



## **June/July 2001 Newsletter**

### **SUMMER ARRIVES AT THE LOST VILLAGES MUSEUM**

The Lost Villages Museum is now open for another summer season, and things are shaping up for a very busy summer. Thank you to all those who assisted in getting the museum buildings in tip-top shape. Shirley Wells, Rita Canough, Lenora Salmon, Donnie Alguire, Isabel Hunter, Tim Gault, JaneCraig, Vale Brownell, Alan Rafuse, and Jim Brownell attended a "clean-up day" on Saturday, May 5, 2001. Many hand helped to get the tasks done quickly. Some of the displays have been revamped, with a number of new display cases in the log house and school. Although it was much work to get the displays assembled, we have had many fine comments about them, and the artifacts displayed in them. There is certainly much more work to do in this area, however the Lost Villages Historical Society is a volunteer organization, and activities do take time to develop. Once again, thank you to everyone for making the 2001 "opening" a success.

With summer, comes a time to step back from the regular monthly meetings and enjoy the beautiful summer evenings. Although there will be no meetings in July and August, we encourage you to attend the various functions of the historical society, and visit the museum site with family and friends. Help us to profile the society and museum in the community. Your help and encouragement is appreciated. \_\_\_\_\_

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

The Lost Villages Historical Society membership has experienced phenomenal growth during the past year, and we now have 170 newsletters to prepare and stuff in envelopes and stamp. This work is so capably performed by Winnie Murdock, Corresponding Secretary of the society. Winnie continues to acknowledge all correspondence which comes to the society's address. As well, she is constantly updating our membership list. With this update comes a call for your renewal.

With the cost of postage and envelopes, it is necessary to have your membership, should you have an ANNUAL membership. Should you find a "Happy Face" sticker at the beginning of this news item, then your membership has expired, and it is time for renewal. Memberships are due in May of each year. For SUSTAINING members, no fees are required.

With the "Happy Face", comes our thanks for the renewal and you will put a "big smile" on Winnie's face. The membership fees are as follows: Individual \$5.00/year; Family \$8.00/year; Sustaining \$35.00/year. Membership fees may be mailed to the address shown above, or you may drop off your membership at the Lost Villages Museum. A membership card will accompany your first newsletter, upon renewal.

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## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!**

Guest speakers for the September and October meetings of the Lost Villages Historical Society have been booked, and the executive of the society's encourages you to mark these dates on your calendar.

On Monday, September 17, 2001, Mr. Shaun Wallace, President of the Morrisburg and District Historical Society, will address our society. This historical society developed through the initiative of Shaun Wallace, and I am sure he will have interesting stories to tell us about the society's development. The society has been active on a number of fronts in the Morrisburg area, and his presentation will highlight their successes to date. They are off to a fantastic start!

On Monday, October 15, 2001, Mr. Chris Emard will be the guest speaker. Chris is a columnist for the Standard-Freeholder, with a weekly "Handyman Hints" column. Chris is the present owner of the Empey/Thompson House, Post Road, Long Sault, and we have discovered many things about this old house through Chris's column. The Empey/Thompson house was built at the site of the old "Empey's Inn", which, today, forms part of the studio at the back of this house.

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## **2001 ONTARIO VOLUNTEER AWARDS**

On Wednesday, June 13, 2001, six Lost Villages Historical Society members were honoured by the Ontario government with "2001 Ontario Volunteer Awards". These awards, recognizing Ontario's volunteers during the "International Year of Volunteers", were presented at a special ceremony at the Cornwall Civic Complex,

Receiving awards for 20 years of volunteerism with the Lost Villages Historical Society were Winnifred Murdock, Vale Brownell and Joan McEwan; 15 years volunteer award recipients were Rita Canough and Lenora Salmon; and Alan Rafuse received an award for five years of volunteer service to the society.

The Lost Villages Historical Society congratulates these recipients, and thanks the Honourable Cam Jackson, Minister of Citizenship at the time of the awards, for recognizing six members of the Lost Villages Historical Society.

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## **WE HAVE BEEN BUSY AT THE MUSEUM**

Even before our official opening for the 2001 season, patrons were visiting the museum site. Early indications point to a very busy summer. To date, we have hosted the following events and tours at the museum.

