

THOMPSON-OKANAGAN BRANCH

1995 Fall

Here are some excerpts from our newest branch's first newsletter, *The Loyalist Drum*, Vol. I, No. I, September 1995...

We wish to dedicate our first issue to the memory of Campbell Stuart, UE.

Chartering 23 April 1995

It was a great day for British Columbia Loyalist descendants when the new Thompson-Okanagan Branch of the United Empire Loyalists was chartered on 23 April 1995. Over 70 people from the entire Thompson-Okanagan area attended the Charter Celebration Ceremony in the William Halina Centre in Vernon. Dennis Webb, UE, President of the new branch, presided.

Special guests were: Mayor Wayne McGrath of Vernon; Member of Parliament, Darrell Stinson; fifteen members from other BC branches; Dr. Peter Moogk UE; and Vona Smith UE.

The splendid stage with Her Majesty's portrait, multiple flags and BC dogwoods in the foreground provided an effective setting for the ceremony conducted by Lois Dickinson, UE, Education Chair for the UELA. Shirley Dargatz, UE and Vera Webb, UE carried the Union flag.

Dr. Moogk, Dominion Councillor and the late Campbell Stuart, UE, President of Victoria Branch and BC's oldest branch, established in 1927, unveiled the Charter which had been draped with a needlepoint from patterns chartered by Phyllis Sutton, UE of Kelowna. Smaller copies of the Charter were presented to the petitioners by Dr. Moogk, assisted by Master James Bowman, UE, Tsawwassen grandson of Doreen Todhunter UE. James, in buckskin and tricorne hat, with canvas in hand, was "Master of the rolls" for the occasion.

A further highlight was a candle lighting ceremony from the Maple Leaf shaped candelabra representing Provinces and regions of Canada.

The first UE Certificates were awarded to: Eileen Foster (Ancestor: Aaron Bradt) Ontario; Raymond Webb (brother of Dennis Webb); Bill Home, UE, Chilliwack Genealogist; and Dennis Webb who was surprised to receive his second UE (in the name of William White, NB).

Other presentations included books, a cap to Dennis Webb, genealogical material to Branch Genealogist Chris Wright and the UEL flag from the Victoria Branch. Mary Van Home UE, Chilliwack and the late Campbell Stuart made the latter presentations while Peter Moogk forwarded the Vancouver Branch cheque and acknowledged the previous gifts of seed money from the Victoria and Chilliwack Branches. Eileen Foster presented Dennis Webb with a presidential gavel.

Messages of congratulations from across Canada were read by Dennis Webb and the afternoon concluded with time to chat, convened by Marie Ablett and Eileen Foster.

Signers of the petition represented all areas of the Thompson-Okanagan region and several Loyalist settlements in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes; Marie Ablett, Gordon Bloom, Mavis Cameron, Georgie Brown, Shirley Buchanan, Coral Eady, Jack Fitzpatrick, Lawrence Fowler, Eileen Foster, Mabel

Fowler, John Graham, Doris Moore, Joanne Hayhurst, Teresa Lodge, David Snyder, Dennis Webb and Eve Wright.

Several members enjoyed a weekend of hospitality from Mavis Cameron UE at her home on picturesque Okanagan Lake.

Our new branch is largely attributed to the visit of last year's tour bus to Kamloops and the welcome there convened by Mabel Fowler UE; Vona Smith's continuing contact with Loyalists of the region; the encouragement of the late Andrew Webb, UE, Bill Home UE; and the efforts of the Education Sub-Committee, Lois Dickinson, Campbell Stuart, Vona Smith and Dennis Webb.

We have a library.

Thanks to the generosity of our guests from other branches at our Inaugural Meeting, we have a basic selection of books, maps, novels and *Loyalist Gazettes*. We also have access to Chris Wright's personal library and part of the library of the late Andrew Webb.

If members have books relevant to our interests and if they would be willing to share or donate them to our library, we would be most grateful.

By Eileen Foster UE, Branch Secretary-Treasurer

1996 Fall

On Sunday, April 21st we celebrated the first anniversary of the chartering of the Thompson-Okanagan Branch of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada. Some thirty Loyalists from Kelowna, Vernon, Armstrong, Enderby, Salmon Arm, Sorrento, Chase and Kamloops gathered at St. Peter's Hall in Monte Creek for the occasion. Eight visiting Loyalists, most in costumes of the 1780s, from the Vancouver and Chilliwack Branches came to offer anniversary good wishes and share the birthday cake and celebrations.

Mrs Grace Melville, former Salmon Arm resident, now living in Kamloops, received her certificate as a proved descendant of Henry Merkley who served in the King's Royal Regiment of New York during the War of American Independence. Congratulations were extended to those who had received certificates during the year: Donald Munro (ancestor Hugh Munro), Mary Colleen O'Flynn (Benajah Northrup), David Hierlihy (Philip Hierlily). To his surprise, genealogist Christopher Wright received recognition for his contributions to the Association.

