



Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch, UELAC

Newsletter

Spring 2010

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Saturday, May 29th, at 11:30 for 12:00 Noon

To be held at the Philipsburg Legion Hall

Guest Speaker: Michel Racicot,

Genealogist, Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch,

President, Cowansville Historical Society

Topic: *Brome-Missisquoi-Perkins Hospital*

1910-2010 – 100 years of caring

Lunch: \$16.00 per person

Please reserve with:

Adelaide – e-mail: adelaidel@sympatico.ca

Telephone: (450) 293-6342

or

Linda – e-mail: lilac23@axion.ca

Telephone: (450) 306-1096

2010 Activities

Spring is here and it's time to look ahead to our activities for 2010. You will see, in this newsletter the details of time and place for both our Annual General Meeting, which is a little earlier this year, and our picnic in Mystic where the Walbridge round barn will be the centre of interest. I look forward to seeing you at both of these events. Looking further ahead, the Commemoration

of the Battle of Plattsburgh on September 10-12 is worth keeping in mind.
www.battleofplattsburgh.org

However, before all these activities, don't forget Beyond the Mountains – 2010, the Annual General Meeting of the United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada. This will be in Vernon, B.C. this year and will be hosted by the Pacific Region. For information, either see the UELAC Website or contact me.
www.uelac.org

For your information, we plan to put this newsletter on our Website www.uelac.org/SirJohnJohnson and to list our meetings there under Upcoming Events.

Roderick Riordon, UE Roderick@Riordon.ca

Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch, UELAC Branch Report for the 2009 Calendar Year

No. in Branch: 84 Active (50 % attendance): 45 Non-resident: 14
Single Annual Branch Fee: \$37.50 **Family Annual Branch Fee:** \$55.00
No. of Certificates: 4 **No. of Newsletters:** 2
No. of Branch meetings: General: 2 Social: 2

Education/Outreach Activities:

- ❖ May 1: Three members attended the launch of **J. I. Little's** book, *Loyalties in Conflict: A Canadian Borderland in War and Rebellion, 1812-1840*, held at Bishop's University. It is worth noting that, in his book, Dr. Little makes reference to two of our branch members: **Marion Phelps** to whom he dedicates his book and who had celebrated her 101st birthday in February; **Jimmy W. Manson** for his book, *The Loyal Americans of New England and New York: Founders of the Townships of Lower Canada*.
- ❖ May 9: Published the Sir JJC Branch *Spring 2009 Newsletter*.
- ❖ June 6: Second branch member, **Okill Stuart**, attended the 65th anniversary ceremonies commemorating the D-day landing of Canadian troops on Juno Beach. While in France he was honoured with the presentation of the Legion of Honour by the French Minister of Defence.
- ❖ June 11-14: Six of our members attended the UELAC AGM at Napanee, Ontario.
- ❖ June 27: Our Branch AGM was held at Philipsburg, Quebec with guest speaker **Robert McBride**, V.P. for Central East Region. At the same time we celebrated the 225th anniversary of the landing of the first Loyalist settlers on Missisquoi Bay.
- ❖ July 4: Our branch was invited to celebrate with American and Canadian Veterans at Fred Gilman's estate near Clarenceville, Quebec on the shore of Lake Champlain.
- ❖ August 1: Three members attended the Northern New York American Canadian Genealogical Society Family Festival in Plattsburgh and visited **Addie Shield** who was launching her new book, *Survival of Families in Beekmantown, NY in the First Half of the 20th Century*. We also visited Addie on the reviewing stand at the Battle of

Plattsburgh Commemoration in September. Sadly Addie died at the end of October at the age of 93.

- ❖ August 19: Annual picnic at Brome County Museum.
- ❖ August 30: Six members attended the official unveiling of the historical plaque at the site of the 1866 and 1870 Fenian Raids monument at Eccles Hill near Frelighsburg, Quebec.
- ❖ September 11-12: Six branch members attended the commemoration of the Battle of Plattsburgh, one of the last major battles of the War of 1812.
- ❖ October 25: Church service, luncheon and Semi-Annual Meeting in Cowansville with guest speaker, Sir JJC Branch member **Mark Jodoin**.
- ❖ October 29: Visit to the Masonic Temple in Montreal to see the mural of the Sir John Johnson Funeral Procession.
- ❖ October 29: Attendance at the Heritage Branch Charter Night dinner.
- ❖ December 1: Published the Sir JJC Branch *Fall 2009 Newsletter*.

