



# *Newsletter*

**Autumn 2011**

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

## **Message from the President**

Most of our branch activities this summer and fall are described in the following pages. However, I would like to add two items. The first is our Branch's participation in the "Seniors in the Park" day held in Cowansville on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and sponsored by the Townshippers' Association to promote activities available for the older members of our community. We were able to put our new *Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch* banner to good use and attracted considerable interest.

Subsequently, at the invitation of Mayor Donald Kasprzak of Plattsburgh, we attended the Commemoration of the Battle of Plattsburgh in early September. The actual battle occurred on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1814 – another 9/11 – and was one of the last major battles of the 1812 War. Each year the City of Plattsburgh hosts a busy week of events including memorial services for all those, both British and American, who lost their lives in the battle. This year, our second branch member, Okill Stuart, laid a wreath on the Riverside Park tomb of Captain George Downie who perished in the naval battle and was the British commander of the newly completed warship H.M.S. *Confiance*. It was the naval defeat that convinced the British ground forces to retreat back to Canada.

*Roderick Riordon, UE*

## **The UELAC Annual Meeting**

The UELAC Annual Meeting in Brockville, hosted by the Col. Edward Jessup Branch, was attended and much enjoyed by 12 of our branch members. Our hosts treated us to some of the many historic sights in the Brockville area and to some memorable meals, particularly the dinner cruise through the Thousand Islands and a great Gala Dinner on Saturday evening. The city of Brockville, situated on the St. Lawrence River, has played an important part in Canada's history especially for the resettlement of Loyalists following the American Revolution and again in the defence of the country in the 1812 War. Indeed, Brockville is named for Major General Sir Isaac Brock who was killed in battle at Queenston Heights in October 1812. This was emphasized by the various fortifications and battle sites that we visited on the tours offered.



*Sitting: Adelaide Lanktree, Sylvia and Okill Stuart, Louise Hall  
Standing: Beverley and Milton Lewis, Michel Racicot, Phyllis Hamilton*

## **Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch Annual Meeting**

Our Branch's Annual Meeting was held in Philipsburg, Quebec on Saturday June 18th, a pleasant summer day. We began with an excellent roast beef dinner provided by members of the Philipsburg Legion. We then began our business meeting with a talk by Ray Ostiguy, an active member of the Johnson Burial Vault Restoration Committee who described Sir John Johnson's activities in establishing many settlers, including Loyalists, in Lower Canada and particularly in Quebec's Eastern Townships. Following the talk, the President read a letter of greetings from Sir Guy Johnson, our Honourary President and descendent of Sir John Johnson. A short business meeting concluded our activities.

► On July 3rd, the Veterans Coalition of Vermont organized a picnic at the home of Fred Gilman on the shores of Lake Champlain. Our branch was invited and a number of our members enjoyed the lovely summer weather and lakeside site.

► And on Sunday, July 17th, family members from across Canada and friends including several Loyalists and also American friends, gathered at the home of Associate member, Fred Gilman, to celebrate his 90th Birthday. A remarkable display of the highlights of Fred's life of devotion to family, friends and country was a focal point for reminiscing. Among the flags adorning the shores of Lake Champlain were those of both the RCAF and the American Air Force reminding us of Fred's contributions during World War II.

### **Our annual picnic at Fort Chambly**

On August 18, a beautiful and warm summer day, we held our picnic, attended by some 20 members and friends, on the grounds of Fort Chambly, located at the edge of the Richelieu River, at the foot of the Chambly rapids. Built in 1711, the fort, a national historic site, is celebrating its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.



While several of us took this



opportunity to visit this famous fort, many of us took a short stroll across the street to visit St. Stephen's Anglican Church built in 1820.

