



# Newsletter

**Autumn 2010**

**With winter fast approaching, this is a good time to look back on our branch activities in this year.**

## Message from the President

Another year is drawing to a close and it is time to renew your branch membership. Unfortunately, we have had to increase the dues for 2011, but only enough to cover the increase voted at the UELAC Annual General Meeting in June to cover rising costs. The Dominion per capita fees are now \$40.00 for individuals and \$55.00 per couple. Our Branch fees remain unchanged at \$2.50 per person making the total that you have to pay: \$42.50 for individuals and \$60.00 per couple. We opposed the increase, particularly in these difficult economic times, but were outvoted.

Our activities during the year are summarized on page 2. However, I will mention only two of them here.

The first, of particular local interest, was the launch of the book *1910-2010: 100 Years of Caring*, covering the history of the Brome-Missisquoi-Perkins Hospital in Cowansville, written by our Genealogist, Michel Racicot. The book launch took place on March 24<sup>th</sup> at the Cowansville Town Hall and was attended by a strong contingent from our Branch. The book is well illustrated with photos of the hospital at various stages of its evolution and of many of the personnel involved. Michel has done a great job of describing its beginnings and its change over the years and, furthermore, spoke to us on this subject at our branch AGM in May.

The second item is our main and continuing project, the reconstruction of the Sir John Johnson burial vault, which shows great promise of advancement in the coming year. Ray Ostiguy, one of our members on the Vault Committee, is preparing a timetable for action. Once we have agreement with CIME (Centre d'interprétation du milieu écologique du Haut-Richelieu) on the land that we will keep with the vault, and access to it, we can proceed to have the site surveyed and start making arrangements for rebuilding. The vault construction will be the culmination of many years of patient effort by the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch Vault Committee. Incidentally, the current members of our Vault Committee are: Adelaide Lanktree, Ray Ostiguy, Charles Harbec and Gerry Thomas. Look for more activity in 2011.

## Activities that we participated in 2010:

1. February 3: Mark Jodoin, a member of our branch and author of *Shadow Soldiers of the American Revolution*, spoke at the Brockville Museum, one of many talks he presented to both Canadian and American audiences during the year.
2. March 24: the launch of the book, *1910-2010 – 100 Years of Caring*, a centennial history of the Brome-Missisquoi-Perkins hospital in Cowansville, written by our Genealogist, Michel Racicot. Our branch had a strong contingent attending.
3. May – Louise Smith was this year's Loyalist education teacher. Her Grade 6 class produced a power point presentation that illustrated interesting information that they had researched using Mark Jodoin's book, *Shadow Soldiers of the American Revolution*.
4. May 29: AGM, Philipsburg. (Further details on page 3)
5. June 30: Some of our members attended the tree planting by the Queen at Rideau Hall. (Further details on page 6)
6. July 3: Heritage Branch Picnic – at Okill and Sylvia Stuart's. (Details on page 3)
7. August 19: Our Branch picnic at the recently restored Walbridge Round Barn, Mystic. (Further details on page 4)
8. August 25: We had a table at the Townshippers' *Seniors in the Park* in Cowansville.
9. September 11: Attendance at the QAHN (Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network) AGM at Orford, Quebec. (Further details on page 7)
10. September 11: Commemoration of the Battle of Plattsburgh, fought on September 11, 1814 (196 years ago).
11. September 26: We greeted members of the Mohawk Fall Tour at site of the Sir John Johnson Burial Vault on Mont St. Grégoire.
12. October 3: We held our Semi-Annual Fall Meeting – starting with a church service at Holy Trinity Church, Iron Hill, and followed by turkey dinner and then our meeting. The guest speaker was Matthew Farfan who spoke about his extensive collection of historic photographs of the Eastern Townships. (Details on page 5)
13. November 3: Heritage Branch Annual Dinner (Further details on page 7)
14. Three executive meetings: 12 March, 23 July, 17 September.

## Membership Report

Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch has 56 individual members and 36 family members for a total of 92 members.

Among these members are 2 renewals of former members: Edwina Bougie UE and Nancy Pope UE. We welcomed 8 new members: Elizabeth and Victor Allistone, G.William Glidden, Patrick Lacroix, Rebecca and Richard MacDonald, Meredith Mackeen and Michael Pope. Three of our members are honorary members: Sir Guy Johnson, Marion Phelps and Audrey McCaw. And we treasure our 10 second-branch members.

