



## **Annual Report 2001**

LOST VILLAGES HISTORICAL SOCIETY - ANNUAL MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 21, 2001

ST. ANDREW'S/ST. MARK'S UNITED CHURCH, LONG SAULT, ONTARIO

This evening's annual general meeting marks the twenty-second time that members and "friends" of the Lost Villages Historical Society have gathered to celebrate and reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, and to recognize and thank all those who continue to work to the aims and objectives of the society. The year 2000, the "Millennium" year for the society, was a busy one, and I thank all those who continued to work to "preserve and protect the history and heritage of the Lost Villages".

Throughout 2000, there were many obstacles to overcome, and many challenges to face, however members rose to the occasion, once again, and helped to deliver a product in the community. You continued to enhance the Lost Villages Historical Society, and you continued to support a museum in our community. We continue to build on the successes of the past, and we are most encouraged by the support received from citizens of the community and leaders in government circles. With an important story to tell, and with the museum site becoming one of the major non-governmental tourist attractions in the area, we have much to be thankful for during the past year. Our patrons have been very kind to us, and they continue to support the activities at Ault Park. With the passing of many of our society's "pioneers" in the recent past, it becomes necessary for a new generation to pick up the torch and continue to preserve our heritage. This is being done at Ault Park, through the good efforts of the members of the Lost Villages Historical Society.

As president of the society for a number of years, perhaps far too long, I wish to commend the members of the executive for a job "Well Done" in 2000. Many of you, on very short notice, have worked to advance the name and objectives of the

society. You have all carried out your executive duties in an exemplary manner, and I commend and congratulate you on your endeavours. Remember, you have all said “yes” to the jobs that very few wish to say “yes” to. Our society members say “thank you” for sharing your time and talents. To Joan McEwan, past-president; Rita Canough and Rosemary Rutley, recording secretaries; Winnifred Murdock, Corresponding Secretary; Vale Brownell, Treasurer; and Isabel Hunter, membership convenor, my hat is off to you, our hats are off to you, for the tremendous efforts throughout 2000. A team effort has prevailed, and you all have made tremendous contributions in your fields of expertise.

As I read over the names of the executive members, you probably realized that I neglected to mention our first vice-president. Yes, it was on June 29, 2000, that our society, and the community, lost our most dedicated member, Fran Laflamme. Fran was our society’s first president, and served in that capacity for many years. She worked tirelessly for the society, and every project in the past had her special “seal of approval” and blessing. Fran was my mentor, and I feel so proud to have served with her on so many projects for this society. She was an inspiration to us all, and, as mentioned, she was the society’s first vice-president at the time of her passing. This executive spot was not filled in 2000, and it is a position which requires a “yes” from one of our members. With Fran’s passing, there are some very big shoes to fill, however our society is known for its teamwork and organizational skills. Since 1977, Fran kept things together, -encouraging many, organizing this and that, and making sure that the message of the “Lost Villages” was delivered far and wide. She left us with wonderful memories, and her presence is felt at every visit to Ault Park. The community’s contribution with Fran Laflamme Drive is a lasting tribute to a “Great Lady”, and how great she was on that warm April Saturday in the year 2000, when she unveiled the signs to her road. So richly deserved!

Early in this report, I wish to pay tribute to the dedication and commitment to history and heritage of our community by the members of the Council for the Township of South Stormont. Throughout the “millennium” year in the township, members of council gave both moral and financial support to the society, and we are most appreciative of this. As well, it was the immediate past Council which saw to the replacement of the “Johnny-on-the-spot” at Ault Park, with a permanent washroom facility.

Although long overdue, it was the desire of Council to support the good work of members of the Lost Villages Historical Society. As well, with the ever increasing number of patrons to the park, they felt that a new facility, cared for by the

volunteers of our organization, would be of benefit to community citizens and tourists. We say “thank you” to them, and we encourage the “new” Council of 2001 to continue to support the conservation and preservation of history and heritage. I must say that we have our staunchest supporter on Council with us this evening. Not only is Heine Bruning the Warden for the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, and Deputy-Reeve for the Township of South Stormont, he and his wife, Ann, are members of our historical society. We are proud of this fact.

