



## **Annual Report 2002**

LOST VILLAGES HISTORICAL SOCIETY - ANNUAL MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 20, 2002

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH, INGLESIDE, ONTARIO

This evening's annual general meeting marks the twenty-third time that members and "friends" of the Lost Villages Historical Society have gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of the past year, and to recognize all those who have worked to further the aims and objectives of the society. As we gear up to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the formation of the Lost Villages Historical Society, and the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Lost Villages Museum at Ault Park, each and every member of this society should take a bow, and thank those who actively work "to preserve and protect the history and heritage of the Lost Villages".

In 2001, the Lost Villages Historical Society continued to grow, and our membership spans the continent of North America. As well, through our society's website, [www.lostvillages.ca](http://www.lostvillages.ca), we have reached visitors from all parts of the world. This is truly exciting for our society, and over 5,200 people have virtually visited the Lost Villages, through the Internet. From this vantage point, the website can only grow, and it will become the tool of the future, -when showcasing our society and museum, and when reaching out to the world. Sometimes, it seems impossible to keep up with all the correspondence and requests from the Internet, however we keep picking away at the requests. It is a fast and easy way when sharing ideas and thoughts.

The Lost Villages Museum certainly was a busy place during the 2001 tourist season. As well, it continued to be a destination for those who wished to spend

some quiet time in reflection, and for those who wished to step back in time to the Hydro and Seaway projects of the 1950s. With almost twenty group visits; our summer bus tours; and the many, many people who visited on a daily basis, the museum site at Ault Park was certainly on the map. As well, our new signs, purchased through a program sponsored by Cornwall and Seaway Valley Tourism, and erected through the generosity of the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Roads Committee, have helped to guide tourists to our site. As well, the publication and publicity surrounding Maggie Wheeler's book, *A Violent End*, did much to put the Lost Villages Historical Society and Museum on the map. We thank Maggie for her generosity, and we are proud to have her as a member of our society. Major Canadian newspapers picked up on the story of the Hydro and Seaway projects, through *A Violent End*, and this brought curious patrons to the museum site. As well, we were blessed with some new members, ready to roll up their sleeves for the Lost Villages Historical Society. This was most encouraging to the "pioneers" of our society, for the future looks brighter with the new faces, and for the enthusiasm brought to the activities and projects of the society.

As president of the society for ten years now, and, yes, it is time for someone to step forward, I wish to thank the members of the executive for their fine work during the past year. As for the executive, their work does not stop when the door closes to our monthly meetings. Yes, indeed, they have picked up the torch on many, many occasions, and they have rolled up their sleeves to many activities which profile our society in the community. To those who cannot be physically involved in the society, but, yet, encourage, commend and support, through kind word and financial involvement, my thanks to you. Our society must continue to encourage younger members to get involved, no matter how big or small the task. Our society members would like to thank the following members of the executive, for their tireless work on behalf of the society during the past year. To Joan McEwan, past-president; Jane Craig, vice-president; Rosemary Rutley, recording secretary; Winnifred Murdock, corresponding secretary, and it is wonderful to see Winnie's recovery from her accident this winter; Vale Brownell, Treasurer; and Isabel Hunter, membership convenor, our recognition and thanks for a job "well done" throughout 2001. You have all made valuable and tremendous contributions to the society, in your fields of expertise.

At this point in my annual report, I would be remiss if I did not refer to the kindness and generosity of the Council for the Township of South Stormont. They continue to believe in us, and continue to recognize the valuable service we provide in preserving and protecting the rich history and heritage of the Township of South Stormont. As well, they continue to recognize the tourist potential which

we have established at the museum site. A municipalities future is built upon its roads and bridges, its infrastructures in water, wastewater, and recreation. As well, its future is also built on the past, protected and promoted by those who hold history and heritage conservation and preservation close to their hearts. Council recognizes this, and they continue to support us, whenever possible. Our hats off to Jim Bancroft, Mayor; Heine Bruining, Deputy-Mayor; Barry Brownlee, Ray Fenton, and Bryan McGillis, Councillors.