Guest speaker at the meeting was Dr. Peter Moogk UE, of the Faculty of History at UBC. Dr Moogk is a highly regarded scholar of Canadian history. His topic was "Louisbourg, a Capsule in Time". Why was Louisbourg, a French fortress on Cape Breton Island, captured by General Wolfe in 1758? In 1760, the victorious British razed the fortress and nearly all the dwellings, and for two centuries Louisbourg ceased to exist.

But in this century Louisbourg has been revealed as a time capsule because it is an archaeological source of information on how ordinary people lived in the 1700s. Archaeologists have recovered objects thrown into a pond and down wells or abandoned in the ruins of buildings. These show ordinary things: common china, tools, shoes, bottles, knives, toys etc., and reveal that there was much more trade with New England than previously thought. Louisbourg is important because most cities of North America have been built over so many times that such everyday memorabilia has been destroyed or buried while the site

of Louisbourg was simply abandoned. From Louisbourg we can learn about everyday life in the Loyalist settlements some years later.

Officers elected for 1996-97 are: President, Dennis Webb; Secretary, Eileen Foster; Treasurer, Terry Lodge, all of Vernon; Vice-president, Marie Ablett; Archivist, Georgie Brown, both of Kelowna; Genealogist, Chris Wright, and Librarian, Eve Wright, of Salmon Arm.

President Dennis Webb represented the Branch at the National Convention in Halifax.

Members of the Thompson-Okanagan Branch live in the Okanagan, Thompson and Shuswap valleys of southern British Columbia, in an area stretching some 300 kilometres from Kamloops to the United States boundary at Osoyoos. After the charter meeting membership was 25. By July this year it had risen to 45. More certificates will be presented at the September meeting which will be held in Summerland.

At our June meeting Eve Wright, UE, received her second and third certificates under Loyalist ancestors Luke Bowen and Michael Carman Sr. The programme after lunch was "hands-on" study. The full library was open. Members brought their reference books for others to study; some were so engrossed that they stayed until late afternoon.

1997 Spring

During the autumn, the Thompson- Okanagan Branch met twice, at Vernon and at Summerland. At Summerland, our theme was the War Years. Some members, the most yet, appeared in Loyalist costume. Mrs Vona Smith of the Vancouver and Chilliwack Branches gave readings from Kenneth Roberts' Oliver Wiswell and from True Blue by Walter Stewart, describing conditions during the Revolution.

Avowed and suspected Loyalists were often persecuted by rebel mobs; the worst treatment occurred in New England where they were often tarred and feathered (which tore off skin), ridden out of town on a rail (very hard on the male anatomy), or imprisoned in damp, underground mines. Many Loyalist men, women and children suffered great hardship as they made their escape to Canada. Most of these people had been born in the colonies; they were of German, English, Scotch, Dutch, Irish, French, negro and Indian descent. Property of Loyalists and suspected Loyalists was confiscated by the Patriots. Although the 1783 Treaty of Paris provided that compensation be paid the Loyalists, to this day they have received nothing; individual states refused to honour the pledge of their federal government. This explains the private member's bill (Godfrey-Milliken) introduced recently in the House of Commons.

Two certificates were presented. In the absence of Glen Bloom, a proved descendant of James Craig, a soldier in Delancey's regiment, his certificate was give to his father, Gordon Bloom, Eve Wright, UE, received her fourth certificate which shows descent from Philip Shaver who, with his three oldest sons, served in the King's Royal Regiment of New York.

At the October meeting in Vernon, Ron Smith received his certificate in the name of Corporal Robert Perry of the Loyal Rangers. This is the first certificate earned completely in the Branch. Joanne Hayhurst, UE, received extra certificates under Loyalist ancestors, George Bender, another Royal Yorker, and Jonas Wood, a founder of Cornwall.

Dr. Peter Russell, of the History faculty at Okanagan University College challenged and entertained this meeting. Since his field of study is early Ontario history, he is well acquainted with Loyalist contributions to the evolution of Canada. He spoke on recent publications Most of these people had been born in the about the Loyalists.

He noted that books on the Loyalists very often reflect the author's national viewpoint. Dealing first with British publications, he named Reginald Hargreaves' The Bloodybacks: The British Serviceman in North America, 1655-1783 (1968), and Michael Parson's Those Damned Rebels: Britain's American Empire in Revolt (1972). English authors are inclined to write from the of view of what England knew about the American colonies at the time. Otherwise, Dr. Russell said little on British writers.

Before 1960, American writers had difficulty dealing with the Loyalists.

Their viewpoint was that all Loyalists were well-to-do English elite. Study of the Loyalist Claims for Compensation shows that only 15% of the claimants had suffered losses of £ 1000 or more. But this percentage is high. Many Loyalists were illiterate and didn't make claims, in Upper Canada few could afford the expense of the long journey to Montreal to present their claims. Some radical American writers believed the Loyalists were in a conspiracy against the Americans. Bernard Bailyn is an exception~ in The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson, he takes the Loyalists seriously.

On recent American writers, Dr. Russell recommended Robert Lambert and Janice Potter-McKinnon. Mary Beth Norton and Ann Y. Zimmer show a pro-American bias.

