



# Newsletter

## *Spring 2015*

Finally winter is behind us and summer has already showed its colors.  
It is time to invite you to our 48<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting.

### Notice of Annual General Meeting

**Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**At 11:30 AM for lunch at 12:00 Noon**

To be held at  
All Saints Anglican Church  
3829 Principale Street  
Dunham, Quebec



**Guest Speaker: Michel Racicot**

Topic: A revisit of the Re-Consecration Ceremony  
of the Johnson Family Burial Vault

**Lunch – \$20.00 per person (wine included)**  
*(See menu on page 7)*

**Please reserve by June 15<sup>th</sup> with:**

Adelaide Lanktree – email: [adelaidel\(at\)sympatico.ca](mailto:adelaidel(at)sympatico.ca)  
Telephone: (450) 293-6342

or

Michel Racicot – email: [mracicot001\(at\)sympatico.ca](mailto:mracicot001(at)sympatico.ca)  
Telephone: (450) 260-1736

To use an Email Address, replace (at) with @

***Payment may be made at the door***

***but please remember that we must pay for the number of places we reserve.***

## The Gravestone of Sir John Johnson repaired in 2014

In 1969, the Missisquoi Historical Society granted permission to have the Gravestone of Sir John Johnson, which had laid for several years under a tree near an apple storage at Mont-Saint-Grégoire and which had been removed by vandals some years past from the door of the Johnson Family Burial Vault, placed in a niche in the wall of the Missisquoi Museum when the new section of the museum building was to be bricked the following spring. So the stone, which bears the barely-legible inscription, *Sacred to the memory of the Honourable Sir John Johnson who departed this life of the 4<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1830, aged 88 years*, was installed in 1970 in the outside wall of the Missisquoi Museum at Stanbridge East, where it remains today. The old stone was in such bad condition and much of the lettering was hardly discernible so that re-lettering of the stone was practically impossible to do. It was therefore decided that a plaque would be placed beside it. This bronze plaque reads as follows: *1742–1830 – Sir John Johnson – Indian Commissioner and a foremost Loyalist from New York State, who led the Loyalist Regiments during the Revolutionary War. Buried at Mount Johnson, Que. – Erected by the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch of The United Empire Loyalists.*

Over the years, the niche where the gravestone is housed, had crumbled and began to pull away from the museum wall and if nothing was done to repair it, the gravestone would eventually fall and break. Last summer, Branch President Gerald Thomas undertook the project of having the niche repaired, which was done successfully.

The Gravestone of Sir John Johnson is also part of QAHN's Identity of English-speaking Quebec in 100 Objects. For more information on the history of the gravestone, please visit QAHN's website <http://100objects.qahn.org/content/gravestone-sir-john-johnson-1830>

Before



Photo: Rachel Garber

After



Photo: Heather Darch

## Prix du mérite patrimonial Fleur bleue

Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch has submitted the Johnson Burial Vault Restoration for the *Prix du mérite patrimonial Fleur bleue* presented by the Musée du Haut-Richelieu. Since 1982, this award recognises outstanding contributions to the preservation and diffusion of heritage and history of the Haut-Richelieu region by an individual, a group, an association or a municipality. Winners will be announced during the Award Ceremony that will be held on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 at the museum in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Québec.

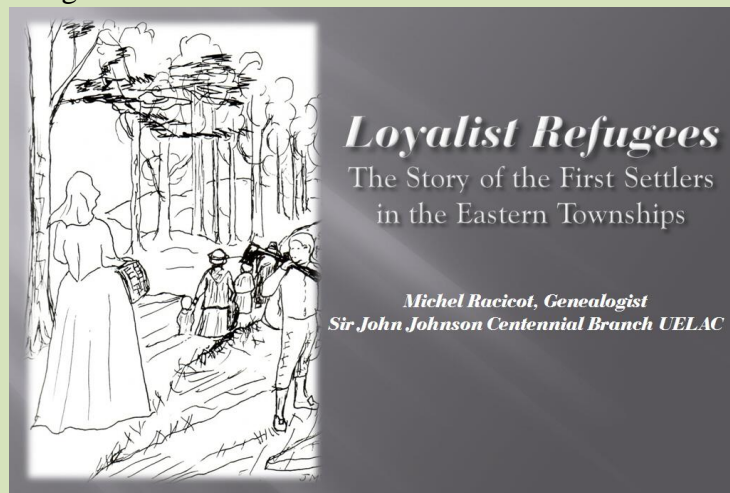


The Ceremony of the burial of the remains of Sir John Johnson and members of his family in the newly restored Johnson Burial Vault at Mount Johnson (today Mont Saint-Grégoire) took place Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014.

