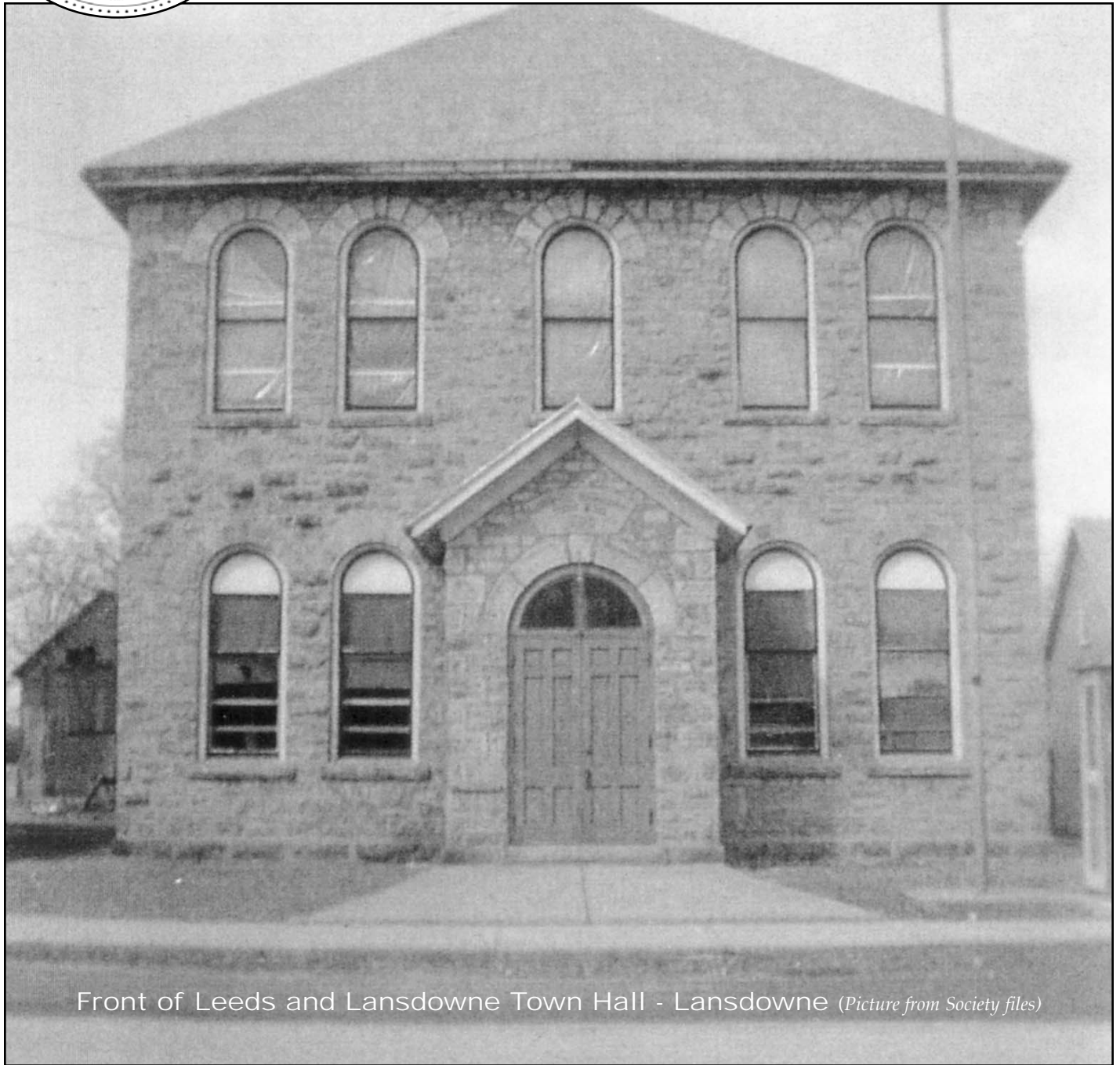




# Leeds & 1000 Islands Historical Society



Front of Leeds and Lansdowne Town Hall - Lansdowne *(Picture from Society files)*

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members:

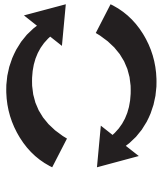
We have been active behind the scenes since our last newsletter. We acquired the services of Lisa Lawrence to design our Webpage and are pleased to say it is completed. We are anxious to show you the result. Our next big project is to work with the Library Co-ordinator and digitize all the material the Society has collected through the years, thus making its access available worldwide through the Internet.

The winter programme consisted of John Nalon who delighted his audience with an excellent presentation of the history of Gananoque. We had a presentation from Parks Canada, and our last speaker, Robert (Bob) Griffin enthusiastically related the beginnings and success of the family business of Griffin's Lakeside Cottages & Lodge.

We owe our gratitude to Bill Boulton for his diligence in organizing and ensuring the success of the Perth Bus Trip.

Wishing you a safe summer,

Your President  
Yolande LaPointe



### MEMBERSHIP FEES - Canadian Funds Please

General (Family) - \$12.00 Association - \$10.00 Corporate - \$25.00

Our membership term is Sept. 1 to Aug. 31

Memberships available at any meeting or by cheque to:

**LTI HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**Box 332 Lansdowne, Ont. KOE 1L0**

### FALL 2009 PROGRAMMES

- Mon. Sept. 21** Fighting Sea Bees – The torpedo boats of WW 2. ----- (John Reid)  
**Mon. Oct. 19** ANNUAL MEETING + Memories of the Akita Club -- (Don Chisamore)  
**Mon. Nov. 16** The Library Digitization Programme ----- (Patrick McMaster)

**All meetings 7:30pm at Community Building, Lansdowne.**  
**Check for Senior's or Lower Room.**

Check our new web site for further details: [www.ltihistoricalsociety.org](http://www.ltihistoricalsociety.org)

### NEWSLETTERS

**As our newsletter binder was growing large, we have decided to split it into two.**

Back copies of our newsletters are available for \$2.50 each

Copies 1 through 20 are now available in a three ring binder. Cost \$62.00

Copies 21 through 30 in a three ring binder - Cost \$37.00

Binders with all copies 1 through 30 are still available. Ask for price.