May 12, 2001, -Martintown Girl Guides visited. A very fine "thank you" note was received from the young ladies in this group.

May 23, 2001, -A group from a Brockville Seniors' Complex, under the direction of Marian Cromb, arrived by motor coach and enjoyed a visit. Jim Brownell met the group at Gedoro's Restaurant in Cornwall, and escorted the bus. All assembled in the church for a short lecture before the tour of the buildings.

May 27, 2001, -A scout group from Cornwall, -Sacred Heart Scouts, heard the story of the Lost Villages and visited the museum buildings.

June 4, 2001, -Teen Dancause's "Art Group" met at Ault Park and spent the day sketching and painting. The schoolhouse was used for a critique session, held at the conclusion of each class. Lovely work by aspiring artists!

June 8, 2001, -70 delegates at the National Convention of the United Empire Loyalist Association visited the museum buildings, following a short lecture on the "Lost Villages". This was a last stop on an all-day bus tour, escorted by Jim Brownell and Lyall Manson. A most enjoyable time, and these delegates left with wonderful memories of our museum site, and the volunteer work required to maintain it.

June 9, 2001, -40 members of Bell Street United Church, Ottawa, from a group called "Ark-M", arrived for an afternoon museum tour and bus tour. This visit was organized by Phoebe McLelland, to honour their retiring minister, the Rev. John Moor. Unfortunately Rev. Moor had taken ill the night before the trip, and could

not attend, however his wife was very impressed with this visit. Jim Brownell hopped on the bus and toured with the group through Long Sault, the Long Sault Parkway, and Ingleside.

June 12, 2001, -Over fifty students from Ahkwesahsne-Mohawk School, under the leadership of their teacher, Miss Cindy Froats, stopped for an afternoon visit. They participated in a "Discovery Quiz", and enjoyed their time at the Lost Villages. A donation of \$60.00 was presented to the society.

June 13, 2001, -The students from J.S. Macdonald/Kinsmen School, Rosedale Terrace, South Stormont, visited the museum buildings, enjoyed a barbecue lunch, and participated in games at the park. Thank you to all the society members who assisted with this event. Much appreciated by the staff and students.

June 17, 2001, -St. John's Presbyterian Church, Cornwall, held an outdoor service at the park, and worshippers enjoyed a noon-hour barbecue in the park. This was a great day for fellowship, and the museum buildings were open for all to visit and enjoy.

June 23, 2001, -Members of the Seaway Valley Amateur Radio Club, under the direction of their President, Tim Smith, held their annual "Field Day" at Ault Park. The schoolhouse was used as the base for operations, and the participants reached around the world for contacts. Our society's website was promoted during these contacts.

June 25, 2001, -A school bus load of students from Roxmore Public School, Avonmore, under the direction of their teacher, Ms. Joan Delaney, arrived for an early morning visit, before heading to the beach at Farran Park. The students participated in the "Discovery Quiz", and, on the second last day of school, students were learning about their heritage. Have we been busy?

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## BITS AND PIECES

The Lost Villages Historical Society had a parade entry in Upper Canada Village's 40th Anniversary Parade. The float was designed and prepared by Jim Brownell, and it was capably maneuvered around the village by Nathaniel Millward and Shaun Dunn. Nathan Gowsell, summer interpreter at the museum painted the signs for the float. The float depicted the Rapids Prince in the Long Sault Rapids, with two young gals enjoying a view from "the Head" of Sheek's Island. As well, members from our historical society assisted with the distribution of cake and

lemonade, following the parade and anniversary ceremony at Chrysler Hall. Mavis Nixon, Vale Brownell, Jane Craig, Nancy Hickey, Bud and Marion Johnston, Ernie and Rita Gillard, Lenora Salmon and Rita Canough capably represented our society at this function. Our society was the recipient of a \$260.00 donation from Maggie Wheeler, a result of the launch of "A Violent End" at South Stormont Chamber of Commerce "Home and Trade Show". Maggie contributed 10% of launch day sales to the society. We are most grateful for this generosity, and we encourage members to purchase a copy of Maggie's book. It is a wonderful murder-mystery, entwined around the Hydro and Seaway projects of the 1950s. This is a "must" read for summer. The book makes a great gift, too. They are available at the Lost Villages store.

