

Yarmouth County Historical Society

HISTORIGRAM

March 2011

Volume 11, Issue 2

Message from the President



Hello everyone;

Yarmouth is certainly getting its share of snow this winter season. I believe I am correct in saying we had a snow storm on three consecutive Thursdays. We did have a good evening for our AGM on Friday, February 4th, but the weather did interfere with our first Heritage Talk on the 2nd which has been rescheduled for March 4th.

This is the Yarmouth area's 250th anniversary. For those of you who are new to the area I would like to give you a brief sketch of our beginnings, and a reminder to the Yarmouth born who live far away and may not be that familiar with them.

The first three families of settlers (Planters) arrived from Sandwich, Cape Cod on Tuesday, June 9, 1761. They were Sealed Landers, Ebenezer Ellis and Moses Perry and their families. On the following Thursday two others families arrived from Connecticut – Jonathan Crosby and Joshua Burgess. During the summer Elishama Eldridge and seven other families arrived but two of these seven went back to New England the same Fall and the remaining five also went back the next Spring. Their ship arrived at what is known as Crawley's Island in Chebogue (Jebogue) Harbour and the Perry family remained in that area. The Ellis family moved further down river near the point. Landers settled at the head of the Tidal area, now Milton, at the head of the Yarmouth Harbour. Elishama Eldridge settled at Fishpoint – the sole inhabitants of Cape Forchu.

In the main section of the museum we have a great display in honour of Black Heritage month on loan from the Birchdale Shelburne County Museum.

The Wednesday evening talk on February 9th had most seats occupied. Great! It was an hour and a half with Bill Crowell, maps, history and laughs. Milton was the topic on the 16th presented by MaryAnne Mehaffey, Virginia Stoddard and Susie Sweeney. Ken Langille rounded the month of heritage talks off with a discussion of the life and times of Capt. Perry.

Please inform me of any items you wish to have published in the Historigram. Hopefully I can oblige.

Aurel

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MARCH SOCIETY MEETING – Friday, March 4th at 7:30 PM
Program – John Fyfe on tartans and other things Scottish

The Curator's World

By Nadine Gates



The things you find when you go digging in your closet can be rather surprising. Especially when you come across something you didn't expect to find while you were looking for what you wanted to find in the first place! I had the adventure of looking in my closet the other day. And believe me, it is an adventure! I started out looking for a piece of material for a craft project I was working on. Amid the containers of art, card making and scrapbooking supplies, fabrics for future quilts, clothes, shoes and boxes of photographs, I came across a round hat box. I had to pause to remember where it had originally come from. My mother-in-law's house on King Street in Yarmouth! It must have belonged to her or a member of her family. In the box were two hats. A feather covered cloche type lady's hat and a man's bowler hat. My husband thinks the cloche was his mother's and that she probably wore it at an Easter church service one year. Stands to reason the men's hat must have been his father's. Unfortunately, my mother-in-law Clara (Bent) Gates passed away a number of years ago so I can't ask her. So I did some of my own research. I'm sorry gentlemen, but the focus of my research was the feathered cloche.



The feather covered cloche doesn't have any maker's markings. The inside of the hat is white felt and seems hand made. (I'd like to think Clara might have bought it in Yarmouth and that it was made in Yarmouth.) The net lined brim is narrow in the back and widens slightly in the front and is covered in beige velour. The bowl of the hat is entirely covered in small fan-shaped sections of golden pheasant feathers.

The cloche hat was fashionable from 1908 to 1933 and had a basic bell contour with a bulbous crown which in appearance resembled a helmet. This shape and how it was worn low on the head brings to mind an image of the "flapper era". The Art Deco influence in this particular hat can be seen in the zigzag seaming, construction lines and pattern of the feathers. This style took the barest amount of shaping and blocking and so had an easy market ready for mass production. Felt was the most common material as it is quite easy to bend and form the material into the rounded bowl shape.

The cloche became a statement of understated chic. To retain the helmet like appearance of the cloche, trimmings were generally kept to a minimum with surface appliqués and other decorative pieces like the feather fans you see on this one.

In the late twenties brimmed felts were worn with casual clothes for sporting events and the narrower cloches partnered occasion wear. My mother-in-law would have been in her early 30s when this style of hat was at its most fashionable. I took a look through the wonderful collection of hats we have at the museum and there are several of this style with variations in brim width. The one closest in design to mine had been dated to 1933 and had no brim at all.