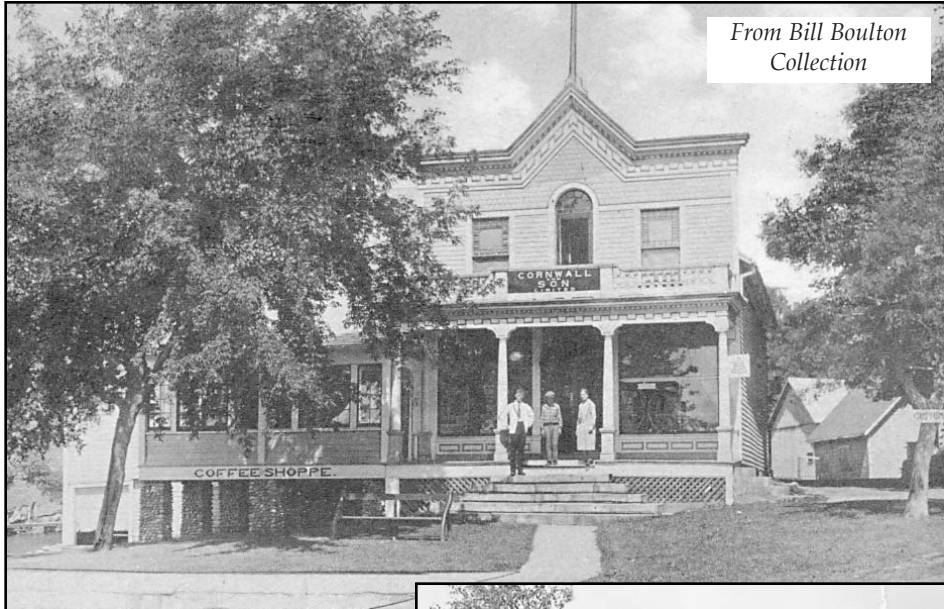
Due to the weight and high cost of postage, if these have to be mailed, postage will have to be added.

Also available now is a binder with a coloured cover insert or the coloured cover insert alone.

Ask the Executive for prices.



# THEN and NOW



From Bill Boulton  
Collection

Cornwall and  
Son Store. Built  
in 1857. After  
her husband's  
death, Louise  
Cornwall  
operated The  
store until 1936



Photo by Bill Boulton

The  
Boathouse  
Restaurant

## WE HAVE ARRIVED! ON THE INTERNET

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE AT [www.ltihistoricalsociety.org](http://www.ltihistoricalsociety.org)

## Heritage Organization Grant

The Historical Society made an application to the Provincial Ministry of Culture for a Heritage Organization Development Grant.

Our application was approved, and we received \$466.00.

This grant will be used to cover the cost of preparation and distribution of our Newsletters.

**We wish to thank the Ministry of Culture for this assistance.**



## **The Front of Leeds and Lansdowne Town Hall** *By Bill Boulton*

The Township had never had a Township Hall. Council meetings had been held in rented spaces, mainly Weston's Hotel and the Stewart House Hotel.

On February 25, 1890, a petition was received, signed by John Lavine and 226 other ratepayers calling attention to the great need for of a public Hall, and asking that council take action toward having a Town Hall built at Lansdowne Village. Several addressed council on the subject.

The council consisted of Thomas Darling, Reeve; S. Donevan, Deputy Reeve; John Cook; John Cowan and J.B. Wilson.

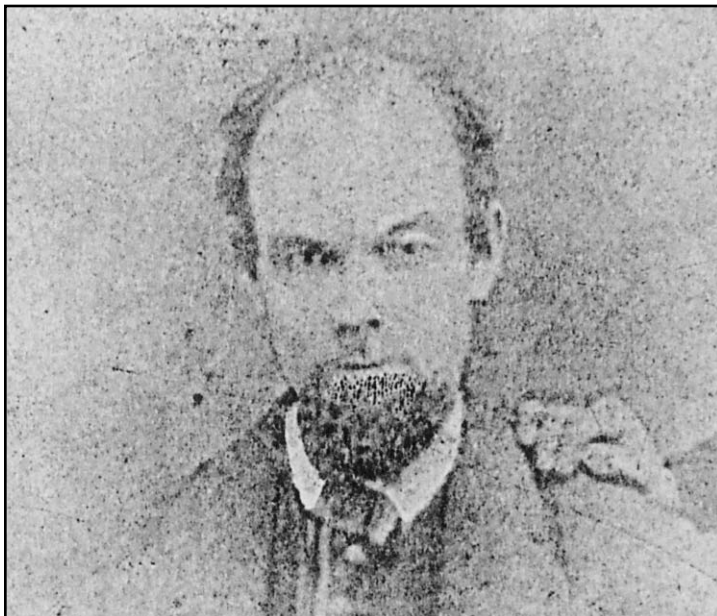
Mr. Cook moved, seconded by Mr. Cowan, that a committee of Reeve, Deputy Reeve and Mr. Cook, with power to add the Clerk and Treasurer, be appointed to consider the advisability of building a Town Hall at Lansdowne Village, in accordance with the petition; with power to purchase a site, build, or enter into a contract to build the same, also to let any portion to any Society for a term of years any portion of the Hall not required for Township purposes. **Motion was carried.**

By the middle of April a Town Hall site was purchased from Mr. R. Ennis for \$250. It was considered a suitable lot, the best in the village for the hall.

At the April 7 Council meeting, another motion came forward. Moved by Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Birmingham, that whereas owing to the low price of farm produce, and whereas a building of the Town hall would necessitate an increase of the rate of taxation, and whereas the committee appointed to build a Town hall have agreed to purchase a site from Mr. Ennis, which we consider a suitable site. Resolve that we request said committee purchase the above named site, but take no action as to building a Town Hall at present.