St. Stephen's Church has the original bell which Sir John Johnson donated in 1822. During the years Sir John Johnson lived at Mount Johnson (today Mont Saint-Grégoire), he became a founder and supporter of St. Stephen's Anglican Church. And in 1822 he donated a bell, which had been cast in London in 1812, for the belfry. Replaced by a larger one, the Johnson Bell was installed on a pedestal in the



churchyard as a memento of Sir John in 1970. Unfortunately, the bell was stolen from its pedestal in 1975. Miraculously, the bell was returned to the church in 2002, twenty-seven years later. The Johnson Bell has now found its niche inside the church. During our visit, branch member Raymond Ostiguy gave us a very interesting presentation on the history of the Johnson Bell.

## Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch UELAC members at OES Grand Chapter of Quebec Annual Session



*PHOTO:- Back row left to right: Robert Newell, PP; Wesley Larocque, PP; Heather Larocque, PM; Brenda Stone, PGM; Louise Hall, PM. Front row:- Evelyn Lewis, PM; Marjorie Newell, PGM; Linda Howman ; Beverley Howman, PM; Adelaide Lanktree, PM. Photo courtesy of Brian Allen*

The eighty-ninth Annual Session of the Grand Chapter of Quebec was held in Granby, Quebec on October 13th and 14th 2011. Members of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch UELAC took an active part in the proceedings. Wesley Larocque was a Grand Guard; Brenda Stone GGCCM on Membership; Adelaide Lanktree, the Worthy Grand Patron's Grand Page; Evelyn Lewis, newspaper correspondent, Heather Larocque, Credentials and Registration; and Marjorie Newell, Scrutineer and Unfinished Business.

Beverley Howman, here from Florida, was presented with her 60 year membership certificate and Heather Larocque with her 50 year certificate. Others with more than 60 years of membership are Louise Hall, 63 years and Evelyn Lewis and Adelaide Lanktree each with 62 years of membership.

The Associate Grand Patron of Grand Chapter of Sao Paula- Brazil, Armando Silva, and his wife, Sandra, were present as was Cathi Cannon, Grand Representative of Quebec in Texas; and Vickie White, PWDGM, Grand Representative of Quebec in Australia.

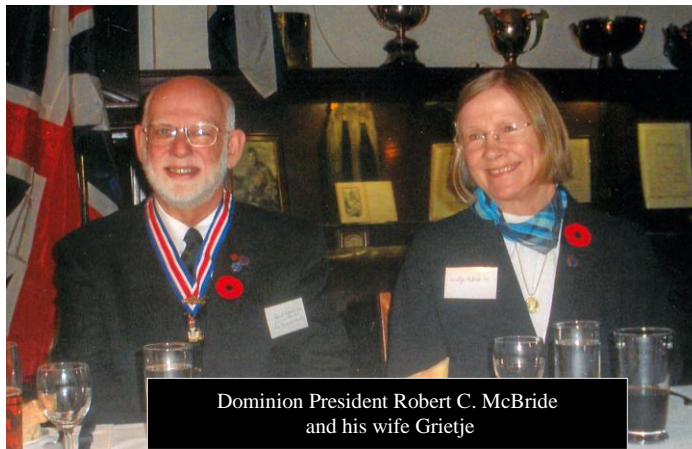
## Heritage Branch Charter Night Dinner

The 38<sup>th</sup> Heritage Branch Charter Night Dinner was held on Wednesday, October 26, 2011, at the Officers' Mess of the Black Watch (R.H.R.) Armoury, on Bleury Street in Montreal. The guest speaker was Dr. Larry Ostola, Director General of National Historic Site, Parks Canada. Dr. Ostola



presented an informative and interesting talk, illustrated by a Powerpoint presentation, on major Canadian historic sites of the War of 1812 and the significant role that each of them played in that war.

Among those present were Dominion President Robert C. McBride and his wife



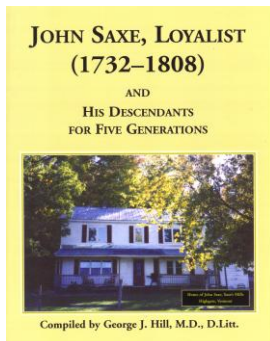
Grietje. Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch was well represented that evening. Members Roderick Riordon, Adelaide Lanktree, Gerald Thomas, Louise Hall, Michel Racicot, and Mark Jodoin. Also present were several second branch members: Okill and Sylvia Stuart, Robert and Maura Wilkins, Gary Aiken, and Doug Page.

