used over a long, long time.

We visited Upper Canada Village recently. The tin shop showed many items the tinsmith made and was currently making there. Cream skimmers were one of the many products made and shown.



Ruth Hough's Cream Skimmers

What is this?



Submitted by MaryKay Morris

This object is about 8" tall.

Please contact angelacronk@gmail.com if you recognise the item. Tell us what it is called, what it is used for, during what era it was used, and anything else you can tell us about it.

Do you have some weird thing hanging around your home or barn? Take a photo of it and send it in – we can feature it here in a future issue.

From the Attic

We are looking for old photos and documents from Adolphustown, North and South Fredericksburgh. Just about any old photograph would be of interest: photos of people, homes, farms, schools, churches, or community or family events. Even if you do not know the people or places in the photos, maybe someone else in the community does. Old publications relating to township businesses, schools and churches often contain fascinating details of life in their era.

Some items we are currently looking for:

OLD PHOTOS or Real Photo POSTCARDS:

- The Adolphustown Town Hall
- The South Fredericksburgh Town Hall at Sillsville
- The U.E.L. Cheese Factory, Adolphustown
- St. Paul's Church, Main Street Adolphustown
- The Old Store at Adolphustown
- The Old Hotel at Adolphustown
- Conway Store
- Conway Wharf
- Phippen Cheese Factory
- Fredericksburgh Train Station
- McDowall Presbyterian Church
- Camp Le Nid
- Glen Island
- Tarry Hall

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Letters or postcards bearing postmarks from local towns and villages
- Correspondence from someone serving overseas during either WWI or WWII

BOOKLET:

- Constitution and Roll of Officers and Members of Camp Le Nid, 1902

If you are looking for any specific photos or documents, let us know and we will add it to our "Attic" list. **Newly added items will be highlighted in blue!**

Contribute to *The Neighbourhood Messenger*

We publish *The Neighbourhood Messenger* several times a year. If you have an old photograph or newspaper clipping to share, a story to tell, or an event to publicize, let us know. Please send submissions to jane.lovell@kos.net.

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