



**LANSDOWNE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
CELEBRATES 50 YEARS**

Lansdowne's First Fire Truck - 1958

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members:

Several of us had been talking in couples, trios or small groups about the unrecorded loss of heritage structures in the area. In the summer of 1992, Shirley Fernetich hosted eight of us at the Golden Apple to discuss what we could do. The Front of Leeds and Lansdowne had never had a L.A.C.A.C., in fact it was a bad word. Our advice from the Township Clerk of the day was to follow another route. Thus was formed the Historical Society.

Two of our objectives, written into our constitution were:

- to preserve the past through a permanent picture collection;
- to carry out research to compile authentic records of early buildings and properties.

I believe we have been quite successful in these areas. We have 17 albums of pictures and over 600 slides.

Our major coup was the acquisition of material from Darlingside at the time of its sale. With the assistance of Township staff, especially Diane Hall and Gloria Crawford, in 1995 we were able to acquire material from Darlingside one day before the auctioneer moved in. Even though we were preceded by the Ontario and Queens University Archives and Parks Canada, we still came away with a truck load of material. Through an Ontario Works programme, we were able to have it sorted, filed and catalogued, a total of 20 filing boxes. We were able to photograph the store inside and out. Unfortunately we only took pictures of the outside of the house.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada designated Darlingside as a National Historic Site. On September 20, 2000, three plaques were placed in the parkade above Darlingside. In the background material leading to the designation, the house is described as "a well-preserved document of the mid-19th century composite house. The house remains very much as it was about 1880". A Gananoque Reporter story in May 1993 described the formation of the Canadian 1000 Islands Heritage Conservancy which grew out of efforts to save the Darlingside Estate which had been on the open market for two years. They described the site as "a treasure trove of history, complete with an in-tact trading post and family residence".

The Conservancy must be as shocked and saddened as many more of us are to discover this spring that only the store is left on the site. It appears the house was dismantled. I am aware that this property is privately owned, and the public perhaps has no right to dictate its survival. But ... the loss of this gem of our beginning leaves a large hole in our heritage. Even if it were to be reconstructed, it would not have the 160 years of authenticity.

At least we have lived true to our objective in saving the site in pictorial form, along with the artifacts we were able to remove.

Bill Boulton - President

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 28 in a three ring binder - Cost \$32.00

Binders with all 28 copies will still be 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.



GREENFIELD SCHOOL OPEN (SCHOOL) HOUSE

Saturday September 27, 2008
1pm to 4pm

F. O. L. I.
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

S. S. #3
GREENFIELD
1855 - 1962



Former students and teachers, general public,
Drop in and relive your memories of the one room school

DONATIONS

Recently David Darling of TREASURE HUNTERS, Hilltop Plaza, Highway 29, Brockville, donated a number of pictures and a copy of Walling's 1861 map made by Archives Canada, to the Historical Society.

We thank TREASURE HUNTERS for their generosity.

TREASURE HUNTERS

Everything has value \$\$\$\$
One person's junk is another person's treasure
ESTATE SPECIALISTS
Call us before you discard a thing

David 613-342-9670
Debbie 613-342-9061

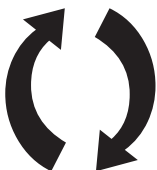
Heritage Organization Grant

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.



MEMBERSHIP FEES - Canadian Funds Please

General (Family) - \$10.00 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



YOUR EXECUTIVE



Photo by Peggy Delaney

Back Row, left to right: Bruce Foley, Ruth Ralph, Pierre Mercier, Rebecca Webster, Duane Dillman, Alan Lindsay, Paul Cote

Front row, left to right: Connie Burns, Yolande LaPointe, Bill Boulton, Anne Graham, Mary Robertson

LEEDS and 1000 ISLANDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Slate of Officers – 2007 – 2008

President-	Bill Boulton
1st. Vice-President-	Yolande LaPointe
2nd. Vice-President-	Paul Cote
Past-President-	Bruce W. Foley
Secretary-	Ann Graham
Treasurer-	Duane Dillman
Members at Large-	Mary Robertson
	Alan Lindsay

Committee Chairs

Communications-	Bill Boulton
Social Chair-	Rebecca Webster
Archivist-	Pierre Mercier
Program-	Ruth Ralph
Membership-	Connie Burns

FROM OUR LAST EDITION

Doctors Articles:

I gave credit to Mrs. Betty MacPherson for assistance in preparing these articles. I neglected to say that Mrs. MacPherson is the daughter of Dr. F.S. Young, and still resides in the family home. I apologize to Mrs. MacPherson.