© Allan Joyner Photography

## Loyalist Refugees – The Story of the First Settlers in the Eastern Townships

On Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Branch Genealogist Michel Racicot gave a talk to the Beaufort-Beaconsfield Historical Society. His PowerPoint presentation was titled “Loyalist Refugees – The Story of the First Settlers in the Eastern Townships”. This presentation which took place in historic Centennial Hall in Beaconsfield (Montreal) was part of a series of 5 lectures on the United Empire Loyalists. The other lectures were given by members of Heritage Branch – Montreal.





## Remembering Ruby Glenna Laduke Moore UE (1908-1990)

Twenty-five years ago, Ruby Moore left us for a better world. Today, let us remember her as the moving spirit behind the formation of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch in 1967.

*"It is Ruby Moore that we have to thank for having the initiative in 1966 to respond to the request of the representative from the Dominion Headquarters in Toronto, Mr. E. John Chard, that a United Empire Loyalist Branch was formed here in the Townships. Ruby Moore had the foresight to see that Missisquoi County was the natural place to start such a movement since so many of the early settlers here were Loyalists."* Marion L. Phelps, late curator of the Brome County Historical Society.



During the summer of 1967, John Chard, UELAC Dominion President, visited the Missisquoi Museum at Stanbridge East, Quebec where he met Ruby Moore, genealogist of the Missisquoi Historical Society. He soon realized that Mrs. Moore had a remarkable knowledge of the history of the region. Several years later John Chard made this comment on his first visit in Missisquoi: *"It soon became evident that there was now support for a gathering of the Loyalist descendants, but according to a universal custom, they relayed the work of finding prospective members onto one person, Ruby Moore. They could not have made a better choice."*

In 1975, Ruby Moore retired as genealogist of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch. She had served the Branch as genealogist since its inception in 1967. In a newsletter dated October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1975, Branch President Gwendolyn Fuller wrote: *"Perhaps some of you may have heard that we had a dinner party in honor of Ruby Moore, on July 21 at my home and Ruby was surprised by a presentation of a purse, by all present. Perhaps this is a good opportunity to praise our great and noble worker, Ruby Moore, for without her ability, her enthusiasm and her willingness, there probably would not be such an important branch as the Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch. We can never forget all she has done for the branch – not only as Genealogist, but throughout."*



Ruby Laduke Moore died on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1990. She was a descendant of Loyalist John Fordyce, a pioneer settler of Fordyce Corner, a small hamlet today part of the town of Cowansville, Quebec, where Ruby lived for years.

### Heritage Branch Spring Dinner

A special Spring Dinner was held on Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 at the Black Watch Officers' Mess in Montreal. This special dinner was held to make up for the Charter Night Dinner that was to have been held at the same venue on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 but which was cancelled by order of the Department of National Defence due to the tragic shootings that day on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Very special guests of the dinner were Bonnie Schepers, Dominion President and her husband Albert, Roy Lewis, Vice-President Central East Region and Myrtle Johnston, Central East Regional Council.

The guest speaker at the Spring Dinner was L.Col. (ret'd) Colin Robinson, the Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel of the Royal Montreal Regiment (RMR). He gave us an informative and interesting talk illustrated by a PowerPoint presentation, on the beginning of the Royal Montreal Regiment and its role during WWI. In 2014, the RMR celebrated 100 years of successful military service to Canada. RMR was born in 1914 to serve in the First World War.

Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch was well represented that evening. Members Gerald Thomas, Adelaide Lanktree, Louise Hall and Michel Racicot enjoyed their hospitality and a very nice dinner.

### Henry Gordon (Gary) Aitken UE (1941-2015)

All of us were shocked and saddened to learn that Gary Aitken, Heritage Branch Librarian, had passed away suddenly on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015. For years, Gary had been a very good friend and second-branch member of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch.