Hats in general have been around for centuries. They were first worn as a form of protection from the elements and later as protection from weapons. Hats were also known to be symbols of social status, authority, and became not only an integral part of some uniforms, but also an art form. Because of its position on the head, the eye is drawn to the face of the wearer and by drawing the eye upwards, it gave an illusion of added height. Coupled with the rounded sleek shape of its bowl, the lady wearing the cloche had an air of classy sophistication.

The wearing of hats has, like all fashion accessories, ebbed and waned with the fashion tides through the years. Their popularity has never been universal since the 1920s. The British, due in part to Queen

Elizabeth's sense of style and propriety no doubt, still favour the wearing of hats. They were popular again in the 1980s thanks to Diana, Princess of Wales, who wore them early on in her marriage. Even the soon to be Royal bride, Kate Middleton, has been photographed wearing various and wonderful hats.

When we wear hats today it is usually for a very special occasion. Hats of a different nature can be found on almost every head. The baseball cap for instance is worn almost as an extension of the skull rather than something that can be removed indoors and is often used as an advertising tool. And now we have the popular "hoodie" attached to the zippered "sweatshirt jacket"!

Hats, as a design element or accessory in the fashion industry, will always be around. The grandeur associated with some of the more flamboyant and sophisticated creations of the past are lost on the younger society unless someone like Kate Middleton creates another fashion craze. Today's proper etiquette does well if the younger generation leave the house in real pants and not in their pyjama bottoms!

Until my next adventure, Happy St. Patrick's Day to everyone and don't forget to wear green on the 17th!



Exploring the Archives
By Jamie Serran, Archivist

For this, our 250th anniversary year, I will be using this space each month to feature fascinating finds from the archives vault...enjoy!



So has anyone jumped on the e-reader train yet? I haven't, but I certainly know several people who have (and many others who are interested in doing so!). These tablet computers allow users to download and store multiple books and to read them on the computer's flat screen. Readers are light, compact, and are, I would imagine, a traveller's dream, especially travellers such as myself who are known to haul a small pile of books along on any trip, short or long. As devoted as I am to reading actual, physical books, I could be swayed to consider an e-reader if I traveled more frequently and needed a portable solution to my stack of books. The local library has even jumped on the bandwagon by offering e-books to borrow through their website, proving that technology can indeed be a wonderful thing.

These thoughts were in my mind this week as I was looking for some files in the archives. Just as Nadine made the interesting discovery that she described in her report this month, I, too made an interesting discovery of my own (housed in a plain, rather un-interesting paper cover). File #YMS-3-8 belongs to the "Gegoging Book Society" – a name that sounded intriguing enough for me to take a further look. The file contains one small, nondescript notebook filled with flowing, intricate script: "*The Rules and Articles of the Gegoging Book Society.*" Today, when it is getting easier and easier to buy or borrow any book immediately (whether physical or digital), it was fascinating to learn more about this organization and their considerably more challenging effort to purchase books and make them accessible to the group's members. A few facts and tidbits from the book:

- ◆ The Gegoging Book Society was established on October 21, 1834 and was to run for a period of seven years.
- ◆ Member fees consisted of an initial payment of two shillings and six pence upon joining and a quarterly payment of one shilling and three pence at each of the meetings, which were held on the first Monday nights of January, April and July.
- ◆ Officers of the society included a "President, Secretary, Keeper, Treasurer, four Inspectors, and a committee of six for selecting new books".

The group recognized that their books were rare and precious and treated them accordingly: "The Keeper shall take charge of the unemployed books in the Library, and keep them carefully; and he shall,

after inspection receive and give out books to the members...The Inspectors (the Keeper included) shall carefully examine all the Books return at the monthly meetings to be hereafter mentioned: and in every case where injury has been done to a book, they shall fine the member who last had it, or was accountable for it”.

The first group of officers, in 1834, were Benjamin Tooker (President), John Williams (Secretary), William Harris Sr. (Treasurer), and Richard Harris (Keeper). David Rose Sr., Edward Harris, William Harris, Benjamin Tooker, John Williams, and Richard Harris made up the Book Committee, and David Rose Sr., David Rose Jr., Calvin Cann and John Rose acted as Inspectors. Twenty-four subscribers paid their membership dues for the 1834-35 year.