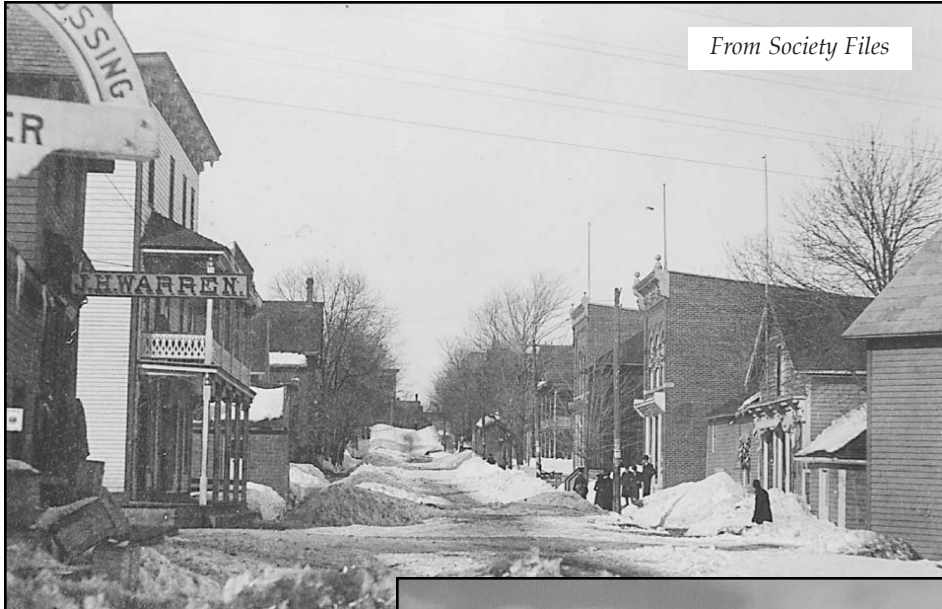
Newspapers:

August 12, 1942, Radio Station CKWS Kingston went on the air for the first time.
 January 18, 2008, CKWS went off the air for the last time.

This was also the day our last edition of the newsletter (#28) was printed.



T H E N *a n d* N O W



From Society Files

Prince Street
looking north
from railway
tracks 1905



Photo by Bill Boulton

Prince Street
looking north
from railway
tracks March
2008



CAPT. DOUG DONEVAN
**THE LONGEST SERVING MEMBER OF THE
LANSLOWNE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT.
SERVED FROM THE FORMATION OF THE
DEPARTMENT IN 1958 UNTIL HIS RETIREMENT IN
NOVEMBER 2007 (49 YEARS).**

Picture courtesy LTI Fire Department

(For full story of the Lansdowne Volunteer Fire Department see page #6)



LANSDOWNE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT **CELEBRATES 50 YEARS**

By Bill Boulton

On May 15, 1958 a public meeting was held in Victoria School for the purpose of organizing a volunteer fire department. Under the guidance of Mr. Lou Carrier of the Fire Marshall's office, the department was set up under five trustees. John MacDonald was elected first chief.

On May 31, 2008 a day long celebration will be held at Station One in Lansdowne. It will include a pancake breakfast, displays and demonstrations and an evening dinner honouring present and past members of the department and Ladies Auxiliary.

Before 1958 there was no organized fire service in Lansdowne. Sometime in the 1920's a fire apparatus was purchased, we are not sure by whom. It was a large soda-acid extinguisher mounted on wheels the size of buggy wheels. Equipped with hose and nozzle, it had a handle on the back to push it, and a hitch on the front so it could be towed. It was stored in Sheppard's Garage. It appears that it was not well maintained, and did not work as often as it did. About 1930, the Women's Institute took over the care of this device. In their minutes of June 24, 1931 there are two mentions of the device. One was a motion to pay a bill of \$2.43 to E.E. Johnson from October to December 1928 for a bill which was against the fire engine when the Institute took it over. The second was a motion that we ask Council for a grant to help pay expenses of the fire apparatus. A committee was appointed to interview Council. There is no further mention of the apparatus in their records.

At this time also, Billy Senn was elected or appointed fire chief, a title he held for many years, even though there was no fire department. Apparently the last use of the device was at a barn fire at the MacNeil farm of Kyes Road. The apparatus malfunctioned, and the pressure gauge continued to climb. Several became alarmed at the prospect of it exploding. Mr. Senn tried to get the nozzle open, but it came apart and sprayed him in the face. It was never used again. Apparently, the apparatus had been fondly referred to as Billy Senn's hot water bottle.

For many years fires were called in to the switchboard at the Lansdowne Rural Telephone Company. The operator would put a very long ring over the party lines. When she had enough people on the line, she would announce the location of the fire, and everyone would rush to the scene. Farmers would fill milk cans with water, and bucket brigades would be formed. It was surprising how well this system worked on occasion.

In the late 1940's, the Township purchased a used army truck, and equipped it with a tank and sprayer. It was used to spray cows for warble flies. When not in use for spraying, it often drew water to fires. This was in use into the early 1950's.

People always knew that some type of more formal protection was needed than calling for assistance from Gananoque or Mallorytown. Two fires in the spring of 1958 brought this to a head. Birds building a nest carried grass from a burn barrel to the eaves of the United Church and set the roof on fire. A grass fire behind the home of John and Ruth MacDonald on Garden Street got out of hand. After informal discussion, Gordon MacDonald and Percy Aldrich canvassed the village and raised \$300.00 in donations. The Chamber of Commerce added another \$100.00. A portable pump, fire hose, nozzles and necessary couplings were purchased. These were placed on a trailer which could be towed to a fire scene.

In the fall of 1958, Bill Funnell donated a snub-nosed 1937 Dodge truck. Paul Yurkowski donated a 500 gallon gasoline storage tank from the former White Rose pumps next to the railway tracks. The department now had its first vehicle! It was kept in Bill Funnell's garage. This was used until it was replaced in 1962. In 1959, the drive shed behind the town hall was closed in to be used as a fire hall. Space was a problem, as firemen had to climb over the truck to get into the hall.