The Lost Villages Display cases are now permanently fixed to the walls of Rothwell-Osnabruck School/Lancer Centre in Ingleside. These cases have been filled with artifacts from the Lost Villages. These were prepared and assembled by Jim Brownell, in time for the school's unit study on the "Lost Villages". Jim Brownell also escorted the grade seven students from Rothwell-Osnabruck School on a bus tour of the Lost Villages, on Tuesday, May 8, 2001. As well, Jim was a judge at the school's "Lost Villages Fair", held on May 22nd, and he was the quizmaster for Tom Dumbrille's "Lost Villages Quiz", held on May 24th. This quiz concluded Tom's study unit on the Lost Villages.

Glen and Kay Keyes, members of the Lost Villages Historical Society, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary recently. All member wish you good health and happiness in the future.

We thank the St. Lawrence Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association for their generosity following the successful national convention of the association, held in Cornwall from June 7-10, 2001. We are most appreciative of the \$300.00 cheque, presented to us from the association, and we appreciate the generosity of the convention chair, Mr. George Anderson, for the most generous donation from his wife, Janet, and himself. Our society had a display at the convention, and we thank Rosemary Rutley and Maggie Wheeler for attending at the NAVCAN facility. They represented our society well, and they profiled their books, -"Voices from the Lost Villages" and "A Violent End". Thanks so much.

The society's website at [www.lostvillages.ca](http://www.lostvillages.ca) has achieved phenomenal success since its launch in early March, 2001. We have had over 1200 hits since that time, with people exploring the site and making contact to our email address. Many people have connected to the museum, and have made plans to visit the site in the

summer of 2001.

We thank all those who contributed to the success of our annual "Bake Sale", held on Tuesday, May 29, 2001, at the Bank of Montreal, Pitt Street, Cornwall. Thank you to all who worked on this project, all who baked goods for the sale, and all who attended and promoted the event. From the baked goods, we raised a sum of \$292.62, and other monetary donations were received throughout the sale. Once again, we profiled our society, and we raised some much needed money for our various projects.

The executive would like to remind members and "friends" that we do have "membership pins" available and for sale. These show the logo for our organization, the one on the society's letterhead, and are available at a cost of \$8.00. They come with a short stick-pin and small circular attachment. As well, we remind you that the society has "In Memorium" cards. When thinking of a memorial donation to a charity of your choice, why not think of the Lost Villages Historical Society. Income Tax receipts are given for all donations. These are available from Vale Brownell and Winnie Murdock, (Ingleside), and Jim Brownell, (Long Sault).

The Forbes Memorial Reading Room 1901 relocation project continues to advance, although the wheels of bureaucracy move very slowly. We have had excellent success to date, with approximately \$40,000.00 donated or pledged to the relocation project. The Township of South Stormont continues to work on this project, and we hope to have plans finalized very soon. We thank Allan Forbes, grandson of Isabella Forbes, for his work in soliciting funds from family members. At the moment, Allan is \$100.00 shy of his goal of \$5,000.00 from family members. We are so appreciative of his enthusiasm and efforts. As well, the South Stormont Fundraising Committee will be contributing to the fund, as will the Cornwall Township Lion's Club, and the Cornwall Sunrise Rotary Club. A donation will be made to Jim Brownell on Wednesday, July 4, 2001, during the Rotary breakfast meeting at the Glen-Sot-Dun Lodge. Jim has been promised a donation of \$500.00, if he speaks. He'll be there!!