Branch Project:

Restoration of the burial vault of Sir John Johnson on the slopes of Mont St. Gregoire (previously Mount Johnson). We are still waiting for the Mont St. Gregoire Municipal Council to designate the one acre site of the vault as a cemetery on the local map and to include a 15 foot right-of-way. Deeds referring to the cemetery and right-of-way have been found and form a basis for this claim. This is an ongoing project.

Celebration 2014:

We have submitted a proposal to make the restoration of the Sir John Johnson burial vault a UELAC project for the 2014 anniversary. This is a major undertaking.

Reporter: Roderick Riordon, UE – E-mail Address: Roderick@Riordon.ca

Message from William Glidden

"We had excellent Canadian-American relations this past year, together with a nice write-up on the Battle of Plattsburgh, and a word on how our Canadian friends will miss Addie Shields, County Historian, who recently left us for heaven above.

As historian for the Valcourt Battle Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) and past president of the Saratoga Battle Chapter, (SAR) it was a great pleasure to be invited, along with Major Gene Hicks, to the annual branch meeting of the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch of the United Empire Loyalists in Philipsburg; and again to Gilman's picnic on Missisquoi Bay, Lake Champlain."



The Cornell Mill featured on new stamp

On January 11, 2010, a new stamp was issued by Canada Post as part of its "Flag over Historic Mills" series. The stamp features a view of the historic Cornell Mill in Stanbridge East, the oldest surviving mill in the Eastern Townships, and the only Quebec based mill to appear in the series. The Cornell Mill is home to the Missisquoi Museum which features exhibitions on the region's Loyalist heritage and other aspects of regional history. The museum was the original home of the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch in 1967, and the inscribed stone from the Sir John Johnson Vault is imbedded in its facade. The curator of the Missisquoi Museum, Heather Darch UE, is a descendant of Loyalist Daniel Secord and member of our branch.



Vincent de Lourdes Leonard (1914-2010)

It is with great sadness that we learned of the death of Vincent de Lourdes Leonard UE, Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch President from June 1993 to June 1995, and descendant of Loyalist Captain John Savage.

Mr. Leonard passed away at the Ste. Anne's Hospital for veterans, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, on Saturday, March 6, 2010 at the age of ninety-five. Beloved husband of Mary-Gordon Johnson and loving father of seven children Peter (Darlene), Gordon (Monica), Ruby-Alice, Philip (Dale), the late John, Jennifer (Ian), and Scott. He will be lovingly remembered by his grand-children, Sian, Cassie, Julia (Eric), Stewart, Kendra (Jon), Erica, Andrew, Sarah (Ben), Connor, Alexander, Justin, Martin, Kaitlin, David, Kaiya, Aiyana and great-grandchild, Stella.

On behalf of all members, we would like to extend our deepest condolences to the Leonard family.



SOUVENIR BOOK LAUNCH : BROME-MISSISQUOI-PERKINS HOSPITAL, AU CŒUR DE SA COMMUNAUTÉ - 1910-2010 - 100 YEARS OF CARING

On March 24, 2010, at the Town Hall in Cowansville, Quebec, the Organizing Committee of the BMP Hospital Centenary launched a book on the history of the BMP Hospital since its beginnings in 1910. The book was authored by Michel Racicot, President of the Cowansville Historical Society (and Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch Genealogist). It contains 288 pages of rigorously-recorded historical facts, vintage photos and many stories of staff who worked on the BMP Hospital.

The BMP Hospital has been dedicated to the health and well-being to the people in our region for a century now. The book is a testimony of gratitude to the thousands of employees, nurses, doctors, members of the board of directors and volunteers who, over the years, have always demonstrated exemplary dedication, as well as to the thousands of citizens who, since 1910, have never stopped supporting their hospital.

