



# HISTORIGRAM

February, 2008

Volume 8 Issue 1

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Happy New Year!* I hope the holiday season was enjoyable for everyone.

Since the last newsletter the Annual Yuletide House Tour & Tea took place and once again this year we were very pleased and thankful for the good weather, the many volunteers who helped out and all of the people who purchased tickets and enjoyed themselves at the tour and tea. On the day of the tea, the raffle was drawn for the quilt donated by Mollie Lewis Hardy – the winner was Pearl Cook of Brooklyn, Yarmouth Co.

At our December society meeting Marilyn Burns and Mary Ann Mehaffey organized the program which included some parlour games popular many years ago. Helen Hall also presented her yearly reading from the museum spirit. Many thanks to these ladies for the enjoyable program.

At our January program, Laurent d'Entremont entertained the audience with jokes, humorous stories and he discussed his new book, *Stories to Remember, Volume II*. This new volume, along with volume I is available in our gift shop.

The Historical societies' Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday Feb. 1, 2008. In addition to the presentation of staff and committee reports, we will be reviewing some photos of events that have occurred over the past year.

*Vaughn Bullerwell*



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# OUR DIRECTOR



Happy New Year!



Germs, germs, everywhere are germs – tis' the season for colds and the flu.

In December, the annual Christmas House Tour and Yuletide Tea were a success with 171 ticket sales; the quilt raffle did well with 646 ticket sales; and, the Museum's air handling system was put back into operation.

The Museum was also kept open during the Christmas Holidays. Few people came in, but this is a good chance for everyone out there to send me some feedback. Would Christmas Programming be warranted, and if so do you have any suggestions?

Thank you to [register.com](http://register.com) for sponsoring free admissions to the Museum for the month of January.

*Derek Kowalchuk*




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## Exhibits & Upcoming Events On Display at the Museum

**January 8<sup>th</sup> –April 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Works by artist William Wilson Cowell.** This exhibit of watercolours by artist W.W. Cowell features several Yarmouth County and Annapolis Valley scenes.

**February 4<sup>th</sup> – April 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Artist Bruce Jacquard** will be exhibiting his work in the downstairs gallery. Please join us for the official opening of this exhibit on Saturday, February 9th from 3 pm. -5 pm.

**February 1<sup>st</sup> –February 29<sup>th</sup>**

In recognition of Black History Month, we will look at the issue of slavery in the early history of Yarmouth County.

**Off Site Exhibit- Western Counties Regional Library**

**January 14<sup>th</sup> – February 29<sup>th</sup>**

Love is in the Air-A look at wedding dress, photos & gifts of the past.



*Love is in the Air*

## Upcoming Events

February is Heritage Month and Black History Month. Every February the YCM&A celebrates the month with a variety of events. This year is no exception.

On **Feb 9**, there will be a Bruce Jacquard "Open House".

On **Feb 16, at 3pm**, Sharon Robart-Johnson will be giving a talk on her book "Africa's Children: A History of Blacks in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia". Question and answer period as well as refreshments after the talk. All are invited to attend.

And on **Feb 18**, we will be serving our Heritage Ham Dinner from 11:30-1:30. Reservations for the dinner are required and take-out will be available.

*For reservations or information on any of the events phone the museum at 742-5539.*

## SLAVERY IN CANADA

The Long Journey to Yarmouth

By Sharon Robart-Johnson

Canada was seen as the "hope and freedom" destination of thousands of runaway slaves who were considered fugitives. They were brutally hunted and severely punished for their "crime" of wanting to be free. Canadians, however, turned their heads towards the American border at the mere mention of the word slavery. Their sorrow over the 300 years of human bondage that was the legacy of their American neighbours was real enough, but was it enough.

### ***TO BE SOLD***

*A BLACK WOMAN, named Peggy, aged about forty years; and a Black boy her son, named JUPITER aged about fifteen years, both of them the property of the subscriber.*

*The woman is a tolerable cook and washer woman and perfectly understands making soap and candles.*

*The boy is tall and strong of his age, and has been employed in County business, but brought up principally as a House Servant – They are each of them Servants for life. The price for the Woman is one hundred and fifty Dollars – for the Boy two hundred Dollars, payable in three years with interest from the day of Sale and to be properly secured by Bond &c. – But one fourth less will be taken in ready Money.*

PETER RUSSELL

York, Feb. 10th, 1806

Who would have given credence to the fact that Canada had its own two hundred year legacy of slavery! As said by the writer of the article *In Bondage*, Tom Derreck, "Canada has its own two-hundred year old slave skeleton rattling about in its national closet." And so it did.

Canada's first known Black slave was a young boy named (a name given to him) Oliver Le Jeune, forcibly removed from his home on the island of Madagascar in Africa in 1628. He was later sold to a minor French Canadian bureaucrat and as a result he became Canada's first enslaved resident.

One of the most famous stories regarding a slave in Canada comes out of Montreal April 17, 1734. Marie Josephe Angelique was the slave property of Francois Poulin, a merchant. After learning that she was about to be separated from her lover, Claude Thibault, a white indentured servant from France, she set fire to her owner's home to cover her attempted escape. Raging out of control the fire destroyed forty-six buildings. It took authorities two months to apprehend her after which time she was tried and cruelly put to death.