Mr. Wilson, speaking to the resolution, said the price now received by farmers were very small, and the outlook no better owing to the actions of our neighbours across the river. He did not wish the Committee to undo anything they had done. So far as the site is concerned, it is a good one, and if ever a Hall is to be built, the lot selected will perhaps be the best place in the Village to build upon. But he thought there was no immediate necessity for a Town Hall, there is now good accommodation here for all kinds of meetings likely to be held and it is not now the time to go into so large an expense which is so little called for. If it had been generally known at the time the petition was received that the Committee would be instructed to go right on and build the Hall there would have been at least a counter petition to oppose the movement. **The motion was lost.**

The following Saturday there was a similar letter to the Editor in the Gananoque Reporter.



An architect, Mr. George R. Allen of Brockville was engaged to draw up plans. His plan was for a two story brick building. At a meeting on May 10 tenders for the building were opened. The lowest tender was from Hugh McKay at \$6,000. For all work and material. This was considered to be too expensive. Mr. McKay suggested it could be built for less if stone was used.

Mr. Allen was asked to redesign the building. Tenders for the new design in stone were opened on May 30. They varied from \$3650. to \$3948. The tender of Hugh McKay for \$3650. was accepted. J.A. Bradley was engaged as superintendent of the job.

Hugh McKay.  
*Photo courtesy Margel Warren*

*(Continued on Pg. #5)*



(Continued from Pg. #4)

## **The Front of Leeds and Lansdowne Town Hall**

By *Bill Boulton*

In July McKay is hard at work on the new Town Hall. The excavation is completed, dug by hand. The soil is found to be so hard he used dynamite. It was decided that the excavation was deep enough for a furnace to be installed, and a cement floor was poured. It was found to be too soft and had to be covered with a new layer. The stone cutters are getting ready for the masons. Stone was cut at the Armstrong Quarry, just south of Highway 2. In January 1891, J.D. Latimer and D. McFadden sued Mr. McKay for stone delivered over and above the contract for material used in Lansdowne Town Hall. Judgement was found in their favour for \$115.

In October, following earlier instructions, the upper floor was rented to the Odd Fellows Lodge.

In August the committee was authorized to purchase furniture and apparatus for the building. A motion was placed to limit the cost of furniture to \$500. **It was defeated.** The contract went to Canadian Office and School Furniture. Included in the order was 2 tables and councillors chairs for \$125.

By the first of December the hall is nearly completed. On December 15, the Council had to meet in the "Old Place" Stewart's Hall as the Town Hall was not ready. After dinner they toured the new building. They were told it would be completed by Wednesday December 17. The seats had not yet arrived. It must have been finished by that date as Council met there on Friday December 26, and nomination meeting was held in the new Hall the last Monday in December. Mr. Black, a photographer from Gananoque was engaged to photograph the new building. On January 10, 1891 the building Committee reported to Council. Other than a few unfinished items such as steps at the entrances, some painting to be finished, and some plaster which had frozen and had to be replaced, the building was accepted.

*Could a project of this size be completed in that time frame today?*

The building was well used through the years. Council met on the stage, gathered around a large table, seated in wooden arm chairs. As many councillors chewed tobacco, white agate spittoons were provided. Plays, concerts, political meetings, religious services, school events and movies were held here. For any community gathering, it was the place to go, the true cultural and activity centre of the area. Behind the building was a shed where local farmers tied their horses under shelter. This was used not only for event in the hall, but for any reason they had to come to the village.

In 1939, a new flag pole was erected in front of the Town Hall to celebrate the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. It was estimated that 2,000 people turned out that evening to celebrate the event.

A volunteer fire department was formed in 1958. In 1959 part of the horse shed was converted into a fire hall. This was an unsuitable location as space was a large problem. The Town Hall was turned over to the fire department in 1963, and converted into their headquarters. The former basement was converted into a 16,000 gallon cistern. This water storage was used until the water system was installed in 1975. The old Mitchell Feed Store, to the west of the Town Hall was demolished in 1988, and a third bay for equipment added.



As I write this, ground has just been broken for a new municipal facility on the north edge of the village. This will include new facilities for the fire department. We are again seeing the 1890 situation reappearing. Protest groups have been formed to protest the expenditure during a time of depression. Letters appear in the local papers.

What will happen to this building when it is emptied? Many are asking that question. Many are concerned. At 119 years old, this building is not even listed on the Buildings of Interest heritage listing. Will this building just disappear and another piece of our heritage be gone forever? We have few remembrances of our past left.

The president of the Historical Society recently wrote a letter to the Council expressing concerns as we have been hearing them. Preservation of the past is part of our mandate. The Council was asked to at least give the public an opportunity to express their feelings. The reply from Council was a terse "It is Council's intent, once the Fire Department has been relocated to the New Municipal Complex, to place station one for sale. We hope this will relieve the committee's concerns regarding the hall." ▼▼▼



## MEMORIES of LANSDOWNE TOWN HALL

*When I was a little girl, seven or eight, I was asked to get up on stage and recite something about Christmas. Time came and I couldn't remember a word. My mother came up on the stage to help me, but I never uttered a word. Needless to say when I got home I heard plenty.*

*Mrs Warren's grandfather was the contractor who built the Town Hall  
Margel A. Warren (94 years old)*



Photo from  
Society Files.