(Continued on Pg. #7)



(Continued from Pg. #6) **LANSDOWNE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

In 1959, a 1940 International pumper was purchased from the Leaside Fire Department for \$2,000.00. It was an open cab vehicle.



(Photo Courtesy LTI Fire Department)

As an interesting aside, Doug Donevan and I were coming back from Stratford in August of 1959 when Doug suggested we stop in Leaside and see the pumper. Doug talked to the chief, who called a driver and said, "Take them for a drive." We went out Lawrence Avenue and turned around in a construction yard. A police car saw us waiting to get back onto the road, pulled up with lights flashing and stopped all 4 lanes of traffic for us. We were probably the first to ride in the new truck. As a fire engine chaser, it was my first ride. I didn't get another until 42 years later when my children arranged a fire truck ride as a birthday gift.

The delivery of this truck also has an interesting history. It had been taken to LaFrance Fire Engines in Toronto for the addition of a new tank and other alterations. In the fall of 1960, Deputy Chief Bill McConnell drove Doug Donevan, John and Gordon MacDonald to Toronto to bring home the truck. It was a cool Saturday morning. Bill went on to conduct some other business. The other three got ready to leave, only to find they had no license plates. A call to the nearest license office determined they were not open on Saturday. It was decided to take a chance and drive without plates. Some ways down the highway they hit a bump. One of the passenger's feet hit the siren button. The driver, figuring he was caught, pulled over, only to discover it was his own siren. It was also very difficult to change gears, so they tried not to slow down. As they came down the hill on the main street of Port Hope, the light at the bottom turned red. To avoid having to slow down and change gears, they hit the siren and went right through. It was a cool all day ride in an open cab along Highway 2 to Lansdowne.

Included in the purchase was a reconditioned air raid siren. This was placed on top of the town hall and could be heard for a mile. It would be sounded from the telephone office, and could not be turned off until the first man reached the fire hall. He would then get the location from the operator. This was used until 1991. A pager system was used for a time, then 2-way radios were purchased in 1971, and began to operate on the County frequency in February 1973. In 1993, 911 was adopted.

After giving a grant for the purchase of the first pumper, the township set up a working budget for the department, making it a municipal fire department in 1961. In 1963 the former Town Hall was turned over to the fire department. The floor was replaced and a 16,000 gallon cistern was built in the basement. This is no longer needed as the village is served by hydrants connected to the water system installed in 1975. The former Mitchell Bros. feed store was demolished in 1988, and an addition made to the west side of the building.

(Continued on page #8)



(Continued from Pg. #7) **LANSDOWNE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Many changes have been made in equipment over the years. In 1962, pontoons were purchased and a fire boat was constructed. It served until 1982, when it was replaced by a 16 foot boat and trailer. The village of Ivy Lea had a small volunteer fire department. In return for fire protection, their equipment was donated to Lansdowne. Also at this time an International chassis was purchased and equipped with a 1,200 gallon tank. This replaced the original Dodge truck. This truck was replaced in 1974 with a 2,000 gallon tank truck. In 1971, the department received their first new vehicle, a King Segrave combination pumper. At the same time, the Lansdowne Firefighters Association purchased a 1970 Ford Econoline van which was used to transport men and equipment. Many other vehicles have come and gone over the years. Today Station 1, Lansdowne, is equipped with: 1992 pumper #10, 1997 vacuum pumper, 2005 rescue truck, 2007 pumper-tanker #14, 19-1/2 foot boat.



2007 Pumper-Tanker #14

Picture courtesy LTI Fire Department

Until 1992, the Gananoque Fire Department had provided protection for the north-west area of the township. For the next year and a half Pitsburg Township provided this protection. On June 18, 1994, the Township opened a second station on Hwy. 32, just north of Gananoque. In January 2001, with the amalgamation of the three townships, the fire departments in Seeley's Bay and Lyndhurst became part of the township system.

Over the years there have been only 5 fire chiefs. John MacDonald, after 14 years as chief, resigned in 1972. He was replaced by Charlie Tedford, who resigned in 1974. Deputy-chief Ken Tedford assumed the duties of acting-chief for the next 7 months. In July 1974, Bill Grier was appointed chief, and served until 2005. The present chief is Gerald Bennett, who shares his time between the Township and Gananoque Departments. In addition, there is a chief fire prevention officer, Wayne Shields; and a part time assistant deputy chief, Bruce Kelsey.

When the department was formed in 1958, there were approximately 16 members. Only 6 of those are still living. The longest serving of those is Captain Doug Donevan, who was active until his retirement in November 2007, having served for 49 years. Presently the department has 80 members, 23 working out of Lansdowne Station #1.

The department has always prided itself on keeping current. In 2001 they were certified for ice-water rescue. Extrication equipment was purchased in 2001. Also that year tiered response for medical emergencies was added.

Some of the larger fires the department has fought include; Mount Airy Hotel in 1990, Lansdowne Arena and Sunset Island Restaurant in 1987, and the Glen House in 1988.

