



THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ADOLPHUSTOWN-FREDERICKSBURGH HERITAGE SOCIETY

Issue Number 8

February 2014

A Wintry World

The winter solstice seemed to arrive this year with a frightening arsenal of severe winter weather. Spanning the full range of deep freezing temperatures and attendant fluffy snow, to rain, freezing rain and ice pellets, the weather served up conditions that ran from simply unpleasant to outright destructive. The falling of ice-laden trees that downed power lines meant many of us were without electricity in the days just before Christmas. This was a near calamity for some, but it no doubt brought to mind how the people of this region endured the winters not so long ago. Certainly there was hardship, and indeed tragedy, in the early years of settlement along these shores and throughout the two centuries that followed. However, winters of our past were not only to be survived. They also presented an opportunity to play: from sleigh or cutter rides along the roads or bays, to skating, tobogganing, ice fishing and iceboating. In this issue of the *Neighbourhood Messenger* we will look at the many ways winter has impacted life of the residents of our townships.

Our Society

Members of the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society are your neighbours, your friends, your family. We are new to the area or have lived here all our lives. Some of us are descendants of the Loyalists who settled the shores of the Bay of Quinte. We all share a desire to deepen our knowledge of the history of our local community and to share our passion with others.

Our Executive

President:	Angela Cronk
Vice President:	John Gordon
Secretary:	Kathy Staples
Treasurer:	Stan MacMillan
Webmaster:	Susan Wright
Sales Director:	Peter Cameron
Cemeteries	
Director:	Tom Talbot
Communications	
Director:	Jane Lovell

Our Meetings

The Society meets every fourth Wednesday in the month at the South Fredericksburgh Community Centre at 6.30 p.m. All welcome!!

Our Website

<http://www.sfredheritage.on.ca/>

Contact Us

If you have questions or suggestions regarding any aspect of the Society, including *The Neighbourhood Messenger*, please contact one of the following-

- Angela Cronk, President (373-8888) angelacronk@gmail.com
- Jane Lovell, Newsletter Editor (373-0199) jane.lovell@kos.net

A Glimpse of the Past



Photo Courtesy of Susan Wright

Snowplow on Highway 33, somewhere around Lot 20 in South Fredericksburgh (east of the Lennox Generating Station) circa 1940s

Do you have an interesting photo of people, places or events that show things as they were in the past? Let us feature it here!

The Neighbourhood Messenger is an electronic newsletter distributed exclusively to members of the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society.

As the receipt of our newsletter is one of the major benefits of Society membership, we ask that you NOT forward the newsletter to friends or relatives. Instead, we suggest that you encourage anyone you think might be interested in receiving a copy of *The Neighbourhood Messenger* to join our Society. A lifetime membership costs \$5, and in addition to ensured e-mail delivery of the newsletter, Society membership entitles those interested in our local heritage to be kept informed of, and participate in, all aspects of Society activities.

Anyone can become a member by sending a cheque for \$5 made payable to the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society, c/o Kathy Staples, 1105 - 828 Sutton Mills Court, Kingston, K7P 2S9.

If you are not currently an AFHS member please consider becoming one!

Events Calendar

February 15	Macpherson House Basket Weaving and Traditional Lunch 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
February 20	Heritage Week Grade 5 Postcard Project Reception and Display Strathcona Paper Centre 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
March 3	History Nights at the Regent David More, Kingston author and historian, tells the story of Canadian born Captain Rene-Hippolyte Laforce who commanded naval fleets for both the French and the British in the mid-1700s. The Regent Theatre, Picton 7 p.m.
March 8	Lennox & Addington Historical Society Susan Wright presents Voices and discusses gathering and compiling stories that capture local heritage Greater Napanee Fire Hall 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
April 5	Lennox & Addington Historical Society Dr. John Milloy, Trent University Speaking about archives and his work as an historian specialising in the impact of government police on aboriginal peoples Greater Napanee Fire Hall 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

HERITAGE WEEK POSTERS
THE LEGACY OF THE CANADIAN POSTAL SERVICE IN GREATER NAPANEE

POSTERS ARE \$20.00 EACH
OR A COMPLETE SET OF 10 FOR \$175.00.