### Music Festival, April 15, 1948 The Broom and the Dustpan

**Front, L to R:** George Warren, Carolyn Clancy, Doris Trueman, Margaret Rose Lynch, Mona Grier, Glen Haffie, Betty MacDonald

**Back, L to R:** Florence Funnell, Ruth Struthers, Marina MacDonald, Myrna Doak, Bob Huskinson, Naida Alguire, Glenna Tedford

*The Town Hall was the only building where people could come together to learn from, and perform for, others. Council would meet there, and on election night oranges would be given out to the crowd.*

*My sister Ada and I went to Victoria School #9 which had two classrooms and we went upstairs to high school. There were many one room schools in the area. Mr Thrasher, a music teacher, taught in all these schools and would bring everyone together in the spring to perform a musical festival in the Town Hall. Many Lansdowne choirs under Mr. Thrasher's direction went to Brockville and Kingston, and would come home with superior Plus grades.*

*School plays would create a lot of fun. I remember my brother George was dressed as a dustpan. Why I don't know!*

*The curtain on the stage was beautiful. It had a picture in the center and advertising for local businesses around the edge. A great way to advertise the merchants of the area.*

*Continued on Pg. #7*



**MEMORIES of LANSDOWNE TOWN HALL**

*(Continued from Pg. #6.)*

**The Rebecca and Oddfellows Lodges held their meetings in the upstairs room of the Town Hall. One memory I have is of a fund raiser the Rebeccas held. I remember Thelma Bean and Ester Lyons singing "I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts". It was hilarious!**

**Movie night was held once a week**

**All kinds of acts came to the village. One of them most vivid in my mind was the Hillbilly Jewels who later became famous as The Family Brown. They are now in the third generation in the music business, The Prescotts. Young Peoples and other groups used to do plays for fundraisers. We made our own fun.**

**Pictures lined the walls, former Reeves and soldiers from the area who had served in the wars.**

**In this small community we had our school, church, rink and the Town Hall for entertainment.**

**My great grandfather, Hugh McKay, built the Town Hall in 1890.**

**Freda (Warren) White**

=====



# The Hillbilly Jewels

## PICTURE ALBUM



★ Hear us on . . . ARROW RECORDS,  
BILTMOR RECORDS, in Canada.  
. . . DECCA RECORDS in U.S.A.

**In September 1942 I started school at the old Victoria School building here in the village. I remained there until I graduated in 1954.**

**As a body of students in public school, every Remembrance Day we would march over to the Town Hall for our Remembrance Day service. I recall this with great pride.**

**Our music teacher, Mr. Thrasher, who taught music from grade 1 to 12, would put on musical recitals and a play every year. We would walk again over to the Town Hall for the practices. It was a wonderful time and very memorable to look back on.**

**The year I was in grade 6, I was chosen by the high school to play Goldilocks in the play Goldilocks and the Three Bears. The high school girls would come by my classroom and take me with them. I sang a solo in the play. Aunt Hattie Landon made my costume and most of the others as well.**

*Photo from Bill Boulton Collection*

*(Continued on Pg. #8)*



MEMORIES of LANSDOWNE TOWN HALL (Continued from Pg. #7)

Photo from Society Files



United Church Young Peoples Play 1953

L to R: Bob Huskinson, Eileen Genge, Audrey Galway, Bruce Foley, Calvin Leith, Barbara Genge, Grant Foley, Betty Brown

*In the 1940's and 50's the Town Hall had good entertainment with movies as well. The different churches and groups would put on plays. There was a good stage and a big curtain that went across the stage*

*In that era Lansdowne was a very friendly and very united in all that took place. I look back on my life and it was a great time, with wonderful people who put a touch on my heart.*

**Florence (Funnell) Crawford**

=====

*Guthrie's Farm Machinery from Elgin would hold John Deere Shows where the newest and best in farm machinery flashed across the screen. This was a big event to attend.*

*Music festivals, movie nights and 4-H Club Award nights were held there.*

*Remember the wooden seats with the flip down seat and the wire rack on the back to hold mens' hats?*

**Peter and Carol Lynch**

(Continued on Pg. #9)





**MEMORIES of LANSDOWNE TOWN HALL** (Continued from Pg. #8)



*Photo from Society Files*

**Continuation School Play 1955**  
 L to R: Carolyn Clancy, Lawrence Aldrich, Anne McMullen,  
 Judith McConnell, Linda Pritchard

**J.W. Lackie sponsored Purina Shows. Movies would be shown, and the best of Purina products advertised.**

**Tuberculosis was still a big concern in the 1940's. The Ontario Department of Health would bring in a bus equipped with portable x-ray equipment. It was parked in front of the Town Hall where Ontario Hydro would make a direct electrical hook up. Other examinations and tests would take place inside the Town hall.**

**A CBC Radio quiz show was taped here. I can't remember the name of the show, but I know it started out Gold, Silver Dollars! I think the MC was Stan Francis.**

**Bill Boulton**

**Lansdowne Oddfellows Lodge Installation Team**

**Back L to R:**  
 Anthony Kemp,  
 Giles McCrea,  
 Ford Johnson,  
 Bob Allen,  
 Jim Funnell Sr.

**Front L to R:**  
 Art Burns,  
 Stewart Johnson,  
 Wilmer Danby,  
 John Donevan,  
 Algie McKay

*(Photo Courtesy Dorothy Funnell)*



( Continued on Pg. #10)



MEMORIES of LANSDOWNE TOWN HALL (Continued from Pg. #9)



**Lansdowne  
Rebekah Lodge**

**Back L to R:**

Sadie Allen,  
Audrey Tamblyn,  
Katie Earl,  
Flo Surplis,  
Minnie Sly

**Front L to R:**

Effie Slate,  
Margel Warren,  
George Pool (drums)  
Bessie Allen,  
Dora Earl.

*(Photo Courtesy  
Margel Warren)*

**BUILDING THE 1000 ISLAND PARKWAY 1937 – 1947**

By Grant Haskin

By 1935 it appeared that the dream of a Thousand Island Bridge was going to become a reality. George T. Fulford, a Brockville native and Liberal M.P.P. representing Leeds County, began working on a dream of his own. Being very familiar with the St. Lawrence River and the Thousand Islands area, he saw the need for a scenic route along the shore line from Gananoque to Brockville. Not only did he feel that it was necessary to handle bridge traffic, he also saw an opportunity to make an already popular tourist area accessible to many people. He also knew that the economic impact would be very helpful in those depression days. The access roads to the area were from #2 Highway to the old River Road, which itself was broken in several places by bays and hills.