### ► A Loyalist family – The Ruiters

In 1784, a small group of American Loyalists settled in the vicinity of Missisquoi Bay. After repeated petitions from these Loyalists, the Eastern Townships was officially opened for settlement in 1792. The first township, Dunham Township, was granted in 1796 to Thomas Dunn and his associates. One of these associates was Jacob Ruiters, founder and first settler of Cowansville, Quebec.

At the history class of the Missisquoi Community School held in Cowansville, Quebec, on October 27<sup>th</sup>, Michel Racicot, President of the Cowansville Historical Society and Genealogist of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch, spoke about the first Loyalist family to settle in the Cowansville area, the Ruiters, whose ancestors came to America after being forced to leave their homes in the German Palatinate on the shores of the Rhine River.

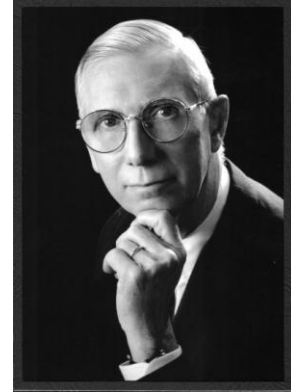
## **John Saxe, Loyalist (1792-1808) compiled by George J. Hill, M.D.**



Dr. George J. Hill's most recent book, *John Saxe, Loyalist (1792-1808) and His Descendants for Five Generations*", tells the story of the Loyalist, John Saxe, and of his children and their descendants – some of whom were very successful, while others were ordinary men and women who eked out a living on the frontier. Some settled in Canada and were loyal to the Crown, whereas others were American patriots, heroes in the War of 1812 and the Civil War, and some who were distinguished in public

service, law, business, the arts, and government.

John Saxe's most famous descendant was his grandson, the poet John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887). One of the most mysterious descendants of the Loyalist was his son, Godfrey about whom very little is known. Godfrey Saxe had a daughter, Anna Maria Saxe, who married Joseph Stockwell and had many descendants, including Dr. George Hill, the author of the book. Based on documents that he discovered, Hill speculates that Godfrey Saxe may have been shunned by his father and perhaps some of his siblings because he had this child out of wedlock.



George J. Hill, M.D., M.A., D.Litt., is Professor of Surgery Emeritus at the New Jersey Medical School, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He has been a Fellow in Molecular Biology at Princeton University and he was an Adjunct Professor of History at Kean University, Union, New Jersey.

A native of Iowa, Dr. Hill received his B.A. degree with honours from Yale University and the M.D. from Harvard. After retiring from the practice of surgery, he earned an M.A. in history at Rutgers-Newark and the D.Litt. in history from Drew University. He has written more than a dozen books on a wide range of topics, including prize winning books on surgery, oncology, and leprosy. His master's thesis became a book on the environmental impact of Thomas Edison, and his doctoral thesis on a secret project of Church and State in the U.S. and Liberia was also published as a book.

As a student of genealogy, Dr. Hill has proved his descent from many early Americans. He is a member of thirty-two lineage societies and he is a current associate member of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch UELAC.

## Sir John Johnson Vault Restoration Project

Since September of this year several meetings have been held with representatives of CIME on the part of the Johnson Vault Restoration Committee (*La Société de Restauration du Patrimoine Johnson*), including one attended by Mr. Bernard Hébert of the Longueuil office of the MCCCQ, *Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine de Québec*. The meetings have been cordial and positive.

According to Mr. Hébert however, the Committee's plans to reconstruct the vault on the remaining foundations (seen as a "reproduction" and not a "restoration") is now inconsistent with the current view afforded to the protection of archaeological sites. By way of example Mr. Hébert cites the blockhouse "reproduction" at Côteau du Lac beside, and not upon, the foundations of the original which remain exposed.

