

ATLANTIC REGION TOUR 2014 – 3 PROVINCES – 3 DAYS

Bonnie Schepers UE

This past weekend I had the pleasure of touring the Atlantic Region branches with hosts Jim McKenzie, Atlantic Region Vice-President and Dave Laskey, Atlantic Region Councillor.

Friday, May 16 - On Friday, May 16, I was to fly from Toronto to Charlottetown PEI, check in to the Lakeview Loyalist Resort and drive on to Bedeque for a meeting with Abegweit Branch and members of the Bedeque Area Historical Society. “The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.” The flight out of Toronto was changed to a departure time of one hour later and then delayed by an additional hour. This translated to jumping into a moving vehicle in Charlottetown and heading out to Central Bedeque without a pit stop or change of clothes. Peter Van Iderstine, President of Abegweit Branch, kindly overlooked my casual appearance and the evening spent at the William Callbeck Centre was informative and enjoyable.

As it turned out serendipity was at play. My seat mate on the flight to PEI was Senator Catherine Callbeck (former premier of PEI), born in Central Bedeque and the woman whose family ran the historic Callbeck store, now the museum. One could not ask for a better introduction to the history of the area and I learned much about Catherine’s family and their involvement in the community.

The program for the evening included the unveiling of two commissioned paintings by local artist Grace Curtis depicting scenes of Loyalist families at work. These paintings make up part of the Loyalist section of the museum supported through UELAC major grant funding in 2013.

Saturday, May 17 - Jim, Dave and I made an early start for the drive to Wolfville NS where we attended a workshop on Planter and Loyalist Settlers of Nova Scotia. Dr. Barry Moody and Stephen Davidson were the featured speakers. The highlight of this meeting was the presentation of the Charter to the newly named Nova Scotia Branch. It was great meeting up again with Stephen Davidson and getting to know the enthusiastic members of the Nova Scotia Branch UELAC. Following the meeting we hit the road for Saint John NB.

Sunday, May 18 – Loyalist Day in New Brunswick and the birthday of Canada’s first city (1785). It was my honour to participate in the Loyalist Day Celebrations at Market Square Atrium along with His Worship Mel Norton, Mayor of the City of Saint John; The Hon. Dorothy Shephard, Minister of Healthy and Inclusive Communities; Rodney Weston, MP Saint John; and the Reverend Dr. John Tremblay. Following a band concert by St. Mary’s Band, Dave Laskey and I attended the 21- gun salute by the 3rd Field Artillery Regiment RCA (The Loyal Company) and inspection of the firing party.

Sunday afternoon, Jim McKenzie gave me a driving tour of the city of Saint John with lunch at the Reversing Rapids and a drive out to the Irving Nature Park, a 600-acre forest at the west end of the city.

Our final stop for the afternoon was Loyalist House, original home of the Merritt family, now a museum and National Historic site in uptown Saint John. Our timing was perfect. Kathy Wilson, President of the New Brunswick Historical Society was at the museum and very graciously gave us a personal tour of the house. The restoration of the dining room is now complete with the reproduction wallpaper and draperies donated by New Brunswick Branch, funded in part by a UELAC major grant 2014.

The grand finale on Sunday night was a Loyalist Day banquet at the Union Club in Saint John. This was a double celebration as we also recognized the 100th Anniversary of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada. New Brunswick Branch President Dave Laskey emceed the evening. Members of all three Atlantic Region branches attended as well as local heritage community representatives. Carl Killen, MLA Saint John Harbour, brought greetings. Dominion President Bonnie Schepers was the keynote speaker.

Thank you to my most capable and welcoming hosts for the weekend – Jim McKenzie, Dave Laskey, and Peter Van Iderstine, as well as the members of the Abegweit, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick branches for a wonderful tour. I will be back. You have been warned. The 2016 UELAC Conference and AGM is scheduled for Summerside PEI. I encourage everyone to mark July 2016 on your calendars – Gone to PEI!

Bonnie

Photo Gallery:

May 16, 2014

William Callbeck Centre – Central Bedeque PEI

Dave Laskey, Atlantic Region Councillor

Peter Van Iderstine, President Abegweit Branch

Jim McKenzie, Atlantic Region VP



Unveiling of commissioned Loyalist Paintings – Bedeque Area Historical Museum
 Bonnie Schepers, UELAC Dominion President
 Grace Curtis, artist – Grace Curtis Fine Art



CONTRIBUTORS BEDEQUE AREA HISTORICAL MUSEUM	
PLATINUM	(\$10,000.00 +)
• Bill, Helen and Senator Catherine Callbeck •	
GOLD	(\$5,000 - \$9,999)
• United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada •	
SILVER	(\$2,500 - \$4,999)
• RBC Dominion Securities •	
• Ron & Donna MacDonald & Family •	
• Heath & Patti Glover & Family •	
• Grant Thornton LLP •	
BRONZE	(\$1,500 - \$2,499)
• Kool Breeze Farms Inc. •	

May 17, 2014
Nova Scotia Branch UELAC – Meeting Wolfville NS

Presentation of Nova Scotia Branch Charter
Bonnie Schepers – UELAC Dominion President
Carol Harding – Nova Scotia Branch



Jim McKenzie – Atlantic Region VP
Bonnie Schepers – Dominion President
Shamus Dilts – President Nova Scotia Br



May 18, 2014
Loyalist Day New Brunswick –Saint John NB

21- Gun salute by the 3rd Field Artillery Regiment RCA (The Loyal Company)



Loyalist House, Saint John NB
Kathy Wilson – President New Brunswick Historical Society
Jim McKenzie – Atlantic Region VP
Bonnie Schepers – Dominion President