Although the idea had much support, there was also opposition. We were in the middle of a depression ; some homes, barns, etc. had to be moved. Mr. Fulford won the support of the Hon. Tim McQuestrim, then Minister of Highways, a giant step towards his goal. By 1936 the Minister had decided that it should be a four lane highway. Surveying began and as usual was changed in some areas several times to satisfy people as much as possible. The route was decided and land purchased.

The strip from Long Beach to Brockville was built by the Standard Paving Co. in 1936-37. In 1937 contract #37-117 was let to Campbell Construction Co. for the work between Gananoque and long beach. It was one of the largest – possible the largest – contracts let to that date by the province.

The Department of Highways office was then in Brockville. The Superintendent of Highways was William Newnon and the project engineer was Pop Saunders. As the saying goes, a prophet is without honour in his own country, and Mr. Fulford was defeated in 1937 by W.B. Reynolds, Conservative. Apparently the majority were opposed to spending “all that money”, I do not know how much. My family was thrilled at the thought as we had just located in Rockport and felt cut off as we had previously lived close to #2 Highway near Lansdowne. We knew nothing of river travel and did not even have a boat as did many of our neighbours. It was years later when I, then only eleven years old, realized that few saw it as my parents did.

Campbell soon built camp #1 at Landons Bay. It consisted of sleeping units, dining and cooking shack, blacksmith shop, horse stable, garage and other facilities. Soon after, camp #2 was built on property on the south side of Selton Road directly south of Jim Wallace’s barn. It was the largest of the camps and often over a hundred men sat down to dinner there. As work proceeded from west to east, camp #3 was built at Buell’s Point. All three camps were operating at the same time. The automotive fleet consisted of red Ford trucks and black Ford cars.



(Continued from Pg. #10)

### **BUILDING THE 1000 ISLAND PARKWAY 1937 – 1947**



Bob Huskinson at Camp #1, 1938  
(Photo courtesy Bob Huskinson)

The wood cutters, clearing the right of way complete with axes, crosscut saws and horses, led the way. There was a long waiting list of people looking for jobs. The pay rate was thirty-five cents an hour for a nine hour day, including Saturdays. Few of the workmen had ever earned that much money before and by fall had bought their first car (second hand of course). The culvert course came next. This included the underpass for the town line road between Lansdowne and Escott. George Darling of Darlingside refused to sell the land unless they built an underpass at this point large enough to accommodate a wagon load of hay as he kept a few animals and his barn was on the south side and his land on the north.

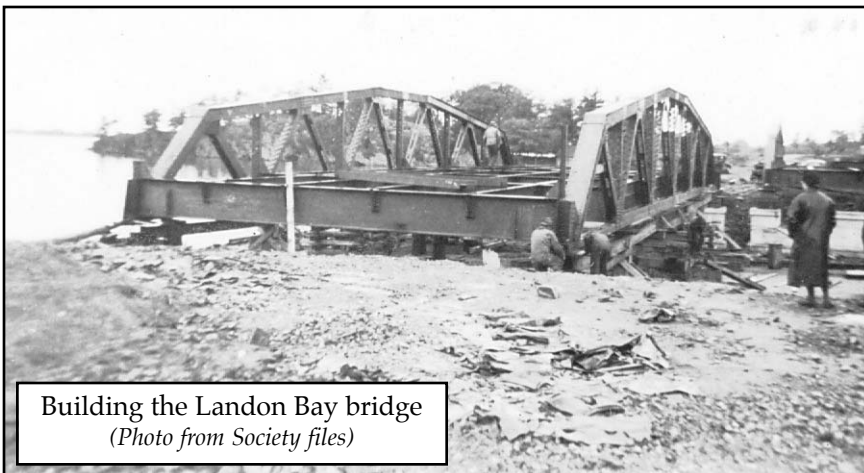
At the same time Vince Goff of Sand Bay was hired to move the buildings slated to go. He had been in the business for several years using slippery skids and pulling with a horse power winch. A few years later I assisted with moving two buildings with the same equipment. Among these buildings were two barns on the Khant farm which were put on a new wall on the north of the original site and joined in a the form of an "L". The house of Hiram Edgley, now the Bay View Motel, and the house of of Harold DeWolfe were moved back from the river, also a Timleck cottage at Brown's Bay.

The rock crews set to work drilling and blasting. Windows were broken in many houses by flying stones and vibrations. Most residents got some dynamite boxes which were used for almost everything, including furniture. Stones were broken and loaded by hand onto dump carts which ran on steel rails. The carts were drawn by a horse. Many rock cuts were worked at the same time with each crew consisting of about ten men. Each crew had three or four skilled rock men that the construction brought with them. Most were Europeans extremely well skilled. One of the largest rock cuts was in front of our property. A new two-part unit was brought in by horses, consisting of a compressor and a six cylinder diesel engine. Each piece weighed three thousand pounds. A two cylinder gasoline engine, mounted on one side of the diesel, was used to crank it. This unit provided enough air to run four jack-hammers using up to twenty-two feet of steel. The drills were sharpened at the blacksmith shop at camp #2, two miles west, and were brought in twice a day by team and wagon.

They proceeded to drill and blast from each end, working towards the centre. On each end was a rock crew and each had their rail dump cart. There was competition between crews to remove the most stone. When one very

large shot dynamite was exploded, a depression on a hill, where the north lane was to be, filled with spring water and remained until after World War II when the rock was removed. It was roughly forty feet by twenty feet and four feet deep in the centre.

