



YARMOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S HISTORIGRAM

August 2008

Volume 8 Issue 7

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello everyone! I must tell you that things are buzzing at the Yarmouth County Museum and Archives during this busy time of year. We are very fortunate to have a number of very pleasant, ambitious students working with us at the Museum for the summer months. It's truly a happening place with everyone pitching in.

New ideas are coming forward and things are moving along well with Bruce Bishop, our Director, at the head. Bruce has only been with us a short time and is handling his work load very well. We are looking forward to fulfilling a number of ideas that he has been tossing around.

Plans are in the making for a celebration of our **50th anniversary** of the Yarmouth County Museum and Archives. The actual date of this anniversary was on March 7 of this year, but nothing says we can't celebrate throughout the year! Happy 50th, everyone.

In connection with **Seafest** activities, things are in full swing with the preparation of our annual Museum Garden Sale to be held on Saturday, July 19 on the museum grounds. Right now many willing workers are busy bringing items in for the big day along with pricing each item. Others are making phone calls for baked goods to have on the bake table. This is a big fund raiser for our Museum, and it is a great way for everyone to have a few laughs while working together. Please come out and support this event if you can.

There are events planned, to be held at the Museum, for each day of the week during

Seafest. These will consist of **speakers** covering a range of topics. There will also be a performance by our own local group, **The Shantymen**, who will be singing some of their sea shanties for a good time of entertainment.

On Saturday, July 5, **Bill Crowell** held an opening of his exhibits of oil, watercolor and acrylic paintings, at the Yarmouth County Museum. A good number of people turned out for this occasion and many interesting comments were shared. Bill's show closes August 30 and his work is in the Lower Gallery.

Our July Society meeting was nothing short of lively as we were entertained by Jeremy Watkins, a stage director at Th'Yarc Playhouse & Arts Centre, along with several of the cast members from their recent production of Shakespeare's **Twelfth Night**. With their props and costumes, along with the Elizabethan language, the acting was well done. Great job, Jeremy and crew, and a big thank you!

For our Society meeting in August, Angela Collier of the **Art Gallery of Nova Scotia** (Yarmouth Branch) will be joining us. Angela will be talking about the upcoming events at both the Yarmouth and Halifax locations. We look forward to learning more about the wonderful exhibits this highly regarded provincial gallery is planning.

Charles R. Winship
President

NEWS FROM THE DIRECTOR



Puff up your pride on the Museum's 50th year of incorporation

"The drives through outlying country, as well as in Yarmouth town, are especially delightful because of the superior roads and the changing views of marsh, river, bay and crags, fishing hamlets, farms, lakes, hills and the open sea. 'The Churn' on the far side of Bay View Park is a fascinating demonstration of the rage of waves when trapped in a rocky trough. The drive consumes about half an hour from the centre of the town. Markland, across the Bar on Cape Fourchu (sic), is surrounded by the swirl of Fundy, the ocean and the harbor, and is therefore



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NEWS FROM THE DIRECTOR (continued)

a desirable place for a summer sojourn. The Milton lakes are reached by carriage or tram. The road passes through pleasant villages overlooked by the Highlands. Further north, rocky Port Maitland faces both the Bay and the Atlantic from its position on the wind-beaten coast. When the hotel at this point is open, there is daily communication with Yarmouth by stage, a distance of 12 miles."

As I recently finished writing the **Michelin Green Guide to Atlantic Canada** prior to beginning my new job at the Museum on June 30, I was fascinated by the above account of Yarmouth County written in 1915 by Ruth Kedzie Wood (1880-1950) in **The Tourist's Maritime Provinces** – surely one of the very first travel guidebooks for this part of the world. Ms Wood had also written guidebooks to Russia, Spain, Portugal and California -- and her essay on her trip from Yarmouth to Bridgewater is decidedly poetic.

I sometimes wonder if it's a particularly Canadian trait that we love to read about how others see us. Perhaps a place like Yarmouth County (or *Kespoogwit*, meaning "land's end" in the language of our Mi'kmaq) being located at the tip of the province -- also fosters a need for recognition. Certainly your Museum and Archives gets its share of accolades, and I thought I'd share a few with you. If you haven't been to see us in awhile, please come back! It's your permanent home to show pride in your town and county's incredible history.