POSTERS MAY BE PURCHASED FROM:
MS. SUSAN BECKEL, TOWN CLERK
12 MARKET SQUARE, NAPANEE

POSTERS MAY BE VIEWED AT:
WWW.GREATERNAPANEE.COM OR THE TOWN FACEBOOK PAGE

Feature Event: Heritage Week

Heritage Week is February 16th – 23rd, and this year the Greater Napanee Heritage Committee elected to celebrate the Canadian Postal Service. To highlight the invaluable part Canada Post and its predecessors have played in the lives of Canadians since the postal service was established nearly 150 years ago, two major projects were undertaken. The first was the creation of a series of ten posters entitled "The Legacy of the Canadian Postal Service in Greater Napanee". These posters, depicting vintage cards, letters, and stamps from various eras and with various themes, have been placed in prominent businesses and public buildings throughout the municipality.

The second initiative was the Postcard Project. For this project, Grades 5 students were asked to create postcards illustrating places or events important to them or their community. Members of the Greater Napanee Heritage Committee dropped by each of the schools in Greater Napanee to deliver the blank postcards and to speak to the children about the project. Children who live in the former townships of Adolphustown and North and South Fredericksburgh attend school in Bath. Despite residing in Loyalist Township, Bath School agreed to participate in the project. The Heritage Committee felt it would be appropriate if someone from the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society were to present the project to the Grade 5 students at the Bath School. I was honoured to be asked to talk to the children.

I do not collect postcards, but I do have a few old cards sent by my grandfather's brother to his family in England from his Grand Tour of North America in 1906-07. In having a good look at these old postcards for the first time, I found a number of things that stumped me. The first strange thing I was to encounter was that on one of the cards the message had been written over top of the image on the front of the postcard. The obverse contained only the address and stamp. It turns out that when the Canadian Post Office Department first accepted postcards in 1895, it was forbidden to include anything other than the address on the obverse. It wasn't until 1903 that a message could appear alongside the address. The other curious thing about my card was the postmark. It read "TORONTO & NIAGARA FALLS M.C. May 30 1906". With much asking around I discovered that M.C. stands for Mail Coach. Mail was sorted on a railcar and postmarked while in transit to its destination. For mail destined for stations along the way but where the train did not stop, mail sorters aboard the mail coach placed the letters and parcels in a leather pouch which was then hung outside the car. As the train passed the station, the stationmaster would hoist up a hook to catch the pouch and would then take the mail to the post office to be sorted for local delivery.

I was able to use several postcards provided to me by Susan Wright to illustrate other unusual things about old postcards. One of those vintage cards advertised vacation cottages on Bayshore Road. I took advantage of the address on the card to talk about addresses and how they had changed over



the years. The other interesting thing about the postcard was the hand-written phone number that had been added after the card had been printed. That was a great opportunity to talk about early phone communication, and how it overtook written communication, but never fully replaced it. The AFHS website includes the 1954 telephone directory for Kingston and area, and in it can be found a description on how that odd-looking number would have been "dialled". The children found it bizarre that someone would have to call the Dorland exchange, ask the operator for line 2 ring 33, and then wait for whoever they were calling to pick up on their assigned ring sequence of three short rings followed by three short ones.

The children were encouraged to pick an era for their postcard and then make the image, message, recipient and stamp date-appropriate. Some of my old postcards not only told stories about the location of the image and the experiences of the sender, but also gave hints about the situation of the recipient and about the social conventions or broader environment of the time in which the card was sent. It was very gratifying to see that some of the children picked up on this and let their imaginations run free in concocting stories from near and far and long ago, using all components of the postcard in the telling.