We welcome Jane Craig as the new Vice-President of the Lost Villages Historical Society. Since joining our society about one year ago, Jane has rolled up her sleeves and committed to many of our society's projects. Jane is the former Jane Whiteside, of Moulinette, -of the Whiteside's "Lion Hotel". Thanks, Jane, for your enthusiastic support. We welcome our two summer interpreters to the Lost Villages Museum. Nathaniel Millward, a student at Rothwell-Osnabruck School,

has returned for another year. Nathaniel spent many volunteer hours at the museum in 2000, and was hired to cover our September dates in the Millennium year. Nathan Gowsell, a resident of Long Sault, and a student at St. Lawrence College, Kingston, accepted the second position at the museum. He began his employ on June 11, 2001, although he covered for the three previous weekends. These young men are anxious to hear your stories of the Lost Villages. Don't hesitate to express them when attending at the museum site. We thank the Federal government for the two grants received in 2001, -the Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions Grant of \$2,425.50, through the Canadian Museums Association; and the Summer Career Placement Grant of \$2,302.00, through Human Resources Development Canada. .

We offer "Get Well" wishes to four members of our society who have been "under the weather" lately. Alex McGillivray has spent a few weeks recovering from major surgery. We hope and pray that Alex is on the road to a full recovery, and that he will be back to the museum site very soon. Our St. David's "Driveshed" project is at a standstill, and we await Alex return with direction and advice. We wish Alan Rafuse, another of our exceptional volunteers on the museum's building projects, a speedy recovery from surgery. Ault Park is just not the same without these two men around. "Get Well" soon, boys! We wish Jeannine Roy-Poirier the very best as she recovers at home. With a "heart of gold", we know that Jeannine will relax and take it easy for a while, and have her heart back to top efficiency. "Get Well" soon, Jeannine! We wish Kay McNairn a speedy recovery as she recuperates. Kay has been an exceptional caregiver to Stanley, at Woodland Villa, and I'm sure he misses her daily visits. Our thoughts and prayers are with Kay and Stanley, two outstanding "heritage activists".

We thank Alan Rafuse, George and Nancy Hickey, Vale Brownell, and Lenora Salmon for their help at the museum site on the afternoon of the United Empire Loyalist tour. Your presence was appreciated by the delegates to this convention. We were honoured to have C. William Terry, Dominion President of the United Empire Loyalist Association in attendance. He certainly enjoyed his visit.

We thank Muriel Charlebois and Neil Moore, Long Sault, for their generous donation of flowers to the Ault Memorial Stone garden. Neil is a member of our society, and Muriel is Jim Brownell's mother-in-law. For the second year now, both individuals have purchased the flowers and planted them in the circular garden at the stone. The vivid red of the wax begonias certainly profiles the memorial stone in Ault Park. A job "Well Done"! Volunteerism is alive and well in South Stormont. We thank, once again, Shirley Wells, a long-time member of

the Lost Villages Historical Society, with family roots in Aultsville, for her work in planting flowers under the Aultsville plaque, on County Road #2, near the Upper Canada Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Shirley has been doing this since 1998. As well, Shirley has been the "keeper" of the small garden outside the log house at the museum site. Perennials are now growing very well in this garden.

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## THE SHARP ENDERS & BLACK GANGS & COOKS OF THE PRE-SEAWAY CANAL BOATS

This is the conclusion to Alan Rafuse's presentation, "Life on the River". The first part was featured in the May newsletter, and it received excellent reviews from members and "friends" of the society. We thank Alan for his literary talent, and for taking the time to put his thoughts to paper. Future generations will benefit greatly from Alan's work.

The first stretch of canal below Prescott elevator was called the North Channel, which was essentially a dredged "rock cut" that kept the ships away from the main stream current and guided you to the Cardinal Locks. The north lock was normally the up-bound lock, and the south lock was used for down-bound traffic, releasing you into the main current of the river. The north lock and Galop Canal could be used for down-bound traffic, if there was a period of excessively low water in that area of the river, or in case of a grounded ship like the S.S. Milverton, sinking in mid-stream, after a collision.

When we talk of excessive low water, I've always heard from the old-timers, (pilots and captains), that the Great Lakes water levels ran in seven-year cycles, from extreme high, graduating lower over a seven-year period. There was an area just west of Morrisburg along the length of Ogden Island, that was called "Rapide Plat". If you looked at the depth figures on the river chart, it would scare you! About two-thirds of the way down the island, (in mid-stream), there were two spots which showed on the chart (mean low water) 12' and 13'. To get between those two spots was very exacting, to say the least. It was very common to have a pilot or captain take the wheel in that area. Immediately after getting by that spot, the ship literally and visually dropped into deeper water and occasionally hitting a flat area of rock bottom hard enough to ring the ship's bell. For a seasoned pilot or captain, it was all in a day's work.