The last few pages of the notebook are the Minutes of meetings held from October 21, 1834 to April 1, 1836. In several of the meetings, most of the business focused on fining members for overdue books or for “injuries” to the books such as tearing, folding, or smearing pages. At the March 1836 meeting, two members were fined: the first, a sum of four pence for “tearing a leaf half a cross the lower part of page 170 Baxters Miscellaneous”; the second, for the sum of three pence, “for a grease spot page 23 Anecdotes of Natural History”.

The final page is a tally of books held in the Society’s library: 59 titles in total. There were religious books, such as the Book of Martyrs, Howetts History of Priestcraft, The Christian Philosopher, and the Missionary Gazetteer; history books, such as History of the Middle States and Anecdotes of Natural History; and science books, such as Lectures on Chemistry and Herschell’s Astronomy. Although not laid out explicitly in their rules and articles, the Society obviously developed its collection with the goal of educating and enlightening its members. The notebook’s last entry is dated May 2, 1836, and I haven’t yet been able to determine whether the group continued until 1841 as it set out to do. The Milton Library and other book societies may have taken the place of the Gegoging Book Society over time – but I hope you enjoyed learning more about an organization that certainly was one of the first libraries in Yarmouth.

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MEMBERSHIP FEES...
to the Society are for a calendar year.
Dues and membership for 2011 are currently being accepted.

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

Cheques to be made out to:
Yarmouth County Historical Society

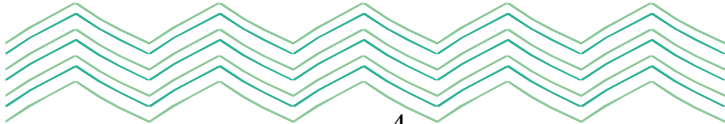
MESSAGE FROM STEEN: Renewals are coming daily and we thank you for your continued support.

Dues may be paid by mail to:

Yarmouth County Museum and Archives, 22 Collins Street, Yarmouth, NS B5A 3C8,

in person at the museum, or we can take your Visa or MasterCard payment by phone at 902-742-5539.

Deadline for April Issue - March 21, 2011



Celebrating Our History!

By Peter Eldridge

“WAAR IS ‘NOVA SCOTIA’? IK HEB ER NOOIT VAN GEHOORD!”

Reminiscing through 50 of Yarmouth's 250 years

For those who know Jack DeGooyer, it is no surprise to learn that when he was posted from Holland to Bonda Textiles in Yarmouth in 1959 he brusquely quipped in earnest, “Where is ‘Nova Scotia’? I’ve never heard of it!”



Now, over 50 years later and in his mid 80s, Jack can look back on a career as a successful business owner in Yarmouth. Among other community involvements, he served as vice president for the Maritime Provinces for the YMCA, president of the Yarmouth Rotary Club, and has been a long-time member of the Western Regional Health board. His wife Lies, a board member of Sport Nova Scotia, of Université Sainte-Anne, and other boards, has been posthumously inducted into the Yarmouth Sports Hall of Fame with distinction as a ‘builder’ (swimming). Their daughter Annick, a leading physiotherapist, tracking in her parents’ footsteps, has similarly been inducted, as an ‘athlete’ for her successes as a record-breaking long-

distance runner, representing Canada in 11 countries. Of their two sons, Randolph is an executive with a large Canadian airline and Kermit is a provincial government agent for change helping preserve Nova Scotia for Nova Scotians!

But before these successes, Jack and Lies had to survive the historical aberration of Nazism which, within 25 years, had devastated Western Europe, including Holland.

A young teenager during WW II, Jack grew up in Gorkum, a formerly walled city dating from 1000 A.D., now an administrative district capital of 35,000 on the Rhine near Amsterdam. When Nazi troops marched into Holland in 1940, Gorkum's mayor, in a fruitless exercise for safety, shut down the city and had the entire population evacuate on foot or bicycle and head north into the outskirts, only to have to return home a short time later in confusion. With three sisters and a brother, Jack's family owned a men's and ladies' fashions store in the city centre, and lived in the same building, a circumstance which ironically later helped save Jack's life.