The postcards created by children from all the schools participating in the project will be on display at a reception held at the Strathcona Paper Centre February 20.

Manager of the L&A Museum and Archives to Receive Heritage Award

The annual Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement recognizes outstanding contributions to the identification, preservation, protection and promotion of Ontario's heritage. This year Jane Foster, manager of the Lennox and Addington Museum and Archives, is a recipient of this award. Much deserving of this recognition, Jane will be presented with her award in Toronto during Heritage week.

Canadian Athletes Leave For Olympic Games

Canada's representatives at the Olympic Games at St. Moritz, Switzerland, now on their way across the ocean, journeyed from their homes to the seaboard via Canadian National Railways. Most of the party were photographed by the Canadian National camera man at Montreal en route to Halifax. Photographs show: Lower left; The Varsity Grads hockey team, of Toronto; right, Lehan and Dupuis of Montreal and Ottawa respectively ski-ing representatives. Upper right, the party aboard the Maritime Express of the Canadian National Railways; left, Ross Robinson, Toronto speed skating champion, who will represent Canada in the speed skating events — Canadian National Railways photographs.

Napanee Beaver
February 3, 1928

Winter

Ross Morton

William Phippen, my maternal great-grandfather, employed horse-drawn sleighs on the Bay of Quinte ice to transport, from Kingston, much of the material used in the construction of his brick house, located east of Conway. The supplies hauled included the stone blocks for the basement walls. These units had been cut from a Cataraqui-area quarry. Local roads in the late 1800s were of poor quality, often snow-blocked in winter and deeply rutted in spring and fall.

Will Morton, my father, harvested the bay ice to be used as a summer coolant. In late winter, when the ice was at its thickest, the cutting and carting of large, heavy sections of frozen water commenced. The ice, cut by handsaws and loaded on sleighs, was transported by a team of horses and then stored in a small building, appropriately called, the "Ice House". Sawdust was generously placed around and atop the blocks and only uncovered when ice was needed to cool dairy milk or preserve family food supplies. This operation became redundant once electrification came to the rural district in the mid-1930s.

As a child, I thought the frozen bay a wonderful playground. A skating rink was located in front of our farm and there were reasons why this site was selected. The shoreline was well defined allowing easy access to the ice and the waterfront was not too far from our house. There were six children in our family and some of our neighbours had several children of skating or snow-shovelling age. The rink was crowded Saturday and Sunday afternoons and often at night when illuminated by the light of a blazing rink-side bonfire. People came from the surrounding districts and some even skated from across the bay to participate. A game called, "Shinny" was played and it didn't matter the number of skaters on a side. For the most part the basic rules of hockey were followed but there was no heavy body checking.

The trek to the Conway Public School over unploughed roads in the 1930s was exhausting. Activities during school recesses and lunch hours were exhilarating. We built snow forts, pelted snow balls at each other, often with the teacher participating, made snow angels, sleighed down the adjoining farmer's hill, skated on the little pond across the road, played "Fox and Geese" in winter or in summer, tag.

One day the Conway school was closed because of an unusually heavy snowfall. This blistering wind-blown precipitation created a huge mound in our back yard. Although the weather was too severe for school, I spent the day converting the pile into an igloo.

In those winter years, farming chores mainly consisted of tending to the livestock. Cows had to be milked and stables cleaned. The sweet odor of corn silage and loose clover hay overcame any stench from animal droppings. If too cold to go outside, the hayloft became our recreation area. There was an increasingly open space as the foliage was fed to the animals. This allowed swinging from one haymow beam to another using the horse fork rope.

In the 1930s a rink was constructed on the Frank Ham property, a mile west of the Conway store. Work was done to level a surface and then the creek water diverted to flood the prepared ground. Perimeter boards, overhead lights and a heated shack provided comforts not available on the open bay ice.

Ken Dickson, and other Dickson family members constructed a quality rink on the shore of Hay Bay at Hayburn. This was a popular attraction for both skaters and hockey players and from my experience Ken was reluctant to accept remuneration for the use of the rink.