(Continued on Pg. #9)



(Continued from Pg. #8) **LANSDOWNE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

In the past 50 years, the Lansdowne Volunteer Fire Department has grown from a virtual bucket brigade to a modern equipped and trained department of very dedicated volunteers. These men and women, all ordinary citizens, are ready at a moments notice to give their time and effort for the protection of, and aid to, their community.



Former Fire Chiefs 1983: L to R: Bill Grier, Ken Tedford, John MacDonald, Charlie Tedford

THE LADIES AUXILIARY

In 1961 a group of local ladies organized a Ladies Auxiliary to the department. They have proved a tremendous support for the association.

Their major objective has been fund raising. They have sponsored bazaars, bingos, dances, bake sales, yard sales, dinners and many other events. They have supplied much of the furnishings for the hall. They assisted in the purchase of the equipment van in 1971.

They are most appreciated for their support on fire calls. They can always be counted on to supply sandwiches and coffee to the men at the scene of a fire.

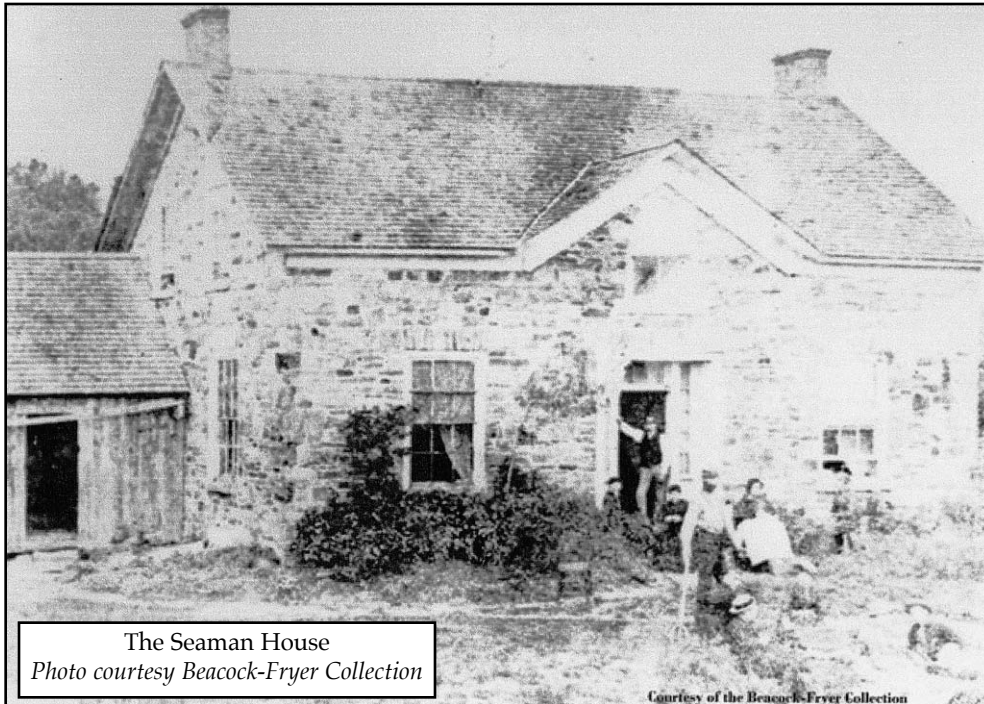
This year the Auxiliary celebrates its 47th anniversary. Two original members, Kathy Aldrich and Doreen Haffie, are still active.

*Prepared with assistance from the department s 25th Anniversary Book,
Wayne Shields, Doug Donevan and Steve Offord.*



Early Pioneers on the Front...the Seamans of Rockport

By Kathleen Burtch



The Seaman House
Photo courtesy Beacock-Fryer Collection

Courtesy of the Beacock-Fryer Collection

In the next few weeks, perhaps on a lovely spring evening, take a drive down to Rockport. On the north side of the Parkway you will find Old River Road and at 28 Old River Road you will discover a delightful stone cottage. Unlike many houses in the area, this house was built of granite stones. Fortunately, we know quite a bit about the Seaman family who built it and this family have a long and interesting history in the area.

Caleb Seaman, (ca1740-ca 1820) a United Empire Loyalist, originally came from Hempstead, Long Island, New York. Seaman had a proven military record. He enlist-

ed with the New York Volunteers; was captured in 1776 on his way to join his unit and eventually escaped and made his way to Schenectady NY with his wife and sons.

Arriving in Upper Canada in 1789, Caleb Seaman might be considered to be a Late Loyalist by some but because he had military service he was entitled to a land grant. Caleb Seaman started out in Tincap near Lyn making scythes. In 1790, Caleb received a land grant at Rockport- Lot 8, Broken Front extending to the St. Lawrence River in what was then Yonge Township. The patent in 1803 shows Caleb Seaman owned a total of 247 acres at Rockport. His son, Smith Seaman (1786-1876) developed the farm at Rockport and built the lovely stone house in 1857. (His brother Nehemiah built another stone house in Brockville. It is said to be the first stone house in Brockville and is located at the corner of King and Perth Street. Smith like his father was also a blacksmith and had a shop just south of the stone house in Rockport.