At the same time work was proceeding on the bridge at Landons' Bay. The fill had been extended toward the bridge site from each side, crossing a small island, making it mainland. The bridge was built on the fill on the west side and supported by scows as it was slid across into position. (Continued on Pg. #12)

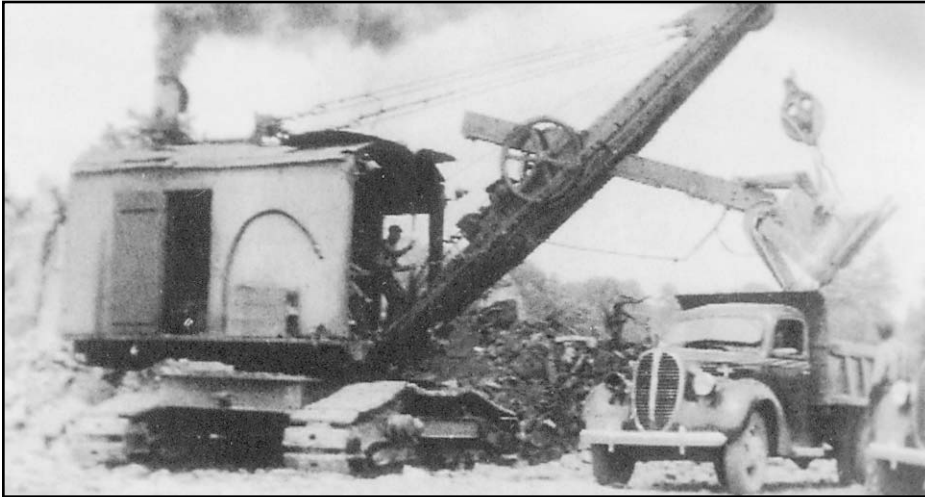


Building the Landon Bay bridge  
(Photo from Society files)



(Continued from Pg. #11)

## **BUILDING THE 1000 ISLAND PARKWAY 1937 – 1947**



Steam shovel with Bill Huskinson operator working on the highway

*(Photo courtesy Bob Huskinson)*

In 1940 a new elevated grader was brought into Russel Gray's farm. It was pulled by a large Caterpillar diesel tractor. As it moved, a blade lifted the dirt between the wheels, which was elevated and discharged into trucks moving beside it. The trucks were mostly five yard capacity and could be loaded in as little as three minutes, depending on how hard the soil was. As distance increased it could take as many as thirty trucks to keep up. This dirt provided the fill on top of the stone from rock cuts and other areas that had to be built up. These trucks were nearly all hired.

Most were independent truckers operating their own truck. Later this machine was used further east.

The influx of workers caused a shortage of houses and most that were rented were divided for two or more families. Some built small units that could be taken apart in sections and be moved away. Some workers married local girls and became permanent residents such as Dalton Scott and Lloyd Mayhew. My mother, and every other housewife who could, took in boarders. There were eight boarders at our house at one time. Mother needed a girl to help her as my sister was boarding in Gananoque and attending high school. Our neighbour, who lived where we do now, brought down her younger sister from Henderson. She helped mother until the end of the season and later married a native son, Hubert Fair. At the end of the war Hubert bought the homestead where Dave Bishop lives now and their four children grew up there. Dances were held frequently at Cornwall's Hall, which was located on the westerly government dock at Rockport.

At the same time Campbells were preparing to set a stone crusher on the Jim Wallace property, a quarter mile north of Jim's house and camp #2. The crusher hill was tunnelled into and thirty tons of dynamite was exploded in a single shot, virtually lifting the whole hill. In the spring of 1941 the crusher was ready to go. Campbells bought three new red Ford short wheel base trucks to begin drawing the crushed stone. At first, a drag line was used to move the rocks to the crusher but as the distance increased large chain-driven Euclid trucks, loaded by steam shovel, were used to fill the crusher hopper.

The highway severed the Siftons property near Jones Creek and as Siftons had several riding horses, they wanted a bridge over the highway rather than the underpass proposed by the Department of Highways. The bridge was built with the Siftons paying six thousand dollars additional costs.

At the end of 1941 construction was virtually brought to a halt and Campbell's contract was near completion. The camps were removed and some cleaning up continued into the new year. The only section that was open to traffic was from the Thousand Island Bridge to Ivy Lea where traffic went north to #2 Highway about a mile west of Lansdowne. The road now dead ends at 401 Highway. The Reynolds Road was not built at that time. Much of the road bed for the Scenic was travelled some by cars in summer and by horse and sleigh in winter.

The Scenic was completed in the next few years after the end of the war. New contracts were let and the contractors were Harvey Construction, J.C. McGinnes, and Peacock and McQuaig. The rock was removed with power shovels. Crushers were set up at other sites east of here and the work was completed in much the same way it would today. Many fewer men were required and there was much less impact on the area.

My personal contribution to construction began in 1941 driving a team of horses on a grader. A month or so later they discovered that I was only fifteen years old so I was laid off as you had to be sixteen to be covered by workman's compensation. In 1946 I returned as a truck driver and drove for Walter Allen and in 1947 for Jack Downey when they were operating a crusher twenty-four hours a day.

*(Continued on Pg. #13)*



(Continued from Pg. #12)

**BUILDING THE 1000 ISLAND PARKWAY 1937 – 1947**

Phil Hunt and Kenneth Hill grading road bed with horse drawn grader



*(Photo courtesy Audrey Newell)*

At one time there was a serious threat of this route becoming part of 401 highway, a role it did fill until 1968. During Expo in 1967 the traffic was so heavy that at times it took a half hour to cross the road. Accidents and fatalities were so frequent during the sixties that it became known as Death Alley. Due to the efforts of Hugh Reynolds, many others, and statistics, the last stretch of 401 was built between Gananoque and Long Beach, and this road remained the eighty kilometre single lane parkway that we all know and love today.

*Mr Haskin compiled this history in the late 1980's. We thank the Haskin family for making it available to us and allowing us to use it.*

(A second part of this history will be published in the next issue.)