These comments are from our guestbook which is placed on a cabinet in the lower level of the Museum:

"We have a Yarmouth in the U.K. which also has a Maritime history, but I don't think it has a museum as interesting as this one!"

"So much more than a Museum – this place is a treasure!"

"For that \$1 to get in it was worth seeing awesome (sic) old stuff we don't have now!"

"Nice museum – what a collection!" (a visitor from Holland)

"Outstanding! Thank goodness you had the foresight and skill to preserve and protect this beautiful history!" (a visitor from British Columbia)

"This place is amazing. Surely the best kept secret in N.S. – wonderful!" (a visitor from N. Yorkshire, U.K.)

"Impressive collection and beautifully displayed. Thank you to all the contributors of \$ and artifacts and to all the volunteers who so generously gave their time to preserve and protect the history of Yarmouth. Your efforts are well appreciated!" (a visitor from Cape Breton)

The last comment is one I'd like to repeat. Although I've only been in my position for a month, I am so impressed with the dedication to the Museum and Archives shown by the Historical Society's membership, including the numerous volunteers and Board of Directors. You make me proud to have hailed from this unique and special corner of Nova Scotia.

Bruce Bishop

The Curator's Corner

by Nadine Gates

Though the Sharing Circle we sat in was small, it provided the perfect venue for Mi'kmaq elder Elsie Basque to share some of her memories and experiences growing up in Hectanooga, Digby County, this past June 21. I had invited her to be our guest speaker in honour of Aboriginal Day this year, and hope to have her back in the near future.

Elsie Basque is a remarkable woman who has experienced many "firsts" in her young 90-plus years: from being an alumna of the Nova Scotia Teacher's College in Truro, to being the first Mi'kmaq person to teach in a non-native school, are only two examples. Her warm heart and generous spirit were felt by everyone in the room -- and her honesty in dealing with our sometimes probing and political questions was greatly appreciated.

As many of you are now aware, we have a new director for the Yarmouth County Museum and Archives. Bruce Bishop brings with him a wealth of knowledge in public/ media relations, fundraising and marketing, and I'm sure he will put us on the destination map in discovering Yarmouth County's rich history. Jamie and I are making sure he gets to know all the 'ins and

outs' of managing this fine facility. There is a lot to learn and I'm sure there are times he has experienced information overload! I know we are in good hands, and look forward to bringing this Museum and Archives to the forefront of everyone's attention.

Now that Bruce is here, I can get back to my own work of developing the exhibits and working with the museum's wonderful collection. Summer students are all in place and are busy with the Museum, Archives, Pelton-Fuller House and Killam Brothers Shipping Office. I must say, we have a great group of young people working for us this year. Please drop in and meet them if you get the opportunity.

It's always nice to be able to put faces to names of people with whom I have had email correspondence and/or long distance conversations. I had the opportunity to meet Society members Barbara and Douglas Eagles who came to visit from British Columbia a few weeks ago. Barbara is the grand daughter of Melford Simms. Mr. Simms was one of the gentlemen who worked on the construction of the church the Museum is now housed in.

If any of you are travelling through town, please feel free to drop in and say hi!

Now on display at your Museum and Archives

Until August 31: "Scenes from History"- A retrospective of paintings by artist and author Bill Crowell.

Until September 14: "Pairings" – Paintings and prose by the Yarmouth Art Society and the WriteAway Writers' Group of Yarmouth County.

Off-Site Exhibit at the Yarmouth Regional Library: "Happy Anniversary YMCA". In celebration of the YMCA's 150th anniversary, we've assembled a photographic and document- based exhibit documenting is growth, development and change over the last century and a half.

Upcoming Exhibit: Opening September 1 on the Lower Level is "Stitches Through Time" - a look at the wonderful world of sewing and needlework from the needle and thread to the foot- powered sewing machine (and everything in between)!

Activities in the Archives

by Jamie Serran, Archivist

I believe that summer vacation has now begun, because the number of visitors to the archives has increased over the past few weeks. Several researchers from Massachusetts have made the trip across the water, joining others from Ontario, New Brunswick, and across Nova Scotia.