In the early years in Rockport, the timber trade was an important economic activity along the St. Lawrence River. Smith Seaman's son John (1813-1884) was listed in the local business directory as a timber merchant. He also farmed at Rockport and he and his large family shared the stone house with Smith Seaman. Mary Andress Seaman the wife of John Seaman, is one of the Escott weavers commemorated at Springfield House in the Weaver's Attic.

The remarkable thing about this house is that it was owned by the Seaman family until 2007 -200 years! In 2007, the Prohaska family purchased the Seaman house and have done extensive renovations to the interior. The original house was the classic 1 1/2 storey Ontario cottage style. The house has been altered somewhat in the roof line. The original centre gable was removed in the early 1900s and the roofline was raised all along the second floor. According to Eleanor Collins a descendant who owned the house for many years, the stonework was done by a Mr. Lynch and the house cost \$100.00 to build.

In 1995, the reasons for designation as submitted by the Front of Escott LACAC were:

"This house is a significant structure when taken in the context of the early history of the Thousand Islands area. It is one of the earliest stone buildings in the township. It is the only one of it's kind in Rockport - a granite building and a rare example of this type of building in the township. The stone was quarried from the cliffs behind the house. The Seaman family were prominent in the area playing an important role in the economy of Rockport and their story has been well documented in published works by Mary Beacock Fryer."

(Continued on Pg. #11)



(Continued from Pg. #10) **Early Pioneers on the Front...
the Seamans of Rockport**

The house was plaqued on July 1, 1996 and designated in December 1996 by the Front of Escott Township Council and the LACAC of Front of Escott. Mary Beacock Fryer, a well known Ontario historian is a descendent of Caleb Seaman and has written two novels for young people on the Seaman family's trials as United Empire Loyalists *Escape: Adventures of a Loyalist Family* and *Beginning Again: Further Adventures of a Loyalist Family*

The Seaman House is a fine example of what can be done by a property owner who appreciates the heritage aspect of their home. This structure is just one of over 130 properties recognized in an Inventory that has been prepared by the Municipal Heritage Committee of Leeds and the Thousand Islands. This Inventory will document the history of each building while working closely with the property owners to assist in the preservation of the architectural heritage of their property. If you would like to learn more about the inventory, please contact Kathleen Burtch at 613-923-5947.



THE LONG ROAD TO LANSDOWNE

By Lloyd Kelsey



Lloyd Kelsey
From Lansdowne Continuation
School Photo
(Photo courtesy Audry Newell)

I was born early one morning, May 21, 1928, in the house belonging to the Warburton Cheese Factory, which my father, Gordon Kelsey, managed and operated for some 30 years. I left my Warburton home after attending the Lansdowne Continuation School for four years, to further my education at the Brockville Business college. Graduation was managed early in 1946. I took my room and board at the home of Mrs. Hattie Fodey at 6 Pearl Street West, along with a number of other tenants. Included was one Joe Lynch who had been discharged from the R.C.A.F. at the end of WW 2. Joe and I actually shared a room. He, I believe, was the son of Mr. Eugene Lynch of Escott.

After graduating from the Brockville Business College, my first place of employment was at Welch and Johnson, manager Mr. Jimmy Campbell. This employment was only a few weeks when I joined the R.C.A.F. This turned out to be an eight year hitch.

The Newsletters seldom fail to have names, places and families that trigger memories of my childhood and youth. Newsletter #26 was of particular interest. There was only one or two in the picture of the 1948 Lansdowne Railway Section Crew that I couldn't match the face with the name. It was interesting to see the picture of Ernie Pritchard, my uncle.

The more I think and write, the more names and faces come to mind. When I was about nine, my father had taught me farm owner's names the length of the 6th concession (R.R.4) starting at Leslie Warren in the east to the Griffins at Sand Bay.

After this preamble, I'll get to the real purpose of this letter. I will title the saga *The Long Trip to Lansdowne*.

I would like to relate somewhat of an amusing tale of the Lansdowne Railway Station. If I error in part, I ask your indulgence.

(Continued on Pg. #12)



(Continued from Pg. #11)

THE LONG ROAD TO LANSDOWNE

It was between Christmas and New Years 1946. (Actually Sunday December 22, 1946) I was traveling from R.C.A.F. Station, Clinton Ontario aboard the eastbound passenger train out of Toronto. As I remember, the train was running late, an hour or two, due to holiday traffic and the exceptionally cold weather. At least that is what the conductor said. Man! It was cold. The train windows, on the inside, were covered with frost. Even with a scraping there was little to see, other than the swirling snow.

The train was referred to as the fast train because it made stops only at the larger towns between Toronto and Montreal. Lansdowne was, of course, not a scheduled stop. We had stopped a number of times as we traveled east, still running late, the trainman said, as we ground to a stop again. I remember asking, when will we be coming into Brockville? The reply was hopefully in an hour or two. It depends how long it takes to get around some freight cars that jumped the tracks. So I again covered myself up with my air force winter coat and went back to sleep.

It was daylight when I disembarked the train in Brockville and made my way downtown to the Grand Central Hotel to board a Colonial bus traveling west. I was getting closer to home, Warburton. Off the bus at the corner of #2 Hwy. and the road running north to the village of Lansdowne. With my kit bag over my shoulder, I braved the cold walk. As I got near to the railway crossing, the buckled freight cars were pushed aside the main line, the station to the north and Mr. Fred McConnell's lumber yard to the south.

