

CATARAQUI LOYALIST TOWN CRIER

*Published by
The Kingston and District Branch
United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada
P.O. Box 635, Kingston, Ontario K7L 4X1
www.uelac.org/Kingston*

Vo1. 35 No. 4 **DUCIT AMOR PATRIAE** **September 2015**
Kingston and District Branch was granted its charter November 4, 1978

A warm welcome to all! We hope your summer has been productive and enjoyable: “in things Loyalist, of course!” Our first fall meeting is **Saturday, September 26th, at 11:30 a.m. for 12:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Anglican Church** hall, corner of Queen & Montreal Streets. It will be a delicious sandwich and squares luncheon. For those not supplying food, a contribution of \$3.50 would be appreciated. Our speaker is **Mr. Nigel Day**, OLS, OLIP, Head of Geomatics Section at the Ministry of Transportation, Eastern Region. He will talk about early surveying of the lands pre Loyalist settlements.

Do come and join us – and bring a friend!

HAPPENINGS

JUNE 12th has been Proclamation of Loyalist Day in Kingston since 1996. Terry Hicks and Gerry Roney were the initiators and they convinced city council that the Royal Proclamation of George III had been received by Governor Haldimand at Quebec on the 12th of June, 1784.

Kingston District Branch has honoured this proclamation every year by raising the Loyalist flag across from City Hall. The “Duty Band” from Fort Henry joined us by playing the drums and two fifes. We were privileged to hear Cpl. Szczesniak, Pvt. Vandeven, and Pvt. Drouin guide our little parade.

June 14th, Sunday at 2:00 p.m. St. Alban the Martyr’s Church welcomed all at the 231st Anniversary of the landing in Adolphustown on June 16th 1784 of the United Empire Loyalist settlers under the command of Major Peter van Alstine. Officiant was Reverend Dr. John Walmsley and guest speaker Peter C. Newman CC, CD, Author, gave us insights to his book on the Loyalists. Tea was served on the lawn following the service.

June 19th is Loyalist Day in Ontario. However we were unable to have the Loyalist flag flying among other flags at the corner of Princess and Division Streets.

LOYALISTS COME WEST
2015 VICTORIA, B.C.

May 28th, 29th, 30th and Sunday morning were busy days. Meeting friends, gleaning information at sessions, chatting over tea, going on tours and ending with a Gala Banquet. (The Greater Victoria Police Chorus were great singers!)

U.E.L.A.C. NEWS

U.E.L. Association of Canada are holding next year's Annual Meeting 2016, "Loyalists, Lighthouses, Lobsters", Summerside, P.E.I. The Conference will be held within the beautiful historic Loyalist Country Inn, 195 Heather Moyse Drive, Summerside, Prince Edward Island. C1N 5R1.

NEW BOOK

Peter Newman has written a new book on the United Empire Loyalists due to be published this fall. Mr. Newman said many books have been written on the Loyalists and their ancestors' genealogy, but not as much on their trials and tribulations. He has two other book projects in the making, keeps up teaching at Ryerson and other universities, and is Journalist In Residence at the Royal Military College in Kingston.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The Kingston District Branch sends a warm welcome to new members Mary Lynn Bell and Ronald Edward Storing. We hope to see you at our meetings as you are not too far away from our meetings at St. Paul's Anglican Church.
- thank you to Doris Wemp

KINGSTON BRANCH O.G.S.

The Kingston and Area Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet in the Frontenac Room of the Kingston Seniors Centre, 56 Francis St., on Saturday, September 19th at 10:00 a.m. Patti Mordasewicz will speak on "Getting to Know the Neighbours – Resources at the Leeds and Grenville Archives." Visitors welcome. Further details at www.ogs.on.ca/kingston

HERITAGE FAIR KEY TO OUR HISTORY

From the Kingston Whig Standard, Wednesday, April 8th, 2015:

“Heritage Fairs Key to Our History” by Gord Sly

For 20 years schools have participated in various disciplines to be judged in history projects at the fair. The goals of the fairs have remained unchanged and still are:

- To create an environment where students are expected to learn and share;
- To provide recognition for student achievement;
- To celebrate cultural diversity and multiple perspectives;
- To reveal the connection between the past and the present;
- And to inspire Canadians to celebrate their place in history.