As a result of this new information, and rather than imitate the Côteau du Lac example, the Committee now seeks to build a permanent structure "over" the foundations in order to protect them and to serve as a depository within which the remains of the Johnson family may be returned and re-consecrated along with such artifact as the original door (restored), lock (reproduced) and Memorial Tablet ("Sacred to the memory ..." to be reproduced). Bilingual interpretative panels, both inside and outside the structure, will provide historical information and recognition for financial and other support received for the project.

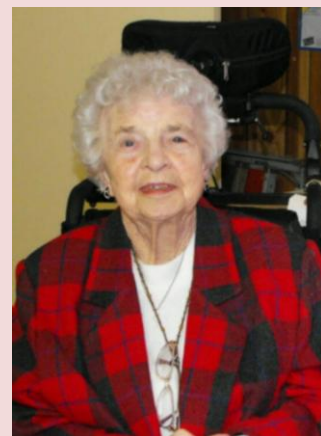
Plans and specifications for the revised project are to be formulated over the coming months so that all arrangements required can be concluded to permit the project to proceed in the spring of 2012.

*Raymond Ostiguy.*

## Cora Hazzard (1920-2011)

Cora Chamberlin Hazard UE passed away peacefully, at the Foyer Sutton, June 4th 2011 in her ninety-second year. Wife to the late Clinton ``Pete`` Hazard, dear mother to the late Catherine (Ralph) and Clark (Florine), grandmother to Scott (Kim), Valerie and Jennifer (Claude), great grandmother to Dena, Ryan, Leah, Craig, Samantha, Alan and Danny. She will also be missed by her brother Guy and sister Alice, nieces and nephews, and other relatives and dear friends. A celebration of her life took place at the Grace Anglican Church in Sutton, Quebec, on July 16th 2011.

Cora became a regular member of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch in 1980. For years, she participated in all the branch's activities. Her Loyalist ancestor was John Saxe.



# Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch Executive 2011-2012

Honourary President:	<b>Sir Guy Johnson</b>	Winchester, England	
Patron:	<b>John E. Chard</b>	Belleville, ON	
Past President:	<b>Adelaide Lanktree</b>	140 Principale Ouest, Farnham, QC, J2N 1K6	Tel. 450-293-6342
President:	<b>Roderick Riordon</b>	4512 Principale St., Dunham, QC, J0E 1M0	Tel. 450-295-2382
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President:	<b>Gerald Thomas</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President:			
Secretary:	<b>Phyllis Hamilton</b>		
Treasurer:	<b>Louise Hall</b>		
Genealogist:	<b>Michel Racicot</b>	129 Church St., Cowansville, QC, J2K 1T9	Tel. 450-260-1736
Publicity:	<b>Evelyn Lewis</b>		
Membership:	<b>Adelaide Lanktree</b>		
Card Convener:	<b>Louise Hall</b>		
Vault Committee:	<b>Charles Harbec</b>		
Hospitality:	<b>Linda Howman</b>		
	<b>Joan Lee</b>		

## WEBSITES

Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch  
UELAC

<http://www.uelac.org/SirJohnJohnson>  
[www.uelac.org](http://www.uelac.org)

## E-MAIL

Loyalist Trails Newsletter: **Doug Grant** [doug.grant@insurance-canada.ca](mailto:doug.grant@insurance-canada.ca)  
Branch President: **Rod Riordon** [Roderick@Riordon.ca](mailto:Roderick@Riordon.ca)  
Branch Treasurer: **Louise Hall** [adelaidel@sympatico.ca](mailto:adelaidel@sympatico.ca)  
Branch Genealogist: **Michel Racicot** [mracicot001@sympatico.ca](mailto:mracicot001@sympatico.ca)



**Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch UELAC**  
**2012 MEMBERSHIP**

Dear Member,

Annual fees for the year 2012 are due by **December 15, 2011**.  
Prompt payment would be greatly appreciated.

**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, email address or phone  
number.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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