To make up for fewer in-person visitors in the month of June, we kept ourselves busy with research-by-mail requests, accessioning and cataloguing items in storage, and our ongoing "summer" cleaning!

We were very fortunate to receive additional funding from the Young Canada Works program that enabled us to hire another student for the remainder of the summer. **Nicole Wallace** joined us in the archives on Saturday, July 12 to assist researchers in the reading room and to work on special projects. We are thrilled to have another student, especially given that many of our days are getting busier and busier. Welcome Nicole!

I'd also like to welcome two new volunteers who have begun recently in the archives: **Bruce Ross**, a graduate from Dalhousie's Information Science program, is coming in once a week to catalogue; and **Susan Brown**, daughter of our regular Friday volunteer Bob Brown, has begun indexing some of our scrapbooks and newspapers. Welcome Bruce and Susan – we greatly appreciate all of your hard work.

Neither fog nor rain could keep me from the **Gathering of Loyalist Descendents** on Thursday, July 10, held

at the beautiful Digby Pines Resort in Digby. Hundreds of participants (also ignoring the persistent rain) gathered for a day of Loyalist genealogy discussions, an art show by Andrew Giffin, a tradeshow with local museums and organizations, and keynote speeches by David W. States and Dr. Terry Punch. After a brief morning introduction, participants moved between three meeting rooms throughout the day for breakout sessions on different family lines, with time in between to visit the tradeshow booths.

The YCMA booth was beside the booth for the Annapolis County museums, and the Digby County museums also had great representation in the tradeshow. Throughout the day I had the opportunity to meet many of the participants and speakers, chat with researchers who had visited us in the past, and listen in on different discussions. Quite a few people stopped by to visit our booth and pick up brochures and the handouts I had brought about our resources, research services, and Loyalist-specific materials. Many expressed interest in visiting the museum and archives later in the summer, and several asked questions about our services and materials that I will be following up on soon.

Despite the fact that much of the discussion and research focused on Loyalist family lines in Digby and Annapolis Counties, there was considerable interest in genealogy as a whole, which included genealogy in Yarmouth County as well. Overall, it was a very valuable (and fun!) day. Congratulations to Dorothy and Sheryl in Digby and to all of their (many) volunteers for a very successful event!

Hi, Society!

News about Yarmouth County Historical Society Members and Friends

SHARON ROBERT-JOHNSON has caught the attention of Nova Scotia's official heritage website, www.novascotia-heritage.ca on its "Faces of Heritage" page. Her soon to be released book, *Africa's Children: A History of Blacks in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia* (Dundurn Group, Toronto, 2008) was mostly researched at the Yarmouth County Museum and Archives, and at three cemeteries in Greenville. Sharon said in an interview, "What I enjoy most about my work is discovering or uncovering previously unknown histories of the area. The knowledge of where the people in this area came from, what they did and how they once lived, gives one a better understanding of how Yarmouth came to be what it is today."

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Good luck on the release of the book, Sharon – you can bet our Gift Shop will stock lots of copies!

GRETCHEN DANE BURDICK, MICHAEL MORRIS and **BELLE HATFIELD** joined with Rioko Miné-Goldring on July 11 for a piano recital fundraiser called "Music with Friends" in the Education Wing. Joining them were fellow members on recorders: **LORI COLBECK, MICHELINE COTTRELL** and **JOAN SÉMPLE**. Produced in conjunction with the *Rock Around the Clock High School Reunion*, the funds that were raised will be put towards the building and erection of a new flagpole at Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School. Thanks to all who participated and donated!

One might say that members **BARBARA MCNUTT-EAGLES** (Qualicum Beach, BC), and **JIM MACINTYRE** (Vancouver) are truly a student's best friend...not to mention to the Society! Barbara and Jim very generously donated the cash amounts to hire two more students to work this summer in the Museum and Archives, bringing our student employee count to seven. Thank you very much, Barbara and Jim – we hope other members might take your example and get the ol' chequebook out next summer.

Our friends at the **Heritage Trust Office** in Halifax asked to pass along the following information on their "**Painted Rooms Project**":

*"Do you have a decoratively painted interior in your home? Or do you know of a local church or institution that is ornately painted? **Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia** is seeking assistance in locating painted interiors within the province of Nova Scotia as part of its new initiative, *The Painted Rooms Project*. This project aims to find, document and preserve some of the rich historical and artistic culture of Nova Scotia.*

A painted interior may consist of a decoratively painted wall mural, border, stencil work and/or decoratively painted ceilings and floors."