In extreme low water years, one could walk across the section of river from Maple Grove to the lower north side of Barnhart Island, as did Alex McGillivray's dad

and his boys.

Down-bound in the main stream current from Cardinal Lock to the Dickinson's Landing Lock, the scenery was all too familiar.

On the Canadian side of the international boundary, you had Cardinal, Frazer Shoal, Presqu'ile Point, Toussaint Island, Iroquois Point, Iroquois, Pinetree Point, Roberston Point, Canada Island, Morrisburg, Doran Point, Doran Island, Indian Shoal, Cook Point, Weaver Point, Steen Island, Aultsville, Farran's Point, Graveyard Point, Maxwell Shoal, Archibald Shoal, Delaney Shoal, Warner Island, Grassy Island and Dickinson's Landing.

On the American side of the boundary, you had Dixon Island, Sears Island, Bay Croft Island, Benedict Island, Twin Island, Round Island, Lalone Island, Lotus Island, Sparrow Hawk Island, Toussaint Island, Point Rockway, Ogden Island, Clark Island, Murphy Point, Dry Island, Murphy Island, Goose Neck Island, Strawberry Island, Crysler Island, Treasure Island, Sturgeon Shoal, Cat Island, Croil Island, Delaney Island with Big Sny and Little Sny Guts, and Long Sault Island.

Remembering "Pinetree Point" -this point was named as such because of a huge pine tree on the point which was used by all ships to steer on. It was used as a fixed marker. We were proceeding down- ound in that area near the end of the Seaway construction. We had the most senior pilot of the day guiding us down river, namely Charles Augustus Mahoney. When he told me to steer on the "Pine Tree", I said, "What pine tree?" He looked out of the front window, and the tree had been cut down. It was the first time in my life that I'd seen an elderly man cry. After piloting for well over 50 years, he was lost in his most familiar (but now unfamiliar) surroundings, and that was his last rip.

Just above the Long Sault Rapids, we work our way to the north shore and head for the western entrance of the Cornwall Canal at Dickinson's Landing. We go by a small lighthouse at the end of the pier, which has since been removed to Upper Canada Village. The lock at "the Landing" was more of a "guard lock", as there was little or no drop from the upper to the lower side of the gates. The new Seaway Lock at Iroquois is of the same idea, and indirectly serves the same purpose, -to guard against disasters or happenings downstream.

After leaving the lock at Dickinson's Landing, down-bound, we observe an area of scenery which is World Class. The beauty and purity of the Long Sault Rapids area, including Sheek Island, was something you just couldn't get enough of.

All too soon, we are entering Bergin Lake, which was a man-made lake within the Cornwall Canal system. This was the mini-Seaway as it was also designed to increase shipping tonnage and Hydro power. But it was done in a way to not interfere with the main flow of the river.

Moving down Bergin Lake, we are running almost parallel to the original old canal, but in deeper water. The visible old canal could be seen as far as the paper mill at Mille Roches. We pass by the village of Moulinette to the north, Frying Pan Island to the south, and then Mille Roches to the north. We have to blow three long blasts on the steam whistle to alert the bridge-master at the east end of the lake that we are coming. Just before we enter the draw of the swing bridge, we go by the Provincial Paper Mill to the north. The swing bridge links the road to Old Mille Roches, the foot of Sheek Island, Power House control dam and the main Sheek Island. It also gives access to the south canal bank, east of the bridge.

Just east of the bridge, there is the continuing Village of Mille Roches to the north. This includes Jim Davis' cheese factory, S.S.#4 Public School, and next door, St. George's Catholic Church. With a little break in the housing further down, you would next see the Mille Roches graveyard, and a little further yet, Albert Andrews' blacksmith shop. Housing was fairly close along the north canal bank, but started thinning out at Maple Grove, where we arrive at Lock 20, with a guard-gate above the lock. The guard-gate was used to block off the canal at that point, in case the canal had to be drained for major repair work east of that point. Other than that, the entire Cornwall Canal used to be drained every spring for a couple of weeks to do any outstanding repairs to the locks and to check the canal banks for trouble spots, such as erosion, etc.

