



Newsletter

Fall 2009

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

UELAC AGM

The first significant activity that we attended was the UELAC Annual General Meeting which took place at Napanee and Adolphustown, Ontario, on June 11 to 14. Six of our members enjoyed the hospitality and excellent organization of the Bay of Quinte Branch under President Brian Tackaberry. A very special event occurred during the Dominion Conference Gala Banquet, the UELAC Dorchester Award, which is awarded annually for outstanding volunteerism, was presented to our Branch Patron, John Chard.

In addition to attending the UELAC meetings and touring the lovely and historical Prince Edward County area, we were treated to the re-enactment of the landing of the first Loyalist settlers on the shores of the Bay of Quinte 225 years ago. This and a military parade put on by some 325 re-enactors, made an impressive display.



Re-enactment of Loyalist landing on shores of Bay of Quinte 225 years ago.

Following the parade of the troops, wreaths were laid at the memorial, including one that I laid on behalf of the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch.



George Anderson, Jim McKenzie, Mark Jodoin and Adelaide Lanktree at the memorial

On Sunday, we were invited to church services at the old Methodist Church at Hay Bay (Canada's oldest Methodist building, built 1792) and, later, at the Anglican Church of St. Alban the Martyr where President Fred Hayward gave an address.

Branch AGM

Our Branch Annual Meeting was held at the Canadian Legion Hall in Philipsburg on June 27th and began with a delicious beef dinner served by members of the Legion. This being the 225th anniversary of the landing of the first Loyalists at Philipsburg, which is at the north end of Lake Champlain, we celebrated the occasion by cutting and serving a specially prepared cake commemorating the occasion.



Cake celebrating the 225th anniversary of the Loyalists arrival at Philipsburg.

We were fortunate to have Bob and Grietje McBride as special guests. Bob McBride, was the UELAC Vice-President for the Central East Region (now UELAC Acting Senior Vice President) and Editor of the Loyalist Gazette. The highlight of the meeting was his talk on the connection between the early Loyalists and the Freemasons with particular reference to both Sir William and Sir John Johnson who, in addition to being prominent Loyalists were also active Masons.

It should be noted that Okill Stuart, a second branch member, attended the meeting. He had recently returned from 65th anniversary ceremonies of the landings of the Canadians at Juno Beach in which he had participated in June of 1944. While in France, he was honoured by the presentation Legion of Honour for his services.



Branch AGM, 27 June, 2009.

L to R – Wesley Larocque, Gerry Thomas, Grietje McBride, Robert Wilkins, Adelaide Lanktree, Robert McBride, Okill Stuart, Bill Glidden, Louise Hall, Gene Hicks, Rod Riordon.

Branch Picnic

Our picnic was held at the Brome County Historical Society in Knowlton on August 19th, a pleasant summer day, when over 30 of our members who turned out enjoyed their lunches in the fresh air. Okill and Sylvia Stuart from Saint-Lambert attended as did Mark Jodoin from Ottawa who took the opportunity to sell copies of his recently published book, “Shadow Soldiers.” This contains stories of the lives of a number of Loyalists and some prominent and some not.



Mark Jodoin and Okill Stuart at our Summer Picnic with Mark's new book.

Battle of Plattsburgh Commemoration



Members and friends at Plattsburgh.

L to R: Jo Carter, Adelaide Lanktree, Mark Jodoin, Louise Hall, Michel Racicot, Rod Riordon and Roy Carter (Robinson genealogist).

In recent years the city of Plattsburgh, New York, has sponsored numerous activities commemorating the Battle of Plattsburgh, one of the last major battles in the War of 1812. The commemoration activities take place over a period of nine days, starting on Saturday and ending on the Sunday of the following weekend. There are several memorial services held during the week at cemeteries where troops of both sides of the Battle of Plattsburgh are buried. Six of our Branch members attended on the final Saturday when the main activities are the re-enactments of both the naval and land battles followed by an extensive parade in the afternoon.

During the re-enactment of some of the land battles, one name mentioned several times by the commentator caught my attention, this being that of General Robinson, because he is my g-g-g-g-uncle. General Frederick Phillipse Robinson was a son of Colonel Beverley Robinson and had fought with him against the Revolutionaries in his Loyal American Regiment. When he ended his career after 75 years in the British Army, General Sir Frederick Phillipse Robinson was the longest serving officer in the Army's history. However, at the time of the Battle of Plattsburgh, he, along with two other generals and substantial reinforcements, had only recently arrived in North America after fighting with Wellington in the Peninsula War against Napoleon. At the time he was a recently-promoted Major General.



British troop re-enactors at Battle of Plattsburgh Commemoration

Despite the defeat of the British fleet in the naval Battle of Plattsburgh, General Robinson was in favour of pursuing the American troops on the ground. However, General Sir George Prevost, the Governor General and Commander of the British forces, was afraid that, following the loss of the British fleet, American troops could now be transported by ship to cut off his rear and he opted to withdraw. This battle took place on the 11th of September, 1814 and it was only a few months later that the war ended in a stalemate. The Treaty of Ghent, which dealt largely with the European War, settled the North American War of 1812, by decreeing that the boundaries between British North America and the fledgling American States should return to what they were before the fighting began.

Coming back to the present, the afternoon was taken up with a parade by many organizations including some very good bands, the most prominent of these being a U.S. Naval Band, Her Majesty's Royal Marine Band of Cobourg, Ontario and two pipe and drum bands. The parade ended with an excellent Beat Retreat Ceremony performed by the combined bands and included a very moving rendition of Amazing Grace played by the bagpipe bands. The ceremonies include American, Canadian and British representatives. This year the salute was taken by a British naval commander.