For more information, or to report a decoratively painted interior please contact: Leeann Roy, Heritage Trust Office, Halifax. Phone (902) 423-4807 or email heritage.trust@ns.sympatico.ca

My, my, my....look what's turned 50!

by Peter Eldridge, Promotions Chair

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Yarmouth County Museum & Archives ('Where the sea and land come together') – and it's certainly a great occasion to celebrate. Looking back just ten years to the fundraising campaign for our building expansion, the following description highlighted the value of our Museum and Archives.

*However, to our recollection, the following description did not appear in the **Historigram** at that time. With the expansion now complete, we thought members of the Historical Society might find the abbreviated, updated variation from the campaign information to be of interest:*

Celebrating Yarmouth County's achievements: the expansion of the Yarmouth County Museum, 1998

The headline says it all – "From the Age of Sail to the 21st Century -- Preserving our heritage for the present and the future!" – the Museum's expansion celebrates the many accomplishments of individuals, businesses and organizations in our community.

One of the most extensive and prominent community museums in eastern Canada, and perhaps even across Canada, the Yarmouth County Museum and Archives features unique exhibits related to both the sea and the land: shipbuilding, sea-trade, sea-captains and crews,

their families, their homes, farms, and businesses of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Included with thousands of treasured artifacts and documents, the award-winning Museum houses over 100 ship portraits. It's a leading collection in Canada; along with a prominent Nova Scotia collection of Victorian costumes; and one of the most extensive family and business archives in the province.

There is hardly a local individual, family, business, or organization that is not somehow historically connected to at least some feature of the Museum...even the building itself is an outstanding architectural artifact from our past.

Recently the city of San Francisco tapped a connection with us when its maritime museum borrowed our portrait of the Yarmouth-captained sailing ship *Balclutha*, a permanent floating exhibit berthed at their signature Fishermen's Wharf.

A scientist at the University of Seattle also recently discovered with great enthusiasm a wealth of information in our Archives – a newspaper dating from the 1830s. He cited Yarmouth area as the world-centre for the production of eelgrass, historically shipped in quantity to global markets to be used for home insulation.

An early enterprising community, Yarmouth reputedly had the second street railway and the second radio station in Canada.

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In the 1800s, Yarmouth was home to many leaders of business. Among them were Canadian industrialist Isaac Walton Killam; father of Canadian tourism L.E. Baker, (instrumental in developing Yarmouth's international ferry service and the original Grand Hotel); and the storied 'Fuller Brush Man', Alfred Fuller, whose neighbouring Victorian home was recently donated to the Museum. Also, John Killam, founder of one of the first prominent ocean shipping companies in Canada in the 1700s, and Canadian bank presidents Sydney Frost and George Spinney, of the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Bank of Montreal respectively, all hailed from our fair county.

There were other notable people of enterprise, such as the inventor of the screw propeller, John Patch, and sea-captain heroes 'Rudder' Churchill and Samuel Davis – their historic travels all recorded in our Museum!

Formed in 1935, the Yarmouth County Historical Society established the Yarmouth County Museum in

1958 in a small wooden Main Street building which it quickly outgrew. With the foresight of Historical Society members (prominent Nova Scotia educator Edwin Ford was one), the impressive stone church building on Collins Street became the home of the Museum in 1969.

The recent expansion of the building helped bring the Museum and Archives from the 19th and 20th centuries into the new millennium, and better able to serve both the local community and visitors. The addition of the 'Education Wing' provides an ideal opportunity to help young people better appreciate and respect their heritage and their community.

During the expansion campaign, author-historian Susie Sweeney reflected, "Yarmouth's heart is the waterfront, but its soul resides in the Yarmouth County Museum!"

Our Wish List

As the Yarmouth County Museum and Archives is a not-for-profit charity, and we rely on donations (cash and in-kind) as well as subsidies from various government agencies, we still harbour a "wish list" of items that we vitally need somewhere on the premises.