Throughout 2000, the members of our society were busy on a number of fronts, whether baking for our bake sales, selling things at our flea markets, cooking hamburgers and hotdogs at our functions at Ault Park, addressing envelopes, or preparing those arduous tax forms which must be completed on a yearly basis. Many, too, assisted with the events at the museum site, from cleaning to guiding. To all those who assisted with any event in the year 2000, my personal thanks, and my encouragement to you in the future. We continue to build our membership, and it is most encouraging to see some new and younger bodies among us. With the tasks to be performed in the operation of our historical society and museum, it will take the help and commitment of these new faces in the future. Without naming names, I thank you all for rolling up your sleeves and assisting with our projects.

Our historical society continues to be blessed with the strong financial support of patrons and heritage conscious citizens. With our financial report this evening, you will see that we continue to make money, and we continue to spend it. With the spending part, I think we can all be proud of the results. Many people have commented to me that, with limited funds, we certainly get much work done. Yes, we have stretched our funds to the limit, and we have had the resources to combine these funds with the volunteerism of many, many people. This combination has established the strong foundation for our society. Our bake sales, flea markets, bus tours, church services, and sales counter at the museum have all been financially successful. As well, we appreciate the generosity of members who have accepted tax receipts, instead of cash, for contributions made to the society. As in the past, we are ever grateful to the pupils and staff of Longue Sault Public School for their generous support of our society with the fall bike-a-thon to Ault Park. Once again, this community school raised over \$1,500.00 for our society. In turn, we hosted the community school to a barbecue in the park and some lovely incentive prizes.

On “Canada Day” 2000, our historical society opened our eighth building at the museum site, School Section #17, Roxborough Township. With a large crowd of

spectators at the park for the “millennium” Canada Day festivities, we had a wonderful audience for this “grand opening”. Alice Ferguson, the last principal at this school, was invited back for the ribbon-cutting ceremony, and everyone had the opportunity to visit the displays which were set up within. The building was substantially restored in 1999, and only a few finishing touches had to be carried out in 2000, in order to bring the schoolhouse to its former glory. Although not a “Lost Village” schoolhouse, for they disappeared long ago, this building gives us the opportunity to tell the story of our “Lost Villages” schools. With the restoration work, we must commend Donnie Alguire, Alan Rafuse, and Alex McGillivray, for their work in restoring this heritage structure. Today it stand in its 1870 glory!

It was on June 30, 2000, that the Sandtown Advent Christian Church was moved onto its site at Ault Park. With wet conditions hampering an earlier move to the park location, Greg Sullivan felt that a move could be accomplished on that date.

We all hoped and prayed that it would happen, for the next day we would have Canada Day celebrations in the park, and the church had to leave its parking spot on Fran Laflamme Drive. With some towing, some pushing and prodding, the church was finally at its finally resting place, -although the lights of Greg’s truck had to be used after the sun went down. By 10:00 p.m., he and his dog were on their way. What an evening! Although much of the exterior restoration had been completed as the church sat on the mover on the roadway, much work had to be done to the interior. Once again, after many hours of blood, sweat and tears, and yes, a sore back by yours truly, the church was ready for its official opening on September 24, 2000. Although donor Leitha Casselman was not able to be with us, we were honoured to welcome Ron and Betty (Casselman) Neville, and family, to the celebration. An Ecumenical service, with clergy from the various faiths from the Lost Villages, was attended by an overflow crowd of members, friends, and former adherents from Sandtown. It was certainly a day to remember. As with the school, we had our same carpenters and painters on this restoration job, and we also had the skills of some new “friends”. Rick Forrester, now a member of our historical society, restored the windows, and John Bies of Long Sault, fashioned a beautiful cross for the church. This replaced the wooden cross which was attached to the front of the church. On December 3, 2000, the church was the venue for a beautiful Advent Carol Service, conducted by Bill, Rosemary, Felicity and Emily Brown, -Bill being a former resident of Moulinette. Those who attended will never forget the beauty of the church, the richness of the music which flowed through the church, and the body heat required to warm the log house, for the reception which followed. Really, we worshipped as our ancestors worshipped, without the

comfort of a thermostat.