Memory fails me as to whether the station was damaged, I think not; but I do remember that McConnell's Lumber took quite a rap. The village was blessed that Christmas — no fire — no fatalities.

That is my story of when I spent a night on a train parked in Lansdowne, rather than get off.

This letter from Lloyd Kelsey arrived just as Newsletter #28 was going to press, too late to make it into the newsletter. Lloyd had been a member of the Historical Society for some years.

We regret to report that Lloyd passed away at his home in Kingston on December 26, 2007, while watching the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey game with his son James.



1946 Train Wreck (Photo Courtesy Bruce Foley)



Gilberts of The Rear of Leeds and Lansdowne

By David Gilbert

This presentation is limited to the writer's own ancestry. It does not attempt to deal with other known branches of the Gilbert family of which there are many. There is family of Gilberts north of Gananoque who are or have been engaged in the gravel/construction business. There are Gilberts in Toronto who at one time summered in Gananoque and who I had the privilege of meeting. I have been told that there is a family of Gilberts on Tar Island and there are Gilberts in south western Ontario. I have not so far, been able yet to make the connection with these families, if there is one. Please consider the following with this limitation in mind.

John Gilbert was born in Oblong, New Lebanon N.Y. in 1759. He fought in the Revolutionary War for the Americans; my genealogy program contains a history of his war record. He married Anna Eaton in Vermont in 1778 and they had 9 children. They came to Upper Canada from Vermont in 1795 and settled on concession 13, lot 5 of Leeds and Lansdowne Rear, where he operated a water powered mill. The property looks to be on the Lyndhurst Rd. close to Soperton. My family of Gilberts is descended from John through his son William.

William Gilbert was born in Vermont in 1786 and came to Upper Canada with his father John in 1795. He married Mary Ann Franklin in 1821. Mary Ann was born in Wexford County Ireland in 1799 and was part of the large group of Wexford Irish who immigrated to Upper Canada between 1810 and 1830. William served as Township Clerk for the years 1814-1815. I have in my files a copy of his signature on an official document.* William and Mary Ann had 6 children, one of whom is another William, known as William Jr. and another, Albert. One each of William Jr's and Albert's children ended up in Gananoque.

William Jr. was born in 1830 and somewhere along in these years the family, or part of it, relocated to Seeley's Bay. This is understandable as the Rideau Canal was completed in 1832 and offered easier passage and opened the markets in Kingston and the surrounding area for trade. William Jr. married Ann Ennis in 1859, they had 6 children, one of whom was my grandfather, George Douglas Gilbert. Another child was Alberta who married Ephraim Bracken. Their eldest son John went on to become leader of the Conservative Party. John Bracken had been successful in Manitoba as leader of the Progressive Party and as Premier. When asked to take on leadership of the Federal Conservative Party, he made it a condition of his taking on that position, that the name be changed to Progressive Conservative and that name stayed in place until very recently. William Jr. operated a successful carriage manufactory in Seeley's Bay.



Original Gilbert Carriage Shop. Winter 2008- Photo by Keith Sly

(Continued on Pg #14)



(Continued from Pg #13)

Gilberts of The Rear of Leeds and Lansdowne

George joined his father for a time in the carriage building business but by 1900 or so with the coming of the automobile, the business began to fail. George went to Toronto and joined one of the emerging big oil companies as a salesman and learned a great deal about lubricants and the blending of oil. After only a few years, he moved to Gananoque. George Douglas Gilbert was born in Seeley's Bay in 1875. He married Annie Darling in 1908 and they produced two sons, John Darling (Jack) and William Douglas (Bill).



Annie and George Gilbert with Jack (standing) and Bill

In 1916 they commenced the family business, St. Lawrence Oil & Supply Co. Ltd. The operation started first in the barn which still stands behind the house on Brock Street now owned by Jennifer Gilbert. As the business became successful more room had to be found and a new warehouse and offices were constructed for that purpose on Oak Street in Gananoque's west end.

Robert Burns Gilbert also relocated to Gananoque. He married Georgina Wartman from Yarker and they had three daughters, Mildred, Eleanor, and Marion. The two families were very close. My mother, Eugenia (Gene) Wright when she was very old, told me the story of how, when she started high school, Eleanor Gilbert had determined that they would be friends. Mom said that the Gilberts went frequently on picnics and various outings and she would be invited to go along. So she said, "that worked out pretty well didn't it."

Jack Gilbert did marry Eugenia Wright and followed his father in the oil business which had expanded to include automotive parts, mill supplies, and fine tools. Jack lived out his life in Gananoque where he served the town in a variety of offices and finally as mayor in 1966 & 1967. Bill Gilbert also worked at St. Lawrence Oil but joined the army when the Second World War started and served in North Africa, Italy and Europe. Upon his return to Gananoque he commenced a rewarding and challenging career as a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Queen's University. Robert Burns Gilbert's three daughters all married and moved to the Toronto area.

The family has multiplied successfully and is spread all over the place. Mostly all still in Canada but one of Bill Gilbert's grandsons is now established in New York City. I do try to keep up with the expansion but it is tough. Ancestors tend to be easier because they are static. Susan Hogarth who is Mildred Gilbert's daughter keeps me informed of activity on her side of the family. Bill Gilbert's children are spread out from Vancouver to St. John but also keep in touch. Jack Gilbert's family all still live in Ontario, Douglas and I are both members of the Historical Society, and my sister Jane lives in Cobourg. All of us, as far as I am aware have so far managed to stay out of jail.