You may be surprised to learn that many of our computers, printers, phones and photocopiers have been donated second-hand, from individuals or other offices...and just like second-hand cars, these office machines have limited lives and break down at the worst of times. These aren't exactly glamorous items, but they are all so essential in the successful running of a world-class Museum and Archives.

So, we thought we'd let our Society members know what the Museum and Archives are missing...in the event some of you may either have this item ready to give away, or might like to help defray the cost of one of the following:

(1) **A laminating machine** – yes, this would get rid of our frayed and yellowing paper labels that describe artifacts– and would also protect the self-guided Museum maps that one of our student employees recently designed. Price? Between \$150 and \$250 at Staples Office Supplies.

(2) **A dehumidifier** (or two or three!) - \$150 to \$350

(3) **17-ft. Multi-ladder** (Product #61-1055-8 at Canadian Tire; about \$250) – You wouldn't believe how difficult it is to replace light bulbs in our track lighting and the older church fixtures. In fact, we normally *rent* a ladder that will reach the more difficult areas. It'd be terrific to have our own, permanent ladder, to do this mundane but absolutely crucial job.

(4) **Hewlett Packard** now makes a multi-functional machine that photocopies and prints documents from our computers. It also scans photos (normal sized and larger) and might even do our dishes, too! In any event, this multipurpose wunderkind would be a definite advantage to the Archives and the Museum. It's not inexpensive, but we'd be happy to place your name - or a loved one's - on this machine that would be used constantly! (Wasn't it Gloria Swanson who said in *Sunset Boulevard*, "Mr. DeMille – I'm ready for my close-up!") The price is around \$7000 or less.

Right now, we have for sale to a member's business (for a bargain basement price of \$250): a Kyocera Mita Point Source Ai3010 photocopier that was donated to the Museum and Archives, but which does not suit our needs. (It's cash and carry to the best offer!)

For all of the above, call for a confidential chat with Bruce Bishop, Director, at 742-5539. (And, as always, *muchas gracias, merci beaucoup and thank you very much!*)

Introducing our Student Employees



L to R: Casidhe Nickerson, Deanna Pottier, Seamus Murphy and Jordan LeBlanc.



L to R: Katherine Surette, Donovan Bain and Jennie d'Entremont. Not pictured: Nicole Wallace.

"My name is **Jennie d'Entremont** and I am 20 years old. I'm entering my third year at Saint Mary's University with a major in psychology. Working here has allowed me to learn about the history of Yarmouth town and county. I give tours, meet wonderful people, learn about the Museum's facts and antiques and work with a great staff. I look forward to working here for the rest of the season!"

"Hi there – I'm **Seamus Murphy** and I am a student at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. I am going into my fourth year of a Bachelor of Arts program with a major concentration in English and a minor in Mathematics. In my time at the museum so far, I have been developing a new, more detailed, floor map for the museum and I will go on to do some cataloguing once that is finished."

"My name is **Deanna Pottier**. I am a graduate of École secondaire de Par-en-Bas. This fall I will be attending the Center for Arts and Technology College in Halifax where I will be taking a 3D Animation Program. It is a two year program that covers all aspects and techniques of animation, both on computer and on paper. My duties at the Museum include cataloguing, giving tours of the three buildings, cleaning, and helping to prepare for special events. It is a rewarding experience working here that I enjoy very much."

"Hello; I'm **Casidhe Nickerson** and I am 20 years old. I grew up in Kemptville, and am now entering my third year at Saint Mary's University this fall. I am majoring in English with a minor in Psychology in the hopes of becoming a teacher.

Since starting at the Museum, along with working at the Killam Brothers Office and the Pelton-Fuller House, I have been working on a Yarmouth Captains Project. This includes finding the information on the ships they captained, a brief bio on each person, along with a description of their voyages. This information will be displayed in the Hilton Room of the Museum once it is finished." (*Director's Note: Casidhe has also been named Senior Summer Student this year.*)

"My name is **Jordan LeBlanc**. I'm from Lake Doucette and am entering Grade 12 at YCMHS. So far at the Museum and Archives, I've been doing some yard work, and learning about giving tours from Susan Winship and John Sollows. I've also been researching a project concerning captains for Nadine, and am learning about how to man the front desk, including dealing with the ever so difficult Visa machine! I'm really glad I applied for this job, and I really enjoy the people I'm working with."