Fall Meeting

On Sunday, October 25th, we met at the Emmanuel United Church in Cowansville for the morning church service, conducted by the Rev. Wendy Maclean, followed by our semi-annual meeting. We were pleased to have Okill Stuart, Past Dominion President, and his wife Sylvia, Robert Wilkins, President of Heritage Branch, and his wife, Maura, as guests. After an excellent roast beef dinner, a special presentation was made to Maryha Gerty, a grade 6 student at Heroes Memorial School, Cowansville, for her essay "Walking Through the United Empire Loyalist Cemetery," that took second prize in the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network contest.

WALKING THROUGH THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALIST CEMETERY

By Maryha Gerty
Grade 6, age 11
Heroes Memorial School
Cowansville, QC

The cold spring air touched my face gently, making my hair blow in my face as I walked through the cemetery. I noticed tombstones with faint writing. Out of the corner of my eye I spotted a faded little flag with the colours of red and blue. I turned my eyes and read "John Ruiter." A few minutes later when the wind died down, I pushed my hair out of my face as an older woman came and stood beside me.

I whispered in a light voice, "What's all this about? Why is there a flag on the tombstone?"

She turned her head to face mine, and then sighed while looking at the tombstone. "The flag represents people who were loyal to Britain and who had to leave the United States once it became independent in 1776. It's sad that people today don't recognize what these things mean."

She then told me that John Ruiter's father, Jacob Ruiter, was the first settler in Cowansville. He gave a piece of land in 1811 for the building of the first school, and later he gave another lot for the Union Cemetery. She also told me that he made a flourmill and sawmill that was used for years. The settlement was first known as Ruiter's Mills and then in 1805, Jacob named this new settlement Nelsonville, in honour of the British Admiral Lord Nelson who died in the battle of Trafalgar.

I was amazed at what she knew and then understood her sorrow. What a sad thing not to know our history.



Presentation by Mark Jodoin and Louise Hall to Maryha Gerty for prize-winning essay.

Following the presentation to Maryha, Mark Jodoin, who recently published his book, “Shadow Soldiers of the American Revolution”, on Loyalists who lived through revolutionary times, gave a talk on “What I did on my Summer Vacation.” In this, he described places in eastern Canada and the northeastern United States that he had visited in connection with his writings and the lives of some of the historical figures who had lived in these parts, thus tying the past and present together in a very interesting way that brings history alive.

Heritage Branch Dinner

Montreal’s Heritage Branch held their annual dinner on October 28th and six of our members enjoyed their hospitality and a very nice dinner at Montreal’s Black Watch Armoury. The guest speaker was UELAC President Fred Hayward with a talk, in dialect, concerning some of his ancestors.



The painting of Sir John Johnson's funeral procession

L to R: Mark Jodoin, Adelaide Lanktree, Michel Racicot, Louise Hall, Rod Riordon, Phyllis Hamilton

A highlight of the day occurred prior to the meeting when the Masonic Memorial Temple, a formidable building on Sherbrooke Street, was opened especially so that our members could tour it and, in particular, see the painting of Sir John Johnson's funeral procession. The painting is a big one and fills one whole panel in a large, marble-walled meeting room.

Outreach Activities

May 1

Four members attended a book launch of Dr. Jack I. Little's "Loyalists in Conflict" which was held at Bishop's University in Lennoxville, Quebec. The book is dedicated to our senior member, Marion Phelps.

"I wish to dedicate this book to Marion Phelps, who has provided over half a century of volunteer service to the rich archival collection of the Brome County Historical Society. It is particularly fitting that she and the BCHS be recognized as they both celebrate their one hundredth anniversary in 2008."

Jimmy Manson is credited in the bibliography for "The Loyal Americans of New England and New York: Founders of the Townships of Lower Canada".

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 where a visit with Addie Shield's who was launching her new book, "Survival of Families in Beekmantown, NY in the First Half of the 20th Century" was the highlight of our day. We also visited with Addie on the reviewing stand at the Battle of Plattsburgh Celebrations in September. Sadly, Addie died on Saturday, 31 October, at the age of 93. We have lost a good friend.

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.

UEL Certificates

Congratulations to the members who have received UEL Certificates in 2009:

Fay Ellen Cotton UE (*Rev. John Stuart*)
Carrie Mackenzie UE (*John Booth Sr.*)
Michael Stanley Soule UE (*George Hauck*)
Rebecca Margaret Soule UE (*George Hauck*)

Congratulations to the 29 members who have already paid their 2010 dues. Thank you

Roderick Riordon UE, President

Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch Executive for 2009-2010

Honourary President: Sir Guy Johnson

Patron: John E. Chard

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

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

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



*The official cutting of the 225th anniversary cake, last June.
L to R: Grietje and Robert McBride, Robert Wilkins,
Okill Stuart, Rod Riordon*

For more information, please visit our website:

<http://www.uelac.org/SirJohnJohnson/>



**The United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada
Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch**

CHARTER GRANTED December 16, 1967

*N° 33. Those Loyalists who
have adhered to the Unity of the
Empire, and joined the Royal
Standard before the Treaty of
Separation in the year 1783
and all their Offspring, and
their Descendants by either
sex, are to be distinguished
by the following Capitular
affixed to their names*

U. E.

*Adhering to their great principle
The Unity of the Empire.*

2010 MEMBERSHIP

Dear _____

Dues for the year 2010 are to be received on or before December 15, 2009

UELAC membership

_____ Individual membership \$37.50

_____ Family membership \$55.00

Second-Branch membership

_____ 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, Quebec, J2N 1K6**

Please notify us of any change of address or phone number.

E-mail address if applicable _____

Loyally,

Louise Hall U.E.
Branch Treasurer
E-mail:- adelaidel@sympatico.ca