"Gary was born in Montreal to Henry Gordon Aitken and Dorothy Hart (nee Kertland). He will be greatly missed by his wife Valerie (nee Josset), his sons Robert (Margaret) and Andrew, and his sisters Susan Haglund (Bruce) and Linda Kochman (William). Beloved Grandpa to Ian and Daniel. Gary will also be missed by his nieces and cousins. Gary was active in multiple groups including his roles as a Past President of the Grace Dart Foundation and a member of the board of directors of the Montreal Chest Institute Foundation of the MUHC. Gary was a proud United Empire Loyalist, an Ensign in the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders and an avid genealogist. His first compilation of family history "Good People" covering the history of the Kertlands in Canada was a work of passion and dedication. His



second book "The Aitkens of the Island" was underway at the time of his passing. Gary had a proud career with Marsh & McLennan of 40 years in the Montreal office. Gary was a loving husband, a great father and a superstar in the eyes of his grandchildren. He will be sorely missed by all those whose lives he touched." (Obituary published in *The Gazette, Montreal, February 24, 2015*)

### **Fred Gilman, “the soul of Bedford”**

In 2015, the town of Bedford, Quebec, is celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The launching of the celebrations took place on May 21<sup>st</sup>. For the occasion, the municipal officials were dressed in period costumes. The Honorary President of the 125<sup>th</sup> is Fred Gilman, the one who is called “the soul of Bedford” and a long-time member of Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch. He also had been the President of honour at the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bedford, a title he shared with his late wife. For years, our Branch has been invited to Fred Gilman’s Annual Picnic honouring American and Canadian Veterans held at his estate near Clarenceville, Quebec, on the shore of Lake Champlain.



In the middle, the Honorary President Fred Gilman surrounded by members of the organizing committee of the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the town of Bedford.

© Photo TC Media – Romy Quenneville-Girard

### **Invitation to Fred Gilman’s Summer Picnic – June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Fred Gilman’s Picnic will be held by the Veterans Coalition of Vermont – MBA, MOA, MOWW & AFA and hosted by ROA.

**Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 12:00 Noon**

At the Gilman home on Lake Champlain, **1720 Gilman Street, Clarenceville, Quebec**  
Directions: On Route 202, between Clarenceville and Venise-en-Québec, take Lakeshore Road (going south). Continue to Street 2 (rue 2), turn left and go to Gilman Street.

**Price: \$15.00**

**Please make cheque payable to Fred Gilman**

Give your name, phone number and total of your party planning to attend,  
and mail to Fred Gilman, 9 Rix Ave. Bedford J0J 1A0

For more information, you can reach Fred Gilman at 450-294-2651 or 450-248-3341



**AGM - Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**At 11:30 AM for lunch at 12:00 Noon**

To be held at  
All Saints Anglican Church  
3829 Principale Street  
Dunham, Quebec

**\$20.00 per person, wine included**  
All are welcome!  
Please bring your family and friends

## *Menu*

*Chicken Pie*  
*Green Salad*  
*Jellied Cranberry*  
*Peas and Carrots*  
*Rolls and Butter*  
*Rhubarb Crisp and Ice Cream*  
*Wine or Juice*  
*Coffee and Tea*

## **Summer Picnic**

Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch intends to hold its Summer Picnic in August, on the site of the Johnson Family Burial Vault at Mont-Saint-Grégoire.

More details to come soon.



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# Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch Executive 2014-2015

Honorary President: **Sir Guy Johnson** Winchester, England  
Past President: **Roderick Riordon**  
President: **Gerald Thomas**  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:  
Secretary:  
Treasurer: **Louise Hall**  
Genealogist: **Michel Racicot** 129 Church St., Cowansville, QC, J2K 1T9 Tel. 450-260-1736  
Publicity: **Evelyn Lewis**  
Membership: **Adelaide Lanktree** 140 Principale Ouest, Farnham, QC, J2N 1K6 Tel. 450-293-6342  
Vault Committee: **Charles Harbec, Adelaide Lanktree, Raymond Ostiguy,  
Gerald Thomas, Michel Racicot, Roderick Riordon**  
Newsletter: **Michel Racicot**  
Hospitality: **Joan Lee**  
Flag Bearer: **Wesley Larocque**



## WEBSITES

Sir John Johnson Centennial Branch  
UELAC

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

## E-MAIL

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Branch President: **Gerald Thomas** [gerryt\(at\)sympatico.ca](mailto:gerryt(at)sympatico.ca)  
Branch Treasurer: **Louise Hall** [adelaidel\(at\)ympatico.ca](mailto:adelaidel(at)ympatico.ca)  
Branch Secretary:  
Branch Genealogist: **Michel Racicot** [mracicot001\(at\)sympatico.ca](mailto:mracicot001(at)sympatico.ca)

To use an Email address, replace (at) with @