Throughout 2001, many activities kept the members of our society extremely busy, and I do not intent to mention them all at this time. To get a true picture of our success, one may go back through our monthly newsletters, or log onto [www.lostvillages.ca](http://www.lostvillages.ca). Our activities are profiled under the topic "newsletters". At this time, however, I would like to point out a few of the activities which helped our society financially, and which put us on the map. In April, our society had a booth at the annual Home and Trade Show, sponsored by the South Stormont Chamber of Commerce. We were delighted to take second place at this event. Our summer bus tours, escorted by Mary Lynn Alguire, were outstanding successes, and this was the first year that we had some "sold out" bus tours. Already this year, 2002, we have reservation for these summer tours, -even before the opening of the museum. As well, we had tremendous success with "step-on" tours, and these have been financially successful. May I thank, too, Tim Gault, for talking on much of the leadership and responsibility for our barbecues, -whether Canada Day, bus tours, or group visits. He has indicated that he looks forward to working on this project in 2002. Thanks Tim!

For the fourth year, the Lost Villages Summer Day Camp was held, under the leadership of Ann-Marie Bourgon, a volunteer with this program, and a former summer employee at the museum. Her enthusiasm and ideas certainly added to the success of this activity. Young people continued to return to the day camp, because of the quality of the program, and the enthusiasm of the leader and young volunteers. We shall miss Ann-Marie in 2002, however we know that life goes on, and her marriage and acceptance into Teachers' College, altered her plans for 2002. We shall miss her.

The Lost Villages Historical Society sponsored Canada Day activities at the museum site, and Carson Elliott, society member, organized the activities for this event. On perhaps one of the coldest and rainiest "Canada Days" in Canadian history, our activities continued, and we braved the elements. We shall never forget the driving rain, and the bitter cold winds which swept up and over the hill at the museum site. Hopefully, the skies will be kinder to us on Canada Day, 2002.

For a second time, Bill, Rosemary, Felicity and Emily Brown returned to the Sandtown Advent Christian Church and provided members of our society, and the general public, the opportunity to get into the true "spirit" of Christmas. They provided two outstanding "Advent" programs in the church, through readings, poetry and song. We look forward to this becoming an annual event at the museum site. When speaking of the Sandtown Church, we must not forget that eight couples were married at this church in 2001. Its quaint charm, and pastoral setting has made this church a popular site for weddings. Already, in 2002, we have ten weddings booked at Sandtown. The Casselman and Neville families are pleased to see that the church continues to have its old-fashioned, spiritual appeal. In 2001, Mrs. Leitha (Warner) Casselman, donor of the church, visited the church, and her family reports that she was delighted to, once again, step over the threshold of her beloved church. In the summer of 2001, Leitha was ninety-three years young. A framed picture of this visit will soon hang in the church.

In 2001, our society continued to receive many, many donations, both in artifacts for the museum, and financial support for the various projects. At times, it was difficult to keep up with all the materials which were being forwarded to the Lost Villages Museum, and we hope the acquisition of a computer, in 2002, will aid us in recording and cataloging these donations. Of particular interest to the society was the donation of the Brownlee Funeral Home's 1924 Star hearse. This hearse, with its distinctive skis, was displayed by Barry Brownlee at the 2001 International Plowing Match at Navan, and then taken to our museum site. As well, we thank the Beaudette family, of Pleasant Valley, Osnabruck, for the donation of the St. David's Anglican Church Driveshed. Although, because of its destruction by mother nature, only about one-third of the driveshed could be salvaged, the driveshed now stands near the Sandtown Church, at the museum site. Reconstruction of the driveshed was accomplished, under the supervision of Alex McGillivray. Although Alex became very ill, shortly after the commencement of the reconstruction, Alan Rafuse, Donnie Alguire, and Jim Brownell completed the work. The driveshed will be officially dedicated during Canada Day ceremonies, 2002.