As I have expressed throughout my years as your president, I am constantly seeking names and subjects for guest speakers at our monthly meetings. It is my belief that the success of our monthly meetings is directly attributed to the topics which are presented. With our meetings averaging between 25 and 30 members each month, something is certainly working. Once again, it is my hope that members will seek out and invite guests for the lecture part of our meetings. As well, I am constantly seeking information for the monthly newsletters. Yes, I have heard that many of you enjoy them, however it does take much work at assembling the information and having it put into type. The newsletters, too, have generated much interest in the society, and the increase in new members is linked to the success of our newsletters. At this time, I would like to express our sincere thanks to Winnifred Murdock for all her work in having the newsletters addressed and stamped for postal service. This is a big task, and Winnie always undertakes the work with a smile on her face. I think I'm right, Winnie! With new technology, our society has now taken on a global perspective. After much work in the fall of 2000, our website was up and running in early January 2001.

Almost 1000 hits have been made to our site since that time, and this is excellent exposure for the society. We thank Raymond Lacroix and Jim Brydges for their work in helping to establish our internet site, <[www.lostvillages.ca](http://www.lostvillages.ca)>. They have taken the information I have supplied to them and have placed it at our website.

Our monthly meetings for 2000 began with our annual "Heritage Dinner", on Heritage Day, the third Monday of February, with Yves Racine, Restoration Technologist with Parks Canada, as our guest. His presentation on "Heritage Conservation in the Downtown Business Core, A Case Study of Cornwall" was most informative. In February, our society also participated in the annual "Heritage Fair" sponsored by the Local Conservation Advisory Committee for the City of Cornwall. In February, we were saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Burton Wasson, a long-time member of our historical society.

In March, we welcomed Maggie Wheeler, a local resident from Ault Island. Maggie addressed our organization on her work with a murder-mystery she was planning to write, with the story base connected to the Lost Villages, and, particularly, Aultsville. Maggie was able to make a number of contacts at this meeting, and we left the meeting with our thoughts on purchasing an murder-mystery by a local author. As we know, "A Violent End" was officially launched, last month, at the Home and Trade Show, sponsored by the South Stormont

Chamber of Commerce.

In April, Heine Bruning was the guest speaker, and his topic was “Dutch Immigration and History in Osnabruck Township”. Through personal anecdotes, and stories about life in the Dutch families in our local area, Heine made us all proud of the heritage of these “recent” immigrants. During the past fifty or so years, our lives have been touched by the industriousness and hard work of the Dutch immigrants to our neighbourhoods. In April, our society took second place at the first annual “South Stormont Home and Trade Show”, and we were delighted to recognize and support Donald Stuart on the launch of his first book, “No Road Back, A Grown Boy’s Stories of Wales”. On April 15, 2000, many of us attended a most impressive ceremony on County Road #2, when Fran Laflamme unveiled the signs to “her” road. We were so fortunate that Fran was well enough to attend the unveiling, and that her sister, Rosemarie” and family were able to attend.

Our annual dinner meeting in May was in the form of an “Italian Feast”, hosted by the fundraising committee of Our Lady of Grace Church in Ingleside. Sandra Shouldice, President of the St. Lawrence Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association was the guest speaker, and she came attired in the costume of our Loyalist ancestors. In May, we took part in the “Upper Canada Challenge”, a joint project between Upper Canada Village and the Lost Villages Historical Society. Once again, it was wonderful to work with our friends at Upper Canada Village.