Each year since 1995, our U.E.L. Branch sets up a display and enters the National Heritage Project. Key members have dedicated much time and energy to the fair’s success and include John Fielding, Ellie Deir, Carol White, Gary Shultz, and Mark Millan. Heritage fairs bring Canadian history to life, and we commend the teachers, sponsors and students for their yearly dedication.

FINDINGS FROM EVA WIRTH

1851 Township Kingston, Frontenac City:
“Concerns People”

Mr. Peter Asselstine is a millwright of considerable ingeniousness. He has discovered perpetual motion. His plan is nearly finished. He only wants some trifling thing and all will be completed. He has likewise discovered how a crank case which he placed on a cylinder in such a manner that at every revolution (without increase of power) a saw will move up and down twice and saw twice the quantity in the same space of time. This will be an incalculable acquisition to the owners of sawmills. He intends to apply to Government for patents and remuneration in a short time.

- George Sparkham

The Kingston and District Branch of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada wishes to acknowledge and sincerely thank the Government of Ontario for the support they have given us in achieving our outreach projects.

ANCESTOR SPOTLIGHT: MY TRIP TO SLEEPY HOLLOW

- by Brett Yerex, U.E.

Legend has it that the grave of the Headless Horseman is in the Old Dutch Burying Ground at Sleepy Hollow. No one knows exactly where the grave is but locals will tell you that if you visit the Burying Ground after midnight ... you just might find out!

I had wanted to visit the Old Dutch Country on the Hudson River ever since I realized that my Jurckse (pronounced Yurks) ancestors farmed there before the American Revolution. Isaac Yerex was the first to Anglicize the spelling of his surname. He and his fourteen-year-old son William evacuated New York City by ship as part of the Associated Loyalists. I felt a desire to explore the land they had left behind. My opportunity to tour this historic area came in September 2002 and I learned much about life in the eighteenth century.

At U.S. Customs I was tempted to tell the officer that we were on a quest to reclaim our ancestral land, but with the anniversary of September 11th on everyone's mind I decided not to be a wise guy. White Plains is located in Westchester County, about a half hour north of New York City. It was conveniently located and became home base. From there we were within easy driving distance of all the sites we wanted to visit.

Four generations of my ancestors lived at Philipsburg Manor. The Manor encompassed over 50,000 acres and was worked by tenant farmers who paid rent in grain and fowl. What a pleasant surprise to discover that the Manor house is currently a living history museum set up to reflect life in 1750. Besides the stone manor house there is a water-powered gristmill and millpond, a slave garden and a reconstructed tenant farmhouse. Historic breeds of cattle, sheep and chickens graze and feed, protected on the grounds. Of particular interest is the role that black slaves played in the running of this property, an indication that slavery was not confined to the South.

Our costumed guide led us through the Manor house. Stopping at the Overseer's Office he explained that the Philipse family was not always at the Manor and they entrusted the daily operations to the overseer who collected rents. Our guide produced a photocopy of a rent roll from 1750. To our delight there was a Johannes Jurckse listed as a tenant. Our guide was very impressed that we had just established a 250 year-old connection to the place.

The mill was amazing. To our surprise, it actually works! The miller explained exactly how it all functioned and then he started it up for us. We were able to buy a small bag of fresh-ground Philipsburg flour for two dollars. On our return home we baked the flour into a loaf of bread and thus had a taste of history.

The Philipse family remained loyal to the Crown and consequently their lands were confiscated and purchased by patriots. Researchers have since concluded that those who owed back rents to the landlord were more likely to become patriots. That's one way to get out of debt!

The Old Dutch Church and Burying Ground was definitely one place we wanted to visit. This site figures prominently in Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Frederick Philipse built the Church over 300 years ago. Folklore has it that a slave suggested to Philipse that a series of floods that were damaging the gristmill would halt if a church were constructed. That slave knew what he was talking about. The church was built and the next flood didn't occur until 1999 when Hurricane Floyd blew through.

The Dutch Reformed Church continued to play a strong role in New York society long after England controlled the colony. Going through the Church records I found 33 Jurckse baptisms and a number of Jurckse marriages recorded here. You can also take a walking tour of the Burial Ground. Included in the tour is the gravesite of a John Yurks Sr., who is my first cousin, seven times removed! If you have ice water in your veins you can stroll through the cemetery along Headless Horseman Drive.

Sleepy Hollow was really just a fictional place. But it is clear that all the events of Irving's book took place in and around Tarrytown. It wasn't until 1996 that North Tarrytown officially changed its name to Sleepy Hollow.