## Branch Annual General Meeting

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, following a tradition of many years, our Annual Meeting was preceded by a roast beef dinner at the Philipsburg Legion Hall. We then opened the meeting with an interesting and timely power-point presentation by our genealogist, Michel Racicot, outlining the history of the Brome-Missisquoi-Perkins Hospital, which serves much of our area, this being its centennial year. The talk was based on his recent book, *100 Years of Caring: 1910-2010*.

## Heritage Branch UEL Garden Party

On July 3, 2010, a warm and sunny Saturday afternoon, Rod Riordon, Adelaide Lanktree, Louise Hall, Phyllis Hamilton, Carol Soule, Mark Jodoin and Michel Racicot attended the Heritage Branch UEL Garden Party held at the beautiful home of Okill and Sylvia Stuart in Saint-Lambert, Quebec.



Diana Wall, Chairperson of Rolls-Royce Owners' Club Saint Lawrence Region, came to the Garden Party in her luxurious 1988 Rolls-Royce Silver Spur. In the photo, we see members of our Branch standing beside the beautiful car with, on the left, Diana Wall, the owner. The bagpiper is Retired Lt.-Col. Bruce Bolton, former commanding officer of the Black Watch (RHR) of Canada.

## Branch Annual Picnic

On August 19<sup>th</sup>, a lovely summer day, we held our picnic, attended by some 45 members and friends, at the newly renovated Walbridge round barn in Mystic. The twelve sided barn was built in 1882 by Alexander Walbridge and patterned on a twelve sided railway roundhouse, complete with turntable. The barn contained twelve hay mows each of which could be filled by turning the hay



wagon toward the appropriate one and removing its load with a hay fork raised by power from a nearby water wheel. When empty, the wagon could be turned to drive out frontwards. Walbridge was a true entrepreneur who built a foundry and machine shop and put up many of the local buildings. With a spur line from the Southeastern Railway (later the C.P.R.) he was able to do machining for the railway but later lost all his money when the



C.P.R. was unable to pay its bills. The renovated barn and its surrounding grounds make an ideal spot for a summer outing. The area is protected by the Walbridge Conservation Area Limited and is now affiliated with the Missisquoi Historical Society. This year Rob Young attended with his team of oxen, of particular interest since oxen were the primary beasts of burden used by the early Loyalists.



*Rob Young  
and his team of oxen*



**Carrie MacKenzie, UE**, of California, a member of the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch since 2007, showing the certificates for her three verified Loyalist ancestors: John Nichols, John Booth, Senior, and Jehoiada Boyce. She is now working on her fourth.

### Semi-Annual Fall Meeting at Iron Hill

On October 3, 2010, the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch UELAC held their semi-annual meeting at Iron Hill with 42 members and friends attending. Worship service was conducted by the Rev. Allan Gault, rector of the Holy Trinity Anglican Church on Iron Hill Road. Following the service all attending retired to the nearby church hall where a delicious turkey dinner was catered by Douglas Hall and assistants. President Rod Riordon welcomed all to the table and expressed a special welcome to members of the congregation who stayed to enjoy the meal with us. After the dinner, President Rod Riordon invited Gerry Thomas to present the flag and those attending joined in singing the Royal Anthem. Adelaide Lanktree then introduced the guest speaker, Matthew Farfan, who talked about his collection of antique pictures and post cards. Michel Racicot extended our appreciation to Mr. Farfan and presented him with a token gift. The business meeting was held after this presentation.



## 2010 Royal Tour of Canada

On the occasion of the 2010 Royal Tour of Canada by Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, Adelaide Lanktree and Michel Racicot, representing Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch, attended a tree-planting ceremony which took place at 1:40 p.m. on Wednesday, June 30, 2010 at Rideau Hall, 1 Sussex Drive, Ottawa. The United Empire Loyalists were well represented. In addition to our Branch's representatives, Fred Hayward, Dominion President, Okill Stuart, Past Dominion President, and his wife Sylvia, Roy Lewis, Vice-President of Central Region East, Robert Wilkins, President of Heritage Branch, and his wife Maura, George Anderson and his wife Janet, Myrtle Johnson, President of Col. Edward Jessup Branch, Dorothy and Tom Meyerhof, and Nancy and Ron Richards were there.