Early Canadian writers tended to pick up either the British or the prevailing American points of view on Loyalists. Now writers do their own research and present the Loyalists' own point of view. Among recent Canadian books, Dr. Russell recommended :

- . Robert S. Allen, The Loyal Americans, (1983)
- . Christopher Moore, The Loyalists: Revolution, Exile, Settlement, (1984)
- . Wallace Brown & Hereward Senior, Victorious in Defeat: Loyalists in Canada, (1984)
- . J.M. Bumstead's Understanding the Loyalists (1986)
- . Hazel C. Matthews' The Mark of Honour, (1965).

Dr. Russell pointed out that the United Empire Loyalists were *small c* conservative in that they wanted to preserve the kind of government they had known in America and believed improvements should be made constitutionally. In this sense they were in opposition to the *large c* Conservatism of the British governors. Part of the *Conservative* policy was the attempt of British authorities to settle the Loyalist soldiers in Canada on a seigniorial pattern of land holding. Most Loyalists were bitterly opposed. Lord Dorchester recognized the land problem, and allowed free title to the grants, which he doubled from 100 to 200 acres. He also showed a compassion, unusual in those patriarchal times, by giving daughters of the Loyalists the same grants as were given to the sons.

By Chris Wright

2002 Spring

2001 was a busy year at the Thompson-Okanagan Branch. We started off in February with an entry in the Vernon Winter carnival parade. This was one of many firsts for our Branch. Harold Morgan, Eileen Foster, Gordon Bloom, Gerry Lewis and myself attended in period costume. We had support along the parade route with Terry Lodge and the Kilby's cheering us on. We had a super time representing the UEL

The end of February we joined forces with the Vernon and District Family History Society and set up a table in the Village Green Mall for a Genealogy Fair. We had a very good response. Several people

stopped by to find out "What is a Loyalist?". Shaw Cable, our local cable company, conducted an interview and we aired in March.

May was our Anniversary meeting held in Kamloops. We hold this event alternating each year between Penticton and Kamloops. Mabel Fowler was a great help in setting up the hall arrangements. I was nervous as a cat, as this was my first meeting as President. All went well. Our mends from the Pacific branches came to give their support: Shirley Dargatz, Lois Dickinson, Vera Webb from the Chilliwack Branch, Vona Smith from the Vancouver Branch and Ken Loucks from the Victoria Branch. They presented our Branch with a beautiful candelabra and a photo album with pictures of our Charter meeting 6 years ago.

In June, we held a workshop at the Alpine Centre in Vernon. Darlene Jones and Terry Lodge gave us a blow-by-blow talk on their most excellent trip to the Cornwall Conference. They both came away with a renewed knowledge of their UE ancestors, the gift of camaraderie and a greater appreciation for the miles between here and there.

August was the Summer Social / Potluck at my home on Okanagan Lake. I gave the house tour - not everyone can claim that Queen Elizabeth slept in their home. We had several guests. Laura Neame's daughter, Terry Lodge's brother from New Zealand and Sally Harrison, President of the V&DFHS. A UE certificate was presented to Sid Reith for his daughter for their Loyalist ancestor John McDougall UE.

September was the highlight of the year; we had a real Presidential tour and a visit from Dominion President William Terry. We arranged for the Vernon Heritage hall for our meeting and all were dressed for the occasion in their period costumes. It was nice to finally meet our President and talk face to face. Many members got a chance to talk to Bill. Of course Shirley Dargatz and Lois Dickinson entertained us with "fan fare" set for a President. Bill told me later what a great time he had in beautiful British Columbia.

October was our AGM. We discussed the idea of our "Loyalist Drum" newsletter going electronic. Eileen Foster would remain editor and take care of the hard copy for those not on the Internet. Harold Morgan our webmaster would take care of the website copy. November 2001 our first edition of a website newsletter of the Loyalist Drum came over the Internet for those who chose to have a electronic copy. Chris Wright gave a generous donation to help financially with future copies of the "Drum". Thank you Chris.

November's Remembrance Day ceremony at the Vernon cenotaph was attended by; Eileen Foster, Harold Morgan, Gerry Lewis, Darlene Jones and Terry Lodge. We are encouraging other towns in our Thompson-Okanagan area to do likewise.

The hall is booked and the meeting times arranged. 2002 holds great hope for our Branch.

By Patricia E. Kelderman UE

2002 Fall

Last February we attended the Vernon Winter Carnival Parade with member participation in costume. The following month we joined forces with the Vernon and District Family History Society for a Genealogy Fair. In April we held a computer workshop and in May we celebrated our seventh anniversary at the Lier House Cultural Centre in Penticton, with piper David Snyder and certificate

presentations. The same month red geraniums were planted at the BC Dragoon monument in Vernon, in memory of the soldiers who died in the Revolutionary War, and the War of 1812.

Pat Kelderman was our representative at Conference 2002 in Waterloo. July saw us back in Vernon at the Pattie Mackie House for a Strawberry Tea, with more good food in August at the potluck at the Kelderman residence on Okanagan Lake.

For September we plan a workshop to share information gathered by members during their summer travels, and October features our AGM. Prizes and a potluck will be featured.

By Pat Kelderman UE