"Hi everyone, I'm **Katherine Surette** and this is my first summer at the Museum and Archives. I graduated in May from Acadia University with a B.Sc. in Biology, and am returning to the University in the fall to begin a Bachelor of Education degree. One of my projects this summer is writing biographies of the Killam Brothers for the Shipping Office. The Yarmouth County Museum and Archives has so much to offer and we're hoping for a busy summer!"

Update on the PELTON-FULLER HOUSE

20 Collins Street, Yarmouth -- The Pelton-Fuller House has seen an increase of visitors for the month of June, which is very encouraging. One of the usual comments is that the House is very comfortable and inviting. It's as if the Fullers could arrive home at any time!

The students have started a new project. Each room will be inventoried with data placed on the computer, so that we will know exactly what is in each room at any time.

The painters have almost completed the exterior painting. The weather has not been too co-operative, but all the storm windows have been removed and any broken window glass replaced.

The **Fuller Brush Room** is now complete. The transfer from the smaller back room went smoothly, though we wondered if it would be finished on time for the summer season. There are more photographs and brushes on exhibit and the central table has a display of hog bristles and Mr. Fuller's original wire-twisting machine of 1906.

Whether the sun is shining or the fog is drifting through the treetops, our door is open and we welcome you to our House. Come in and visit for a while.

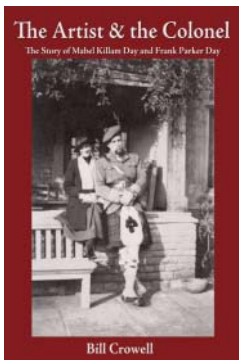
Susan Winship
Committee Chairperson

THE MAST HEAD GIFT SHOP

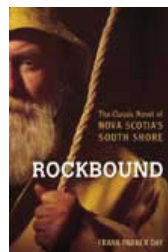


The new Amos Pewter ornament, **Tree of Life**, has arrived. Please contact the museum if you would like us to reserve one or more ornaments for you.

Also we have a complete line of Amos Pewter jewelry including new products like the **Beach Treasure** collection



Still available in our gift shop is local writer, Bill Crowell's book **The Artist & the Colonel** written about artist Mabel Killam Day and her husband, writer and academic Frank Parker Day.

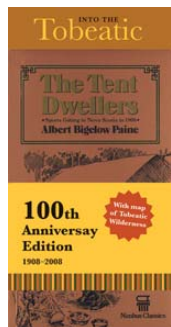


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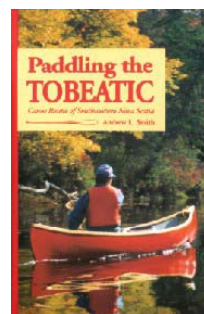
Rockbound by Frank Parker Day

For the Paddlers we have two excellent titles:

The Tent Dwellers



Paddling the Tobeatic



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YARMOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

<http://yarmouthcountymuseum.ednet.ns.ca>

HOURS OF OPERATION Summer Hours

Museum

Monday – Saturday 9am - 5pm,
Sunday 1pm – 5pm

Pelton Fuller House

June 15th - October 15th - Monday – Saturday
9am – 4:30pm – Sunday by request

Killam Brothers Shipping Office

Open most days 10am- 4:30pm

Archives

Monday – Saturday 9am - 5pm
(closed for lunch daily 12 – 1pm)

(our hours change after the Canadian Thanksgiving Weekend)

SEPTEMBER HISTORIGRAM

DEADLINE:

FRIDAY

AUGUST 15TH

“Check out the 50% Summer Specials at The Masthead Gift Shop” and our fine selection of Nova Scotian and Canadian Books and Souvenirs

As members are aware, *postal costs have again increased*. If you are interested in receiving your newsletter by email, (in Adobe pdf format) email us at the following: ycmhistorigram@eastlink.ca

Membership Fees

Membership fees to the society are for a calendar year. Dues and membership for 2008 are currently being accepted.

- Single.....\$25.00
- Family.....\$40.00
- Life (single).....\$400.00
- Life (family).....\$550.00

Please make payment to:

Yarmouth County Historical Society