During the summer of 2000, Ann-Marie Bourgon returned to the Lost Villages Museum and presented another “Day Camp” for children. As in the past, this program proved very successful, although in 2001 she anticipates having the program for children, ages 5-8. Jonathan Irvine, a Cornwall resident, and studying at the University of Guelph, was hired as the summer interpreter at the museum, and his relief was Nathaniel Millward, of Ingleside. Both employees greeted patrons and guests to the museum site, and assisted with other projects from time to time. The success of all programs at the park was enhanced by the new washroom facilities, which opened on Canada Day. Our summer bus tours were held on six Sundays throughout the summer, and Mary Lynn (Johnston) Alguire, a member of our historical society, did another “first class” job at telling the story of the Hydro and Seaway projects of the 1950s, and the life in the “Lost Villages”. All participants returned to the park for a barbecue, and all had impressive comments to make about the tour. Mary Lynn will continue with this work in the summer of 2001, with six tours already planned during July, August and September.

Our autumn activities kicked off with the official opening of the Sandtown Advent Christian Church, and our September meeting allowed us the opportunity to plan for fall and winter events. It also gave us the chance to catch our breath, and take stock of our busy summer activities. I continued to lecture at many functions throughout Eastern Ontario, with the furthest west lecture being to the Kingston Genealogical Society's June meeting. The highlight of these lectures was the Elderhostel cruises which I took aboard the Grande Carribe, a cruise ship which transported me between Crylser Marina and the old post of Montreal. I was invited to present a three-hour lecture to 120 American seniors, and what a grand time it was. I have been invited back for a repeat performance in June, 2001. I look forward with anticipation.

In October we welcomed Mrs. Isobel Williams, of the Williamsburg Heritage Society. She outlined the efforts of this organization in protecting the history and heritage of Dr. Locke's community. Mrs. Williams was most impressed with our organization, and she picked up a number of hints for use in the Williamsburg Heritage Society. On a cold, snowy evening in November, a number of hearty souls made the trek to Williamstown, Ontario, to hear Esther Bryan's presentation on "Invitation, the Quilt of Belonging". Esther gave us a guided tour of the project, and those who were in attendance were most impressed with what they saw. One can visualize the beauty of the finished project.

Finally, in December, 2000, we held a special dinner at the South Stormont Seniors' Support Centre, to honour three individuals for their work in history and heritage conservation and preservation. Reeve Jim Bancroft presented the Ontario Heritage Foundation's "Heritage Community Recognition Awards" to Winnifred Murdock, Donald Alguire and Tim Gault. On that evening, Tim made the decision to join our society, and we are delighted that he did. Tim joined our "clean-up gang" recently at the Lost Villages Museum. Tim continues to keep the grass cut in a "heritage corner" of South Stormont. Winnie and Donnie were most deserving of the recognition, and we certainly hope that the Township of South Stormont continues to participate in this important heritage recognition program. We must all work to profile and recognize the contributions made to preserving the history and heritage of South Stormont.

In conclusion, I thank all of you for your support and encouragement during our "millennium" year. We have worked to profile our historical society in the life of our community, and we must continue in the future. We must work to support the aims and objectives which were established by our organization's "pioneers". As I said in 1999, I continue to be optimistic about the future of the Lost Villages

Historical Society. We have grown steadily during the past few years, and we have acquired the talents of some new members. Let's continue to support the talents of one another. Before ending this presentation, I would be remiss if I did not thank Paulette for putting up with my "interests" in the historical society. She knows that I enjoy my work in the historical society, and she remarked recently, "What would you do without the Lost Villages

Museum?" Well, I could find much to do, however I could not find a hobby which would give me as much satisfaction as my work with the Lost Villages Historical Society and Museum. Finally, as president, I wish each and every one of you good health and happiness in the future. May you continue to remember the "pioneers" of our historical society, and remember those who are ill or infirm, and could not be with us this evening. These people have left us with the society's and museum's future. I wish you well.

Respectfully submitted this 21 day of May, 2001.

Jim Brownell

President, Lost Villages Historical Society