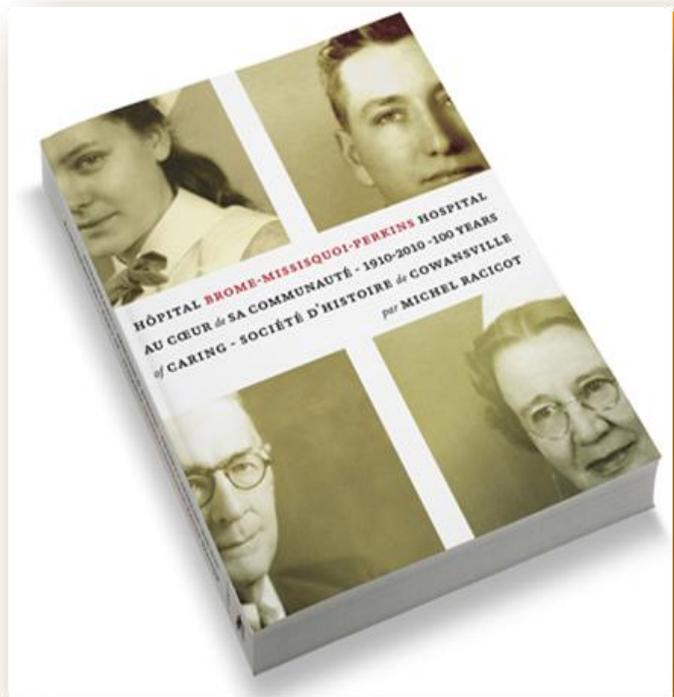
Partners

The author, Michel Racicot completed this major research and writing undertaking entirely on a voluntary basis. In 2001 he joined the Cowansville Historical Society and since 2002 he has been a member of the Petit Musée BMP Heritage, whose role is to make the history of the BMP Hospital come alive. Profits from the sale of the book will be donated to the BMP Foundation. The City of Cowansville is the sponsor of this souvenir book.

Available now

The book on the history of the BMP Hospital is available in the Auxiliary Boutique located in the lobby of the hospital, and in bookstores in Cowansville, Bromont, Lac-Brome, Sutton, Bedford, Farnham and Granby.

(Press Release – Centre de santé et de services sociaux La Pommeraie)



AN ACCOMMODATION GRANTED TO SIR JOHN JOHNSON

It concerns the situation faced by Sir John Johnson as a Garnishee in February and April 1826 and March and April 1827. It deals with his involvement in a court action between a carpenter hired by a Mount Johnson Millwright and never paid, Sir John's health, his residence at Mount Johnson and the state of roads and rivers to be faced by travelers at that particular time.

On Thursday, February 2, 1826, William Stevenson, of Montreal, Carpenter and Joiner, appeared before Judge George Pyke, of the Court of King's Bench for the Judicial District of Montreal, to swear an affidavit that Robert Watson, of Mount Johnson, a Millwright, owed him £ 14 – 1 – 8, current money, for his services. Stevenson alleged that Watson was about to *secrete his effects with an intent to defraud him* and that he would *lose his debt or sustain damage without the benefit of an attachment to seize and attach the same in the hands of the Honorable Sr John Johnson Baronet residing at Mount Johnson*. That very day Judge Pyke ordered that a *writ of attachment or saisie arret issue upon the foregoing affidavit*. Two days later, at six o'clock in the afternoon on Saturday, February 4th, Sheriff Frederick Ermatinger, after travelling six leagues, attended upon Sir John Johnson personally at his domicile at Mount Johnson to affect a seizure of such *goods, monies, credits and effects* in Johnson's hands belonging to Watson. Johnson was enjoined not to dispose of any of the seized property and he was further summoned to appear before the Court in Montreal on Friday, February 10th to declare under oath what he may have in his *hands, custody, possession or power* belonging to Watson. At the same time, a *grown person* at the domicile of Robert Watson, also at Mount Johnson, was served with a like summons to appear.

On Friday, February 10, 1826, Attorney C.C. Sabrevois de Bleury (licensed November 7, 1819), acting for William Stevenson, the Plaintiff, filed a Declaration (dated February 3, 1826) with the Court against Robert Watson as Defendant and the Hon. Sir John Johnson, Baronet, as Garnishee. A Court file was opened, exhibits supporting the claim were deposited and it was allocated No. 2152 for the February 1826 Term. Attorney John Boston (licensed April 9, 1810), retained by Sir John Johnson, appeared before the Court that morning on behalf of his client and moved *that a delay be granted to the 1st April next*.