The Scenic Highway at Rockport  
*(Photo from Society files)*





## Lansdowne Cemetery (by Alan Lindsay)

Located on #2 Highway, Lansdowne Cemetery is the oldest cemetery in the area that has been in continuous use since at least 1800. The oldest stone records the death of Aner Watkins wife of Oliver Landon. Family tradition says she was the first burial in the cemetery. Known over the years as the Landon Burying Ground, Robinson's, Ebenezer and Lansdowne. The area is raised up above the land surrounding it and this is likely why it was chosen as a burial place. It has remained active for over two hundred years.

Located on the south east corner of Lot 11 Con 2 it is bounded by #2 Highway, the line between Lots 11 and 12 and the first concession road. This lot was drawn by Truman Stone who sold the south half to Oliver Landon who in turn sold it to John McNeil in 1795 for 25 Dollars Halifax currency. The land was donated to the people living in the first, second and third concessions by John McNeil.

The original school house was located on the north east corner which is now the Darling plots. To the south three lots were reserved for "strangers". No names are recorded on these lots. All of the old families are represented. Some of the more unusual names are Zephaniah Jeroy, Mary Harbittel, George Sherrard, Isaac Aimes, John Pear and Matthew Elliott. One of the more famous people resting here is Captain John Davis who died in 1826 at the age of 80. The inscription on his stone is from the poem "The Burial of Sir John Moore" with whom he fought and whose funeral he attended after the battle of Corunna in 1809. John Davis was one of many soldiers who came to Canada after the defeat of Napoleon. Many of the stones have most likely disappeared over the years and are more plentiful as you move westward in the cemetery.

Families often walked carrying the casket of their loved one from as far away as Dulcemaine for burial in this cemetery.

As a result of provincial legislation in 1906 a meeting of everyone interested in the cemetery was held. Organized as the Lansdowne Cemetery Company, Wallace McNeil (Chairman), Peter Wood (Secretary/Treasurer) and John W. McNeil, Robert Mitchell and J.D.W. Darling as trustees were appointed.

Up to this point there did not seem to be a regular system used in laying out the grounds. The Company laid out the first twenty two rows of lots starting at the east side-each ten by twenty feet. The remaining lots were eight by twenty feet. As a result a few burials were "outside" the part of the lot the family owned. Many of the early lots had been divided into three parts. A passage across the cemetery from the steps on the north side was created. An attempt was made to identify the owners of the various plots. The cemetery was improved and in 1910 the Maple Leaf Fencing Company of Ivy Lea replaced the old barbed wire fence around the cemetery with an ornate iron fence. The fences around some of the individual lots were removed. In 1921 a cement vault was built for \$1,704.45 on land donated by J. W. McNeil. It was decided in 1922 to extend the cemetery to the west and land as well as the old part was graciously donated by Mr. McNeil. Up to this point it appears that Mr. McNeil was the actual owner of the cemetery. Lots at this time sold for \$15. It cost \$5 for an adult and \$2.50 for a child to be held in the vault.

*(Continued on Pg. #15)*



## Lansdowne Cemetery (Continued from Pg. #15)

Over the years the cemetery has continued to be used by local families and is still operated by a Cemetery Board and beautifully maintained.

From early times a small community grew up around this cemetery populated mainly by the Landon, McNeil and Robinson families. The Landons along with family member Ephriam Webster ran a sawmill and potash works on the creek east of the cemetery. Joseph Landon who was the first township clerk was granted a licence in 1816 for an inn called the "Sign of the Hart". Two other hotels operated in early times; Cook's at the foot of Kidd Road and later McCormack's about where the schoolhouse is today. Hiram Landon lived in the large white house across from the cemetery and his uncle Simcoe Landon lived in the small house to the east of the cemetery. This house is on a small piece of land that Oliver Landon saved for himself when he divided his holdings among his sons in 1812. Two McNeil houses still stand on either side of the road to the west. A house owned by the Robinson family south of the cemetery was torn down a few years ago. The large brick house on the Todd road was built by John A Webster long time reeve of the township.

A Methodist Church was built at the corner where the Todd Rd. meets #2 Highway and was still there well into the 1930's although it was used for other things. Hiram Landon's widow gave land for a parsonage next to the present school. Reverend Warren, an early minister, and his wife are buried beside the Ephriam Peck family with whom they spent the later part of their lives. A wagon shop and blacksmith shop also operated at one time.

When county government was organized in the 1840's the community was known as Landonville and was considered as a location for the construction of a township hall. The most famous building was John McNeil's barn, the oldest surviving barn in Ontario until it was demolished a few years ago. It was built in 1812 with the help of British soldiers who were passing through on their way to Kingston during the War.

### **Inscription on the stone of Captain Davis - By Charles Wolfe**

**"Not a drum was heard, nor a funeral note,  
As his corpse to the ramparts was hurried.  
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot  
O'er the grave where our hero was buried."**

***Special credit to Beatrice Webster for her article in the Tweedsmuir Book and an article by Richard Duff in the Lansdowne Reporter in 1950 after interviewing Mrs. M. King and Mrs. Shields.***

### **OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS**

BLACK CREEK  
BUILDING SERVICES  
CHARLESTON LAKE PROV. PARK  
GANANOQUE RIVER  
WATERWAY ASSOCIATION  
HORTON HOMESTEAD FARM  
LEBLANC DESIGN  
LANSDOWNE  
TELEPHONE/1000ISLAND.NET  
RONEY ENGINEERING  
THE LIONS DEN HAIRSTYLING  
TODD GRIER EXCAVATING  
TOM BURNS C.A.  
TWP. LEEDS AND THOUSAND  
ISLANDS  
"THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT"