My brother Frank built an iceboat. He had no drawings, or money to purchase parts, but he was creative in obtaining material for the project. The steel runners for this contraption were "borrowed" from the metal framework of a neighbour's windmill no longer used to pump water. The sail material was cut from a bed sheet with approval obtained after the fact. A canvas, strung between two small diameter hickory saplings, seated the operator and passenger. This arrangement was surprisingly effective as a shock absorber when travelling over rough ice. The balance of the structure was made

from boards and tree limbs and the sections secured with whatever fasteners were available. The rig obtained considerable speed, even in a light breeze, and I often wondered if the potential for injury was worth the breathtaking ride over a frozen surface.

When I became a teenager I constructed a simple triangular sail out of a bran sack affixed to narrow wooden slats. It was hinged at the joint and held taut by a cross board. I travelled miles across the bay ice when it was first frozen and later in the season as the melting and springtime rains created a solid sheet over snow banks.

My wife, Geraldine, lived the first 29 years of her life in the city of Montreal. She was familiar with solid cement sidewalks and firm asphalt roads. The only ice skating surface encountered was surrounded by boards in a park.

In 1954 we moved to the Sandhurst district and built a small house. We had water frontage and made use of this fact, summer and winter. An ice cover had formed on the bay in front of our place and by the second day it was at least two inches thick and safe for skating. We talked Geraldine into putting on a borrowed pair of skates and coming with us.

This newly frozen ice layer was translucent and you could see clam shells on the stone covered bottom and even small fish swimming past. Geraldine was not impressed - what you could see through could also break - so went her reasoning. Reluctantly, she did take a few strides after considering our comments regarding the soundness of the surface.

Overnight the weather changed with strong south-east winds creating huge waves in Lake Ontario which swirled through the upper gap and racked the newly formed ice. In the morning when we looked out all we saw was choppy waves. Geraldine was aghast. She had been sure yesterday's skating surface was not safe and the water now in front of us was proof. It took years for me to regain credibility as being somewhat knowledgeable of the soundness of an ice surface.

We were one of the first in our community to purchase a snowmobile. We bought a lightweight, 16 hp, single cylinder Ski-Doo. This marvellous winter transportation vehicle was the creation of Joseph-

Armand Bombardier of Quebec. The name was the result of a labelling misprint -- the packing cartons ordered should have read "Ski-Dog", as being the motorised version of a dog team.

The Ski-Doo was enjoyed by all members of our family. One outing was the crossing of the Bay of Quinte ice to watch horse racing in the cove at Stella on Amherst Island. I drove the Ski-doo, with Geraldine positioned behind me and our three children seated on a rope-towed toboggan. This method of conveyance would not be allowed in today's world. A solid tow bar would be needed as one of many required safety items. The races were between ten or so competitors with each participant sitting on a two-wheeled cart called a Sulky and pulled by one horse. Crowds lined the shoreline.



**Ross Morton atop snow cleared from driveway
January 1978**

Until a few years ago I skated the bay ice at least a few times each year given a sunny week-end afternoon. However, even when traversing the waterfronts from Roblin's Point to Sandhurst I would not see other skaters. Just another sign of changing times.

Then and Now

Kathy Staples

The Skrubis house on Bayshore Road



Photo Courtesy of Peggy Allison

Circa 1943. Note the chains on the rear wheels of the truck.

The right-hand side of the house was built by David Brown in the early 1800's, on land originally granted to Conrad Vandusen in 1797. By 1919, the farm was owned by the Davern family from whom Archibald Heathcote acquired the property as part of the Soldier Settlement scheme in 1937. The Heathcotes remained on the farm for just over 30 years. The current owners of the property are Bert and Nellie Skrubis who have lived there since 1986.