Courtesy of Keith Sly, a resident of L&L Rear with a profound knowledge of the history and genealogy of that Township.





Mrs. Dixon's Scrapbooks
Mrs. Dixon's Columns from the 1940's

In Newsletter #27, I told of the ability, finally, to access the scrapbooks put together by Mrs. Daisy Dixon. They contain articles she had written for several local newspapers. Imagine my surprise when I opened one of the books, and the first article to catch my attention was about a Lansdowne fire, fitting I thought, to go with the 50th Anniversary of the Fire Department.

FIRE IN LANSDOWNE – The tireless efforts of neighbours and villagers last night saved the home of Fred McConnell, in Lansdowne, from total destruction by fire. The outbreak was discovered about 7 o'clock by Miss C. McConnell, who on her way to work, happened to look back at her home and noticed smoke rising from the roof. About the same time a neighbour also noticed the smoke and together with Miss McConnell they informed Mr. and Mrs. McConnell of their discovery. The alarm was sent out over the telephone circuit and in short order residents from the village and district gathered at the McConnell residence, a large frame structure, and formed a bucket brigade. The fire had gained a considerable headway and considerable damage was done to the house and contents before the blaze was brought under control. The lack of fire fighting apparatus except for buckets and ladders hindered the efforts of the fire fighters and only through a concerted effort were they able to control the blaze and extinguish it before the dwelling was a total loss. The all out signal was given at 8:45 o'clock last night. Damage to the house and contents could not be readily estimated. It was believed the fire was caused by defective wiring.

The Brockville Recorder and Times

Editor's Note: While this article does not have a date, it was in the early 1940's, maybe 1941 or 42. I well remember this fire, as I lived next door, and I know I was much younger than I am now. Our house was also frame, separated by only a narrow driveway from McConnell's. Imagine the fright of this incident! Teenage boys rode their bicycles up and down local roads alerting farmers to fill their milk cans with water and bring them to the fire scene. This was not the first fire here, though the most serious. Just a few weeks earlier, a fire had damaged a downstairs sitting room. Repairs had just been made when the second fire occurred. Two or three weeks later, as carpenters Algie McKay and George Stevens were rebuilding the damaged roof on the back part of the house, a third fire started in the roof toward the front of the house. Believe it or not, playing in the back yard, I was the first to notice the smoke and alert the carpenters. *(Bill Boulton)*

Another 55 years would pass before a fire department was established.



The McConnell house 21 Miller St.
 Photo by Bill Boulton

OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS

- BLACK CREEK BUILDING SERVICES
- CHARLESTON LAKE PROV. PARK
- GANANOQUE RIVER WATERWAY ASSOCIATION
- HORTON HOMESTEAD FARM
- LANSDOWNE TELEPHONE/1000ISLAND.NET
- 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 JUNE 20, 2008