On Saturday, April 1, 1826, John Boston appeared again before the Court to move that his client, Sir John Johnson, be allowed to appear before a Commission in Monnoir, his place of residence, to provide his declaration under oath, or that a further delay be granted to him until the 1st of June next. On Monday, April 3rd, John Boston was sworn in open Court to provide the following evidence in support of his motion:

John Boston of Montreal Esq. maketh oath that the Garnishee is a Gentleman much advanced in years & the deponent hath understood that he is weak in health & from the present state of the roads & rivers the deponent doth believe that it would be attended with risk & danger were he obliged to attend at this time, his residence being at Monnoir & requiring of him to come to Montreal to cross over the Rivers Richelieu & St. Lawrence now in a perilous state.

The motion was granted by the Court. That evidence was not taken however, until almost a year later, namely, on Thursday, March 29, 1827, at St. Marys, before William Woods, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the District of Montreal. On Monday, April 2, 1827, John Boston appeared again before the Court, with the written consent of the attorney for Stevenson, to move that Sir John Johnson's declaration be considered *as having been in due course made before this Hon^{ble} Court, the said Garnishee being aged & unable to appear before the Court to make in person his said Declaration*. Sir John Johnson, it should be observed, was in his 85th year. The affidavit of Sir John Johnson filed with the motion disclosed that *Sir John Johnson has neither effects goods or chattels or money in his hands belonging or appertaining to one Robert Watson formerly a Mill wright of the parish of St Marys*.

Prepared from Montreal District Court of King's Bench archive documents at BAnQ – M (Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal) by Raymond J. Ostiguy, © Chambly, Quebec, April 6, 2010.

Travel, Then and Now

Upon reading *An Accommodation Granted to Sir John Johnson* by Raymond Ostiguy on page 6, I thought of the contrast between travel then and travel now and it occurred to me that Sir John Johnson had good reason to avoid the trip to Montreal to appear before the Court of King's Bench. Not only was he quite elderly but in February 1826 it would require a long, cold and rough journey, one not without some danger and a far cry from today's travel. Now, a trip to Montreal from the Cowansville area – about 100 km. – can be made in warm comfort in about one hour. Mount Johnson is some 40 km. by direct line from Montreal – more by road – and the trip, one way, would likely have taken one long day if not more. In 1826, there would have been some form of road that could be travelled by carriage or sleigh. However, at the time there were no bridges across the Richelieu and St. Lawrence Rivers. The new Jones Bridge across the Richelieu at St. Jean would not be completed until later that year and there would be no bridge across the St. Lawrence until the completion of the Victoria Bridge in late 1859, over 33 years hence. Crossing the river at any time of year would have been a potentially hazardous undertaking, whether by boat in the summer or on the river ice in winter or contending with ice floes in the spring. Comparing travel then and now it is easy to see why Sir John Johnson preferred to appear before a Commission at Monnoir, his place of residence.

A note about the Victoria Bridge: at the time of construction, it was not only a major engineering feat but was the longest bridge in the world and was labeled the eighth wonder of the world. Whereas it was originally strictly a railway bridge with a single track, an extensive modification in 1897 changed the bridge girders and added a second railway track and a deck for other vehicular traffic.

Roderick Riordon, UE



Members of the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch
at the BMP Hospital souvenir book launch on March 24, 2010.
*Left to right: Louise Hall, Heather Darch, Roderick Riordon, Joan Lee,
Michel Racicot, Pauline Racicot, Gerald Thomas and Adelaide Lanktree*

2010 Annual UEL Picnic

**Thursday, 19 August, 2010
at the Walbridge Barn site
St. Ignace de Stanbridge (Mystic), QC**

11:30 AM

→ Bring a picnic lunch and a lawn chair ←



Admission is free for Missisquoi Museum members and \$10.00 for non members.

We hope for good weather and a good turn out and look forward to seeing you there.
In case of rain, the picnic will be cancelled.

If you have any questions,
Contact either:

Rod: Roderick@Riordon.ca
Tel. (450) 295-2382

Or

Adelaide: adelaidel@sympatico.ca
Tel. (450) 293-6342

**** Annual Dues ****

Fees for 2010 are due!

For those who have not paid, please send payment
to:

Louise Hall,
140 rue Principale ouest,
Farnham, QC J2N 1K0