The guard-gate and Lock 20 were more or less central to the area of Maple Grove. Maple Grove was a fairly active area. There were nice farms in the area, including McNairn's (two farms), Roy's, Robertson's, Robidoux and so on. There was also the Ernie Runions Hotel, three service stations, including Welland Hartle, Farrand Gillie, and Milton Matheson. Gillie had tourist cabins on Robertson's Creek, where there was good swimming and diving. There was also a motel east of Gillie's. There was a monument at the south edge of Ernie's Hotel parking lot, commemorating the workers who built the Cornwall Canal. To this day, I don't know where that monument was transferred, but have heard rumours that it is on Hydro property, inside the fence at the Power Dam. It would be a nice and valuable addition to the Lost Villages.

Also, east of Lock 20, was the Maple Grove electrical sub-station, which

distributed power to a fairly large area, including Cornwall, from the Sheek Island Power House. To the extreme end of Maple Grove, there was the Sky-Way Restaurant, owned and operated by Hugh Mullin.

A little further east, we are coming to Lock 19, and, after leaving the lock, we pass the mouth of Blackadder's Creek, which ran under No. 2 Highway and still does. Next stop is Lock 18, at the Howard Smith Paper Mill, and also the Roosevelt Bridge, which had a swing span to let the ships pass. Gerald Revell was bridge operator for many years. Cornwall's main water supply pump-house was on the south side of the canal in that area.

Leaving Lock 18, we are sailing past the southern extremity of the heart of Cornwall. There was a swing bridge at the foot of Augustus Street for the cotton mill workers and access to the road on the south canal bank. At the foot of Pitt Street, there was a Canada Steamship Lines freight shed, where their company ships loaded and discharged freight. There was a rail spur line on the north side of the shed (Water Street), parallel to the shed, for easily handling of goods, to and from the shed, or to and from the ship through the shed, all in the same motion. With no ships at the wall, it was a wine- rinker's haven.

Just east of Pitt Street, the canal took a bit of a curve to the south-east, which lined us up to the approach to Lock 17. Once tied up to the wall above the lock, (or in the lock), we always had to deal with East Side Dairy's delivery truck. The vast majority of ships dealt with them, therefore, they had a very prosperous business. We always considered their dairy products the best on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. Buttermilk, in the summer, was very popular among the seamen.

Lock 15 and 17 was a unique system. They were quite close together, and you could almost say they operated in tandem with one another. There was a widening in the canal between the two locks, which created a pool with enough room for up and down-bound ships to meet and slip right into the next lock. Everything had to be done in a certain sequence to maintain the water level in that pool.

On the north side of the pool, there was a Marine Post Office, which handled the mail for all the ships passing through. East-bound, it was always nice to receive a letter or two, as once you left Lock 15, you had four hours or so to read your mail a few times, lying in your bunk, and maybe even enough time to answer your mail, dropping it off in Lachine or Montreal.

To the north of Lock 15 and 17, was the east entrance to the original canal. That area became a dry- dock area for ship repair and was owned and operated by the

Bingley family.

The old canal system kept you closer to home - so to speak. There was always time to visit or phone family. You could always say, "I'll see you next trip". Once the Seaway opened, you left in the spring, and the expression was, "see you in the fall". Too bad.

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## IN MEMORIUM

Our sympathy is extended to member, John Van Baal, on the passing of his mother, Mrs. Maria Van Baal, on May 14, 2001.

We extend sympathy to society member, Lillian Poirier, on the passing of her companion, Mr. James Shaver, on May 17, 2001.

On May 27, 2001, the Lost Villages Historical Society lost a most valued and active member, Mrs. Lottie MacLeod. Lottie had her 95 birthday on May 22nd, and, until a few months before her death, she was a regular attendee at the society's monthly meetings. As well, she will be remembered for her contributions to the society's bake sales. Her doughnuts were superb! To past-president, Joan McEwan, Bryan and family, and Lottie's family, our condolences.