*UELAC members at Rideau Hall*

The grounds of Rideau Hall are graced with more than 120 trees planted by members of the Royal Family, heads of state and other dignitaries. A bronze plaque at the base of each tree indicates the name and title of each person who planted it. This was the 5<sup>th</sup> tree The Queen has planted at Rideau Hall.

**Congratulations** to nonagenarians Hope Cotton UE and Ed Jenne who celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary on August 6, 2010. Hope's Loyalist ancestor is the Rev. John Stuart. Hope and Ed have been members of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch since 1978.

## QAHN 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference

The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN), which was founded in 2000 in Lennoxville, presented two awards at its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference held in Orford, Quebec, on September 11, 2010. Phyllis Emery Skeats, of North Hatley, received the 10<sup>th</sup> Marion Phelps Award for her long-term volunteer commitment, and the Austin Cultural Committee, of Austin, received the new Richard Evans Award, a new award in honour of the organization's founding president, an award that will be presented annually to a volunteer organization working in the Province of Quebec to preserve and promote Anglophone heritage. During the conference, an address was delivered by Jimmy Manson, historian and Branch member, who spoke of the coming of the Loyalists and how they created a brand new community in the wilderness. Past President Adelaide Lanktree and Treasurer Louise Hall represented our Branch at the QAHN 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference. Our Branch is a charter core member of QAHN. Phyllis and Ken Hamilton, Louise Hall and Adelaide Lanktree attended the inaugural meeting of QAHN at Bishop's University, Lennoxville, in 2000.



*Phyllis Emery Skeats*



*Richard Evans presenting the new award to Madeleine Saint-Pierre, Serge Wagner and Don Fisher, representing the Austin Cultural Committee*

## Heritage Branch Charter Night Dinner

Wednesday, November 3 was the date for Heritage Branch's Charter Night Dinner held in the elegant and historic Officers' Mess at the Armoury of the Black Watch (Royal High Regiment) of Canada, on Bleury Street, Montreal. Among those present at the Dinner were many members of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch: Rod Riordon, Adelaide Lanktree, Louise Hall, Phyllis Hamilton, Michel Racicot and Mark Jodoin. Also present were Fred Hayward, Dominion President and Roy Lewis, Central East Region VP. The guest speaker was Richard Feltoe, curator of the Redpath Museum in Toronto. He spoke about the remarkable life of John Redpath, the subject of his book *A Gentleman of Substance – The Life and Legacy of John Redpath (1796-1869)*. Mark Jodoin, member of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch and author of *Shadow Soldiers of the American Revolution – Loyalists Tales from New York to Canada*, thanked him for his presentation which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

**BARBER, POLLY** (named Mary at birth) (Scovill), teacher, farmer, and businesswoman; b. 25 Sept. 1803 in Saint-Armand, Lower Canada, daughter of Asahel Barber and Polly Armes; d. 23 Feb. 1898 in Scottsmore, Que.

Polly Barber's father was the son of an American physician from Canton, Conn., and her mother's family included several Baptist clergymen. Coming from quite a distinguished background and blessed with a keen mind, Polly received a sound intellectual and practical education, which she put to good use.

By 1820 young Polly was teaching in Saint-Armand, probably in private homes, for 4 livres a week and was paying for her room and board by weaving. She accompanied her family to Sutton Township and there took the place of a schoolmaster in 1834. Her weekly salary was \$1, in addition to room and board, but she later said that she still managed to save money.

About this time Polly married Stephen Scovill (Scofield) Jr, a farmer in Sutton Township five years younger than herself, who owned more than 250 acres of land. The two devoted a great deal of energy to developing their farm. Making use of her skills, Polly was able to produce large quantities of wool and cloth. In 1842 their flock of 40 sheep yielded 200 lbs of wool woven into 55 yards of cloth. In the township assessment rolls for 1846 the Scovills' properties were valued at \$1,450.