LAST NAME FIRST NAME	LAST NAME FIRST NAME	LAST NAME FIRST NAME	LAST NAME FIRST NAME
AALDERS, WINNIE	FOLEY, BRUCE & JOAN	LAPPAN, ROSE	REID, DENNIS
ABBOTT, MADELINE	FOSTER, DONALD & CAROLE	LAWSON, RICK & SUSAN	REID, JOHN & KAY
ADAMS, WINSTON & WILMA	FRENCH, SYLVIA & ORLAND	LEDINGHAM, G.	RIDEOUT, WES & KAREN
AKENSON, PROF. D.H.	GAYLORD, DAN & JANET	LEGGETT, LYNNE	ROBERTSON, MARY
ALEXANDER, VIVIAN & PETER	GEEKIE, NANCY	LINDSAY, ALAN & CAROLE	RONEY, MR. & MRS. G.V.
ANDRESS, DOUG	GIBBINS, CHRIS & GINNY	LYNCH, CAROL	RUNNING, MURRAY & DIANE
ARBUCKLE, DON & GLORIA	GIBSON-LANGILLE, SHIRLEY	LYNCH, DAVID & BEV	SCHARF, MYRNA & RICHARD
ARROWSMITH, BRENDA	GILBERT, DAVID	MABEE, KEITH	SHEPHERD, RHODA J.
ASTLEY, ROGER & MARJORIE	GILBERT, JUNE & DOUG	MACKENZIE, WANDA	SHERREN, MONA
BARR, DAVID & PENNY	GRAHAM, ANDREW	MACKINTOSH, DOUGLAS & BLU	SHIRE, DAN
BOUCAUD, JOAN	GRAHAM, ANNE & TOM	MacPHERSON, BETTINA & MANFORD	SHIRE, GEORGE
BOULTON, WM.	GRAHAM, KATHERINE	MALLORY, LINDA	SIMPSON, DERROL
BOYD, JIM & ELIZABETH	GRAY, CHARLES & ANN	MANGAN, ELLEN	SLY, KEITH
BOYSEN, MIKE & LIESBETH	GRAY, PAUL & NORA	MATTHEW, MARY ELLEN	SLY, SANDRA
BRADLEY, BETTY	GREEN, BRUCE	McCRADY, EARL	SMID, HENRY
BRETT, GERTRUDE	GRICE, LINDA	McCREADY, BRUCE & MAXINE	SMITH, RONA & BRIAN
BROAD-MELCHERS, PATTI	GRIER, HAROLD & RUTH	McCULLOUGH, DORTHY	SMITH, SUSAN
BROWN, JACK	GRIER, JAMIE & TRACIE	McDONALD, ED & SHARON	SORENSEN, JOHN & LOUISE
BULL, DAVID	GRIER, ROSS	McDOUGAL, MARILYN	STEACY, H. R.
BURNS, DON & PAT	GRIFFIN, BARBARA	McELROY, MARG & GLEN	STEACY, MARLENE
BURNS, GEORGE & CONNIE	GRILLS, DIANA	McKAY, HUGH & MARION	STEACY, PAUL
BURNS, JOAN	HAFFIE, JOHN & DOREEN	MICHIE, ROSE	STEACY, PETER E.
BURNS, KARL & DORA	HAFFIE, LARRY	MOIR, RONALD	STEACY, RICHARD
BURNS, KEITH & JOAN	HAIG, HAROLD	MONTGOMERY, CHARLES	STEACY, ROBERT E.
BURTCH, ELIZABETH	HALL, MYRTLE	MONTGOMERY, LEON	STEVENS, MILDRED & CECIL
BURTCH, RITA	HAMEL, HUBERT	MONTGOMERY, LOVERNA	STRACHAN, JOY: MERCIER PIERRE
BURTCH, ROBERT	HASKINS, DIANE	MOORHEAD, ALBAN	STUCKLESS, MARLENE
BURTCH, K.	HEATON, STEPHEN	MOORHEAD, LORNE	SWAN, MARION & PETER
CAMPBELL, JIM & NANCY	HEWITT, NATTANYA	MOREY, ELEANOR M.	TEDFORN, LYNN
CHAMPAGNE, DAVE	HEWITT, TED & PAT	MOUG, NORMA	TEDFORD, ROGER & CONNIE
CHASE, GERALDINE	HOGAN, KENNETH P.	MOULT, ELEANOR C.	TRICKEY, SPENCER
CHISAMORE, DON & DANNIE	HUNT, GORDON & DOREEN	MULHOLLAND, PAT	TRUESDELL, ERIC & JACKIE
CLARK, ED	HUNT, MORLEY & ANNE	MURCHIE, DAN & PAM	TRUESDELL, VAIDA
CORNISH, JOHN	JACK, MURRAY	NALON, JOHN	WARREN, GEORGE & BETTE
CRAIG, BRUCE & BETTY	JOHNSTON, THANE W.	NEAL, TOM & HELEN	WARREN, MARGEL
CRAWFORD, FLORENCE	JONES, STEWART & THELMA	NEWELL, AUDREY	WEBSTER, ERIC & NANCY
CRAWFORD, MADGE	KAISER, LAWRENCE	NEWELL, DORTHY	WEBSTER, GEORGE & REBECCA
CROSS, THORALD & MARY	KAISER, W.	NUTTALL, BEN & HILDA	WEBSTER, JEAN
d'ADDARIO, PATRICIA ANDERON	KEIR, VIVIAN J.	NUTTALL, JAY	WEBSTER, LES & DAWN
DAY, M. SHARYN	KELLOGG, MARK & VALERIE	OFFORD, HOSS & SANDI	WEBSTER, PAUL & DOREEN
DEMPSEY, DONNA	KELSEY, MILTON & VIVIAN	O'GRADY, CHRIS	WEBSTER, ROBERT & BEATRICE
DESJARDINS, MELANIE	KENNEDY, ADELINE	OLIVIER, GLENDA & BOB	WHITE, CHERYL & LARRY
DICKSON, GERI & JOHN	KENNEY, GLORIA	ORTH, JIM & CATHERINE	WHITE, WILBERT & FREDA
DILLMAN, DUANE & CAROL	KITSON, VERA	PAGE, STEVE & JOANNE	WILLIAMS, HOWARD & JUDY
DOAK, BOB	KNOWLES, LLOYD & MADELINE	PAQIN, CAROLE	WILLOUGHBY, JACK
DOBSON, JOYCE	KORPONAY, EILEEN	PAQIN, LAURIE	WRIGHT, MILLARD & JUNE
DONEVAN, DOUGLAS	LACKIE, BOB & KAYE	PECK, GARY	ZIMMER, JOHN E.
DONEVAN, LOUISE	LONDON, BYRAN & MARTHA	PERRY, BETTY	
DOREY, DONALDA	LONDON, GLENDENE	PILON, TELESPORE	
DOREY, MARK	LONDON, IRIS & BILL	PURVIS, DANA & ALLAN MARR	
DOUGHTY, ERNIE & MARY	LONDON, YVONNE	RALPH, DAVE & RUTH	
EDGLEY, LAWRENCE & BESSIE	LANGTON, JIM & NANCY	RATCLIFFE, WALTER & GEORGINA	
EDWARDS, CAROL	LAPOINTE, YOLANDE	REED, GWENDOLYN	

**HONORARY LIFE
MEMBER:**

RUTH CHISAMORE