Each day during high school, between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm, Jack travelled for an hour with other students “on a slow train” to a neighbouring town to attend a Christian school, “in the days when everyone was religious and attended church”. As the war progressed, and brutality increased, people began to ‘disappear’ – taken away to concentration or work camps. In vehement opposition to the Nazis, the Communists had gained strength all across Europe, including Holland, where many of the Underground had Communist leanings and “were very well organized”. With reference to the retaliation imposed on townspeople's families for attacks against Nazis, Jack speaks of an innocent school-mate returning to his home station only to be rounded up off the platform, and never seen again.

During “the hunger winter of 1944”, as Holland experienced the increasing Nazi repressions and heavy Allied bombings, Jack's last year of high school was interrupted for six months, while students were instructed closer to home by teachers living in their own neighbourhoods. With war's end in 1945, after Jack's home area was liberated by the British, students were given school-completion diplomas. At this point, Jack enrolled in a textile college for two years. Since the defeat of the Dutch military early in the war, Holland now imposed compulsory military service. Jack trained for three years, after which he became employed as production manager in a textile mill.

Reflecting on the war years, Jack deeply credits his parents for their courage and determination to protect their family and others. Long after the war, a former member of the Underground (then living in Florida) whom Jack's family had hidden, searched out Jack to thank him and give him a memento of that occasion. In another incident, one night after the 9:00 o'clock curfew when there was an ominous ring on the front door of the family store, Jack's parents and family living in back, remaining silent, were thought not to be at home and were left undisturbed. They learned next day that about 100 young men of 17-20 years suspected of being anti-Nazi were being rounded up. Of that number only about half returned home. At this point, Jack and a friend left home and went into hiding from house to house for a couple of months until near the war's end. Finally, through an uncle who was forced to repair German vehicles in his auto repair shop, Jack acquired a certificate declaring him a ‘mechanic’ so he could be free to come and go relatively unmolested.

Coming ultimately to Yarmouth, by happy coincidence Jack found that the premises of Bonda Textiles on Parade Street were part of a former WW II base camp, where Canadian and British military had been trained to help liberate Holland and other countries in Europe!

After managing Bonda in Yarmouth for many years, Jack bought the company in 1979. Included among the many textile lines produced and marketed was the well-known 'Nova Scotia tartan'. The year before Jack retired in 1998, the company was purchased by R.H. Davis & Co., Ltd., an expanded wholesale enterprise which sells and distributes across Canada.

After 50 years of personal and family accomplishments, including a big part of Yarmouth's history in between, Jack looks back with a chuckle (and we can join him!) ironically thinking of that pointed question of 1959:



“Waar is Nova Scotia? Ik heb er nooit van gehoord!”
Cheers, Jack!

MESSAGE FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

As chair of the nominations committee I would like to give each one of our Board members and committee chairs a big thank you for volunteering to hold these positions for the year of 2011 – and beyond I hope.

First of all, to each one who has been reappointed, thank you and keep up the great work.

To our new committee chairs (Mary Louise Killam, David Sollows and Roseanne Blades) I want to welcome you to your new roles. If you have any questions or concerns please feel open to approach any of the Board members or staff. We are all in this together and each of our positions is as important as the other. Thank you and enjoy the year ahead.

Charles Winship
Committee Chair



Free admission to the Yarmouth County Museum and Archives During the month of March courtesy of our friends at **Comeau Seafoods**

“Focus on Photography” Opening March 19th

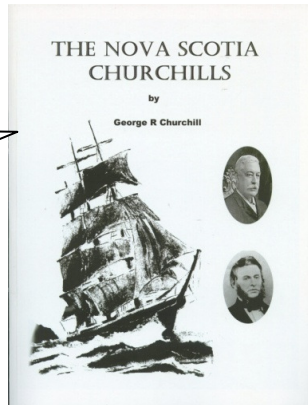
Sue Hutchins co-founded the **Yarmouth Photography Club** in 2007 which now has over 60 members. We will be showcasing their artistic journey into the world of digital photography.

Join us on March 19th at 6:30 pm
For the opening reception and meet the photographers behind the lenses.