Polly was, however, sorely tried by the deaths of several of her children; only one of the twin boys born in 1835 and three daughters would reach adulthood. On 7 Nov. 1847 her husband died, leaving her pregnant at the age of 44, with three other children to raise and debts to pay. She was equal to the task. Not only did she manage to keep the farm, but she worked twice as hard as before, increasing her crops and livestock, and even opening a clothing factory which provided work for several employees. In 1861 her farm was worth \$5,000 and some of the production figures are astonishingly high: for example, 1,300 lbs of maple sugar, 1,100 lbs of butter, 350 lbs of cheese, and 60 yards of woollen fabric.

The "widow Scovill," as she was called, was so successful that, according to her obituary in the Montreal Daily Star, she was known as "the most prosperous farmer of Sutton." She had had her daughters educated and had established her son, Smith, on two other plots of land in the township. In 1867 she gave her daughter Julia\*, who had married George L. Scott, a lot with a house and store in Knowlton. About this time, however, she was forced to take a rest, since the hard work was affecting her health. She entrusted the management of the farm, located near Abercorn, to her eldest daughter, Judith Smith, and her husband, Abram N. Smith, who became a justice of the peace and mayor of Sutton Township.

Polly Scovill spent her last years with her daughter Julia and son-in-law at Scottsmore in Dunham Township. On 8 Jan. 1880 she made her will, leaving her property to be divided equally among her four children, but stipulating that her daughters' inheritance was never to be included in any community of property arrangement. She remained perfectly lucid and retained her extraordinary memory; a few days before her death, she could still recite hymns. Although raised a Baptist, she had joined the Universalists, this kind of shift being common in areas where the population was too scattered to support clergymen of several denominations. On 23 Feb. 1898, having been an invalid for some years, she died at the age of 94. Her funeral was held at the Methodist church in Abercorn, where she was buried in the Old Union Cemetery. Remembered as an energetic and gifted woman, who overcame current prejudices and hardships, she was an example to her contemporaries and yet ahead of her own time.

Marie-Paule R. Labrèque

1891-1900 (Volume XII)

Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online

*\*Julia Scovill was my 2nd great grandmother. She married George Lemuel Scott.*

*Linda Howman, UE*



# *Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch Executive*

## *2010-2011*

Honourary President: **Sir Guy Johnson**

Patron: **John E. Chard**

Past President: **Adelaide Lanktree** 140 Principale Ouest, Farnham, QC, J2N 1K6 Tel. 450-293-6342

President: **Roderick Riordon** 4512 Principale St., Dunham, QC, J0E 1M0 Tel. 450-295-2382

Vice President: **Gerald Thomas**

Secretary: **Phyllis Hamilton**

Treasurer: **Louise Hall**

Genealogist: **Michel Racicot** 129 Church St., Cowansville, QC, J2K 1T9 Tel. 450-260-1736

Publicity: **Evelyn Lewis**

Membership: **Adelaide Lanktree**

Card Convener: **Olive Pollard**

Vault Committee: **Charles Harbec**

Hospitality: **Linda Howman**

**Joan Lee**

### **Eric Pollard**

Eric William Savage Pollard UE was born in Granby in 1924 and attended the local high school. After graduating, he joined the RCAF but never served overseas. A longtime employee of Bell Canada he joined the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch of the UELAC in 1985 and was an ever ready helper whenever needed. Eric was active in the Boy Scout movement in Granby, serving as leader for many years. His community involvement continued with his service to St-George's



Anglican Church in Granby until he moved to Brome where he continued to actively serve St-John's Anglican Church in that community. Sadly Eric passed away on July 7, 2010 after a short illness. Since Eric served on the executive of our branch for many years, his assistance will be greatly missed.

**Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch UELAC**

**2011 MEMBERSHIP**

Dear Member,

Dues for the year 2011 are to be received on or before **December 15, 2010.**

**UELAC membership** (regular, affiliate and associate)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Individual membership**      **\$42.50**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Family membership**      **\$60.00**

**Second Branch Members** (members of other branches)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Individual membership**      **\$10.00**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Family membership**      **\$15.00**

Please make your cheque payable to:

**Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch UELAC**

And forward it to:

Ms Louise Hall  
140 Principale Ouest, Farnham  
Québec, J2N 1K6

Please return this notice with your payment. Thank you.  
Please notify us of any change of address or phone  
number.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if changed) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_