The Historical Society of Tarrytown Museum is located in a grand old home. The curator was very pleased to see someone who showed a genuine interest. She had a wealth of information and could have talked all day about the history of the area. When she heard our last name she disappeared upstairs and brought back a thick genealogy file on our family!

The most exciting event that ever happened in Tarrytown was the capture of British Major John Andre. If you watched A&E's recent presentation on Benedict Arnold then you know all about this. Andre was negotiating with Arnold to change sides when patriots captured him. The British major had incriminating plans of the American fortifications at West Point upon his person. After a quick trial General Washington ordered him hung for treason. Arnold of course escaped and joined the British side for the duration of the conflict.

The Museum had an entire room dedicated to this event and much to my surprise I discovered that one of the captors was John Yurks Jr., my second cousin six times removed. I was now face to face with the reality that some of my ancestors were on the other side!

If you are ever in this area be sure to also visit the museum at West Point Military Academy and the opulent Rockefeller Mansion, Kykuit.

This trip confirmed for me that genealogy is not just about names and dates. Our ancestors' lives were impacted by history. Their decision to remain loyal had dramatic implications for all their dreams and ambitions.

Additional Information about the Old Hay Bay Church in Adolphustown.

It has long been called "The Cradle of Methodism in Upper Canada" for its precedence, and as the centre of the first and largest circuit in the province. The Bay of Quinte circuit reached a peak of 966 members in 1826. Since 1860, the building has had no congregation or appointed minister.

To give some idea of the church as a tourist attraction, in 1997 we had 1500 visitors—a lower number than usual—in the 101 days we were open. Two-thirds came from Ontario, while others came from six other provinces, 20 states, and thirteen other countries including Great Britain, Australia, China, Ukraine, Holland, Norway, Finland, Italy, Germany and Nigeria.

Its history can be summarized thus:

- 1791 - Rev. William Losee organizes first circuit in Upper Canada.
- 1792 - Subscription list commits twenty-two persons to build a "Meeting-house or Church for the more convenient assembling of ourselves together for social worship before the Lord." Size: 36' x 30'.
- 1805 - First Canadian camp meeting held in Adolphustown. Mississauga Indians first attend in 1826.
- 1819 - Tragic drowning of ten youths crossing Hay Bay for Sunday services.
- 1835 - The church enlarged to its present size, 36' x 45'.
- 1860 - Church abandoned; congregation builds new church a few km. away, now known as Adolphustown United Church.
- 1867 - Sold for \$50 to farmer who uses it for grain and implement storage.
- 1910 - General Conference of the Methodist Church meeting in Victoria, BC, agrees to re-purchase the church as an historic site. (This G.C. also voted in favour of Church Union.)
- 1911-12 - Minimally restored, crowds attend re-opening, addressed by Dr. Albert Carman, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church; Dr. Nathaniel Burwash, Chancellor of Victoria University, and others.
- 1942 - General Council of The United Church of Canada, meeting in Belleville, travels to Hay Bay for service marking 150th anniversary. Moderator Dr. J.R.P. Sclater speaks.
- 1947 - Annual Pilgrimage Service inaugurated; the Very Rev. Jesse Arnup preaches.
- 1957 - Historic plaque erected by Archaeological & Historic Sites Board of Ontario.
- 1992 - Bicentennial celebrations. Dr. Charles Yrigoyen, of the General Commission on Archives & History, United Methodist Church, U.S.A., speaks and unveils their marker (see below).
- 2000 - Declared a **National Historic Site** by The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

The Old Hay Bay Church is:

- the first Methodist church erected west of the maritimes, and the first in Upper Canada. Although Methodists erected a few meetinghouses in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (and possibly in Newfoundland) before 1792, none remain. Another meetinghouse was begun in nearby Ernestown township in 1792, but was never finished.
- the oldest building belonging to the United Church of Canada.
- the second oldest church building still standing in Ontario. Her Majesty's Chapel of the Mohawks at Brantford was built in 1785.
- the site of the first Camp Meeting held in Canada, in 1805.
- the oldest extant "foreign mission" building of American Methodism, and the only Canadian site on the Register of Heritage Sites of the United Methodist Church (U.S.A.)

ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE SERVICE

OLD HAY BAY CHURCH



LOYALIST DAY IN KINGSTON