The Mast Head Gift Shop



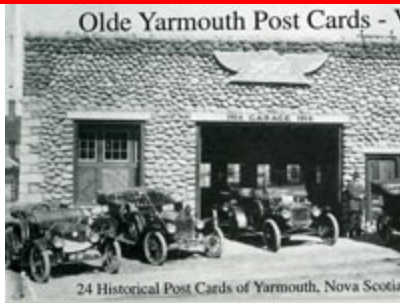
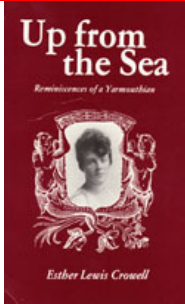
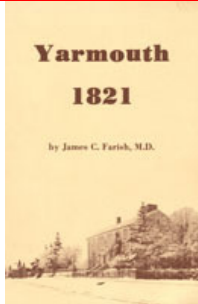

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<p>Yarmouth Once Upon a Time</p>	<p>100 Years a Celebration Yarmouth Anniversary</p>	<p>A Matter of Mischief</p>

Historical Society members receive 10% discount on all regular priced items in the gift shop. No tax is charged on purchases in the gift shop

As this issue of the Historigram goes to print, I want to bring everyone up to date with the happenings and events of the past month.

- ♣ We are working on 250th Anniversary projects. I'm excited that the costumes Brad Gould has been working on are coming along nicely with the mannequin sporting a hand made corset, chemise and underskirt. His talent and attention to detail insures we will have four period costumes for display and teaching. Proof of his talent is seen in the 19th century gown on display in the Captain's Cabin in the museum.
- ♣ The linen and felted wool have all been selected and construction of our house flags is progressing. I'll have more detailed description of the house flags in a later issue.
- ♣ Later this year we will be unveiling interpretive panels of Mi'kmaq, Acadian and First English Settlers. Thanks to Greg Doucette Designs, Halifax, the Mi'kmaq one is finished. One down and two to go!
- ♣ February was Heritage month and in celebration of Black History, the exhibit "Remembering Black Loyalists, Black Communities" from the Black Loyalist Heritage Society in Birchtown will be here until March 18th.
- ♣ Despite a stormy start to our Heritage Talk series this year, it has been very successful. The first presentation with Wilfred Allan and Judi Archibald has been postponed to Mar 2nd but I'm sure people won't mind extending Heritage month into March! We started with Bill Crowell on February 9th with a very entertaining reminiscence of Lake Annis and its history. His anecdotes about life in this cottage community brought smiles to all. I'll report later on the remaining talks. As I write this, preparations for a presentation by Maryanne Mehaffey, Suzie Sweeney and Virginia Stoddard are taking place. I have no doubt that these ladies will be informative and entertaining in their history of Milton.
- ♣ We had the pleasure of hosting Minister Percy Paris at the museum on February 1st. He visited to receive a presentation copy of "Africa's Children" from author and society member Sharon Robart-Johnson. We enjoyed his visit and look forward to further conversations about museums, and Black history with him in the future. Zack Churchill, MLA for Yarmouth, and Warden and Mrs. Leland Anthony, Municipality of the District of Yarmouth were also present.
- ♣ Our Heritage Ham and Scalloped Potato Luncheon proved that good food and good friends make for a great fundraising project. A lot of hard work and preparation went into this luncheon and a huge Thank You to organizer Barb Hinckley and to everyone who helped make this event one to look forward to every year. We would like to thank Rodd's Grand Hotel, Yarmouth, for again preparing the scalloped potatoes for us. As tasty as ever!
- ♣ Funding for summer students has been and is being applied for. Keep your fingers crossed that these grants are approved and that by May 16th we'll have fresh faces, inquiring minds, and willing bodies for the 2011 season.
- ♣ Until March 12th – GENERATIONS – and exhibit featuring the artwork of JoAnn Horton, Mary Landry Dowler, Fred Horton and showcasing paintings by Sister Agnes Berchmans (Julia Alma Landry)

Yarmouth County Historical Society

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Director: Vacant

Curator: **Nadine Gates**
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Archivist: **Jamie Serran**
ycarchives@eastlink.ca

Historigram: ycmhistorigram@eastlink.ca

WINTER HOURS

Museum and Archives:
Tuesday to Saturday 2 to 5 pm

Director: Monday to Friday 9 am to 5 pm

Curator: Monday to Thursday 9 am to 2 pm

Archivist: Tuesday to Saturday 9am to 5 pm

Archives are closed from 12:30 to 1:30 daily

Nadine