## Paid up MEMBERSHIPS as of August 30, 2009

<u>LAST NAME</u> <u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>LAST NAME</u> <u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>LAST NAME</u> <u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>LAST NAME</u> <u>FIRST NAME</u>
AALDERS, WINNIE	FOLEY, BRUCE & JOAN	LANGTON, JIM & NANCY	REID, DENNIS
ABBOTT, MADELINE	FOLEY, DONNA	LAPOINTE, YOLANDE	REID, JOHN & KAY
ADAMS, WINSTON & WILMA	FOSTER, DONALD & CAROLE	LAPPAN, ROSE	RIDEOUT, WES & KAREN
AKENSON, PROF. D.H.	FRENCH, SYLVIA & ORLAND	LEDINGHAM, G.	ROBERTSON, MARY REID
ANDRESS, DOUG	FUNNELL, DORTHY	LEGGETT, LYNNE	ROMBOUGH, JOAN
ANDREWS, AUDRIE	GAYLORD, DAN & JANET	LINDSAY, ALAN & CAROLE	RONEY, MR. & MRS. G.V.
ARBUCKLE, DON & GLORIA	GEEKIE, NANCY	LOWRY, SHAWN & KAREN	RUNNING, MURRAY & DIANE
ARROWSMITH, BRENDA	GEMMELL, JOHN	LYNCH, CAROL	SCHARF, MYRNA & RICHARD
ASTLEY, ROGER & MARNIE	GIBBINS, CHRIS & GINNY	LYNCH, DAVID & BEV	SHEPHERD, RHODA J.
BARR, DAVID & PENNY	GIBSON-LANGILLE, SHIRLEY	MABEE, KEITH	SHERREN, MONA
BICKERTON, DOUG & ANN	GILBERT, DAVID	MACKENZIE, WANDA	SHIELDS, JACQUILINE
BLUMENTHAL, MARLENE	GILBERT, JUNE & DOUG	MACKINTOSH, DOUGLAS & BLU	SHIRE, DAN
BOUCAUD, JOAN	GRAHAM, ANDREW	MALLORY, LINDA	SHIRE, GEORGE
BOULTON, WM.	GRAHAM, ANNE	MATTHEW, MARY ELLEN	SIMPSON, DERROL
BOYD, JIM & ELIZABETH	GRAHAM, JOHN & JADE	McCRADY, EARL	SLY, KEITH
BOYSEN, MIKE & LIESBETH	GRAHAM, KATHERINE	McCREADY, BRUCE & MAXINE	SLY, SANDRA
BRADLEY, BETTY	GRAY, CHARLES & ANN	McCULLOUGH, DORTHY	SMID, HENRY
BROWN, HILARY	GREBBY, JOHN	McDONALD, ED & SHARON	SMITH, SUSAN
BROWN, JACK	GREEN, BRUCE	McDOUGAL, MARILYN	SNETSINGER, M. A.
BULL, DAVID	GRICE, LINDA	McELROY, MARG & GLEN	SORENSEN, JOHN & LOUISE
BURNS, DON & PAT	GRIER, HAROLD & RUTH	McKAY, HUGH & MARION	STEACY, H. R.
BURNS, GARRY & ALICE	GRIER, JAMIE & TRACIE	McOUAT, DON & HELEN	STEACY, MARLENE
BURNS, GEORGE & CONNIE	GRIER, ROSS & IRENE	MICHIE, ROSE & BOB	STEACY, PAUL
BURNS, JOAN	GRILLS, DIANA	MOIR, RONALD	STEACY, PETER E.
BURNS, KARL & DORA	HAFFIE, JOHN & DOREEN	MONTGOMERY, CHARLES	STEACY, RICHARD
BURNS, KEITH & JOAN	HAFFIE, LARRY	MONTGOMERY, LEON	STEACY, ROBERT E.
BURTCH, RITA & LIZ	HAIG, HAROLD	MONTGOMERY, LOVERNA	STRACHAN, JOY: MERCIER PIERRE
BURTCH, ROBERT	HALL, MYRTLE	MOORHEAD, ALBAN & LEAH	STUCKLESS, MARLENE
BURTCH, K.	HAMEL, HUBERT	MOORHEAD, LORNE & MARGARET	SWAN, MARION & PETER
CAMPBELL, JIM & NANCY	HASKINS, DIANE	MOREY, ELEANOR M.	TEDFORD, LYNN
CHAMPAGNE, DAVE	HEATON, STEPHEN	MOUG, NORMA	TEDFORD, ROGER & CONNIE
CHASE, GERALDINE	HEWITT, TED & PAT	MOULT, ELEANOR C.	TRICKEY, SPENCER
CHISAMORE, DON & DANNIE	HOGAN, KENNETH P.	MULHOLLAND, PAT	TRUESDELL, ERIC & JACKIE
CLARK, ED	HORTON, JUDY	MURCHIE, DAN & PAM	TRUESDELL, VAIDA
CORNISH, JOHN	HUNT, GORDON & DOREEN	NALON, JOHN	WARREN, GEORGE & BETTE
CRAIG, BRUCE & BETTY	HUNT, MORLEY & ANNE	NEAL, TOM & HELEN	WEBSTER, ERIC & NANCY
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CRAWFORD, MADGE	JOHNSTON, THANE W.	NEWELL, DORTHY	WEBSTER, JEAN
CROSS, THORALD & MARY	JONES, STEWART & THELMA	NUTTALL, BEN & HILDA	WEBSTER, LES & DAWN
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DONEVAN, LOUISE	KORPONAY, EILEEN	PECK, GARY	
DOREY, DONALDA	LACKIE, BOB & KAYE	PERRY, BETTY	
DOREY, MARK	LANDON, BARBARA	PILON, TELESPORE	
DOUGHTY, ERNIE & MARY	LANDON, BYRAN & MARTHA	PURVIS, DANA & ALLAN MARR	
EDGLEY, LAWRENCE & BESSIE	LANDON, IRIS & BILL	RATCLIFFE, WALTER & GEORGINA	
EDWARDS, CAROL	LANDON, YVONNE	REED, GWENDOLYN	

**HONORARY LIFE  
MEMBER:**

RUTH CHISAMORE

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