During the summer of 2001, our society was successful in obtaining two grants through Federal government programs for the employment of two summer students. . We extend appreciation for the financial contribution from Human Resources Development Canada's "Summer Career Placement Program"; and the Canadian Museum's Association's "Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions

Program".

Perhaps the greatest project started in 2001 was the move of the Forbes Memorial Reading Room from Newington, Ontario, to the museum site. After many years of wishing for a "home" for the society and its archives, the building was donated to the Lost Villages Historical Society by the Township of South Stormont, and moved on October 11, 2001. Substantial contributions were made to the society for this move by the Baker Family Foundation, and Ontario Power Generation. Other donations, big and small, helped us to achieve our goal of moving and restoring this reading room, and donors will be recognized, during Canada Day celebrations, 2002. \$40,000.00 was provided for the move, by our society; and, through our fundraising efforts, we will complete the restoration of our year-round, climate-controlled, resource centre.

The interest in our society, by its members, has been accomplished through the society's efforts in having monthly speakers and entertainment at our meetings. In any given year, it is necessary to line up eight different speakers or activities. With ten years under his belt now, your president is finding it increasingly more difficult to develop ideas for these meetings. He needs help. If you know of an interesting topic or speaker, engage a "guest" to attend and make a presentation to our membership. We are not looking for experts, however we are looking for topics and speakers who have a message to give, preferably in history and heritage. We have eight months to fill, and your president is always looking for ideas.

In 2001, we had a most interesting roster up of guest speakers for our monthly meetings, -Glen Cunningham, with the Granny Hoople story in February; a "Show and Tell" in March; Freeman Elliott's slides in April, arranged through the good work of Alan Rafuse; Chuck Charlebois and Cornwall's Renaissance Project in May; Shaun Wallace and the Morrisburg and District Historical Society in September; Chris Emard and the Empey/Thompson House in October; Joy Parr's "Megaproject: History, Technology, Memory and Power" lecture at the McIntosh Inn in November; and a Christmas Potluck and "Heritage Community Recognition Award" presentation in December. 2001 was a busy year!

Before concluding my remarks this evening, I wish to recognize the many, many fine contributions made by you all to our historical society. From addressing, sealing and posting envelopes; cleaning and guiding at the museum site; planting flowers in the museum's gardens and at our historical plaques along County Road #2; cooking, baking and entertaining; promoting the society; answering questions

by phone or mail; providing financial support, and the list goes on and on. You have all made a difference. The success of our society has been accomplished by many, many people working together for a common goal, or should I say goals. You have all played your part well, and I, as your president, thank you from the bottom of my heart. As we celebrate our 25th anniversary in 2002, and pat ourselves on the back for the success at our museum site during the past ten years, we must remember the "pioneers" of our society, and the firm foundation which they built for us, as we develop our historical society. We must remember them, and we must remember two outstanding members of our society who passed away in 2001, -Lottie MacLeod on May 27, and Ruth Fowler on August 14.

In conclusion, let me say that it was a pleasure serving, once again, as president of the Lost Villages Historical Society. We have much to do in 2002, however, with the help of each and every one of you, success will follow. I encourage the younger members of our society to pick up the torch, and assist, whenever possible. Your time and talents have been appreciated in the past, and they will certainly be appreciated in the future. For those who have actively served in the past, however cannot do so at this time, let me say that our society owes you much appreciation. We know that it frustrates you not to be physically active with our society and museum's activities, however your words of encouragement will certainly sustain us and encourage us to move forward. As I look around this hall this evening, some of our society's earliest pioneers continue to support the aims and objectives of the Lost Villages Historical Society. May they be an inspiration for us to continue. My work with the historical society and museum has been supported by a kind and supportive family. I especially thank Paulette for putting up with my "interest" in the work of the historical society. Finally, as president, I wish each and every one of you good health and happiness in the future. May you find pleasure as you reflect on the accomplishments of our historical society during the past twenty-five years.

Respectfully submitted this 20th day of May, 2002.

Jim Brownell President, Lost Villages Historical Society