The Underground Railroad which operated between 1830 and 1861 brought a large number of escaped slaves into Upper Canada. This railroad was not a train, but a series of escape points set up by a group of abolitionists. They chose to aid and conceal runaway fugitive slaves in their homes along a carefully planned route that would take the escaping slaves across the border into the land they looked upon as their salvation.

In 1783 the names of 3000 Blacks were entered into a book known as the Book of Negroes. These people, Black Loyalists, embarked on a ten day trip from New York to Nova Scotia. Some of whom arrived in Shelburne County on various ships only to find that their lives were no better here than they were where they came from. The land that was promised was so poor or so small that it bordered on being totally useless and in some cases it was. A large number of these Loyalists came as freed slaves, while others were still enslaved.

Eventually a few of the United Empire Loyalists made their way to Yarmouth County. Some brought their slaves with them, but contrary to belief, not all slave owners were cruel. James Lent who

*(Continued on Page 4)*

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settled in Tusket also brought his slaves with him. One slave, William Berry asked his Master for a wife, at which time James purchased one for him. Her name was Dinah. As far as can be determined, Mr. Lent was not unkind to his slaves. Two other prominent Yarmouth men who were slave owners were Dr. Joseph Norman Bond, surgeon and Nehemiah Porter, coroner. Neither was physically cruel to their charges.

Others, however, gave not a second thought to beating their slaves for something as minor as stealing a piece of bread; or whipping a young girl of about thirteen years of age for allegedly stealing a piece of ribbon. Even these punishments pale in comparison to the brutal beating of a slave girl, a beating that resulted in her death the following morning. Would it never end?

Finally, the day came when freedom was in sight. On August 24, 1833 the Slavery Abolition Act was passed by the British Parliament and it became law on August 1, 1834. Slavery was abolished throughout the British colonies and an estimated 800,000 Blacks who had been held in bondage for so many years, were finally emancipated.

**SLAVERY HAD COME TO AN END IN CANADA**

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**FROM THE ARCHIVES**

The New Year is upon us and I would like to thank all the volunteers who have helped ot make our archives a success. With the help of our many volunteers we have accomplished a great deal in the past year; old projects were finished and new projects begun. If anyone would like to spend a few hours a week helping with the various projects please contact our Volunteer chairperson, Dottie English.

For Black History month there will be a display of archival documents and photos in the museum. I hope you will visit the museum during the month of February.

Can anyone identify the people below? If you can, please contact the archives at (902) 742-5539.

*Sharon Robart-Johnson*  
*Archival Genealogist*





# Mast Head Gift Shop

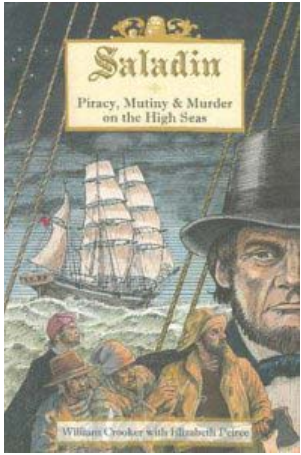


**NEW!**

**Local author - Laurent d'Entremont's  
Stories to Remember Volume 2  
More timeless stories by a long-time storyteller  
Price: \$21.95  
Volume I also available in the gift shop.**



## ***Selected Fiction in the Gift Shop!***



**Saladin: Piracy, Mutiny & Murder on the High Seas  
Author: William Crocker**

Price: \$15.95

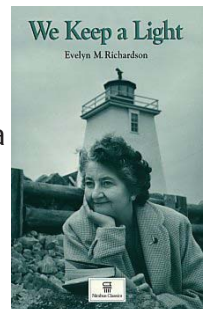
This novel is based on the true story of the Saladin massacre. After being arrested for illegal trade in Peru and stripped of his cargo and ship, Captain George Fielding begins searching for a way home for himself and his son. He has just escaped from a Peruvian prison when he meets Alexander MacKenzie, the Scottish-born captain of the barque Saladin, just finishing a successful trading mission. Fielding helps MacKenzie find a crew after the desertions of several of Saladin's men, and in gratitude, MacKenzie offers Fielding and son passage home to Liverpool. MacKenzie proves to be a hard taskmaster and earns the hatred of several of his crew; he and Fielding argue over the running of the ship, and Fielding conceives a plan to seize control of Saladin and its valuable cargo of copper, silver, guano and money letters. What ensues is a twisted tale of mutiny and murder.

## **We Keep a Light**

**Author: Evelyn Richardson**

Price: \$15.95

Winner of the Governor General's Award when first published in 1945. This is the delightful story of the author's life on Bon Portage, an island off the southwest coast of Nova Scotia. In 1929, **Evelyn M. Richardson** moved to the island with her husband, a lighthouse keeper, raising her family there in isolation from the turbulence of the outside world. Her close-knit family reveled in the island's charms and didn't miss mainland conveniences. Their story transports readers back to a simpler way of life when lighthouses were an integral part of the maritime culture.



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