Undated

AFHS Photo

Photo Courtesy of Kathy Staples
2010

Iceboating in the Bay of Quinte

Jane Lovell

By happenstance, the weather in December and January this winter -- with temperatures well into the deep freeze zone, and little snowfall after the freeze -- contrived to produce near ideal conditions for iceboating. Local iceboaters eagerly took advantage of those few days to fly up and down the ice-covered bays to the delight of participants and spectators alike.

The sport of iceboating on the Bay of Quinte has a long history. An 1898 article in the *New York Daily Tribune* enthused about the winter sailing possibilities along our frozen waterways:

One of the most perfect ice-yachting waters in the world is the Bay of Quinte, which winds up through the country for over sixty miles, having a width from one to three miles. The lands passed are nearly all farmed, but the high banks of the waterway are left in a wild State. There are no tides or currents to break the ice, and when the newly formed covering can be taken early in the year, before the snow spoils the surface, this sixty mile run is simply a wonder. Picton, Deseronto and Belleville are the chief calling places, or, rather, refuges in case of a snowstorm, and care has to be taken not to get caught in a blizzard when far from shelter. Owing to the lulls caused by the neighboring highlands, the best iceboat speed is never maintained here throughout the journey, or else the whole trip might be polished off in an hour. But it can be done, lulls and all, in about three hour's average going, and it is probably the nearest thing to the open-water cruise of the summer yacht that the iceboat world presents so far.

Today, throughout the Bay of Quinte area there are clubs and groups catering to iceboating enthusiasts, co-ordinating outings en masse to some likely lake or bay whenever conditions are good. The most serious of iceboaters participate in races in high-tech craft tricked out with fixed wing sails and enclosed cockpits. Others chase speed records: Modern iceboats can achieve speeds as high as ten times the wind speed in steady light wind on perfect ice. We're talking 80 to 100 km/h here -- definitely an adrenaline rush!

Just as popular, however, is the indulgence in iceboating as a solitary sport, often on home-made craft, and on frozen waterways near at hand. Speeds achieved by these iceboats do not approach international records but are plenty fast enough to make iceboating thrilling -- and dangerous! There is evidence of the use of these small home-made craft in the Bay of Quinte well into our past. Photographs, along with written and oral accounts, show their popularity from the early decades of the 1900s. Indeed their recreational use surged when, in the mid 1930s, the *Detroit News* sponsored the development of a design for an iceboat that could be built at home and transported on the roof of a car. The initial design was mass-tested in 1937 when a group of 50 or so enthusiasts congregated at the *Detroit News* hobby shop. For a reported \$32, each of the participants was supplied



**Iceboating on Bass Cove by Glen Island
below the Lake on the Mountain January 2014**

with the materials needed to build their own iceboat from the prototype design. Few of the iceboats built that winter survived the season, but changes made in the design to correct deficiencies or improve performance made it into the 1938 design. That design became the basis for the International DN (for Detroit News) class of iceboat, the most popular racing and recreational iceboat in use today.



Photo Courtesy of Susan Wright

Small gaff-rigged stern-steerer iceboat on Adolphus Reach below Allison House, Adolphustown, circa early 1900s

Before the small iceboats there were big iceboats. Indeed, the early racing iceboats were called ice yachts and their design was inspired by the sailing yachts of the day. Over time the hull design of these craft morphed from a flat-bottomed boat on runners to little more than a long beam and a cross bar on skates. The four runners were replaced by three steel skates affixed to each end of the cross bar located at the base of the mast and to the ruder, forming a triangular base. These stern-steerers were up to 40 feet in length and carried from 400 to 700 square feet of canvas – a far cry from the modern bow-steering iceboats clocking in at 12 feet in length and with sails in the neighbourhood of one tenth of the size of their giant predecessors.

There seems to be some controversy as to when the first triangular-based iceboats came into general use. One 1898 history of the sport published in the *New York Daily Tribune* claims that this design change was first introduced in Canada.

In 1858 the iceboats used on the bay at Toronto were practically the same as they are to-day. Except in special builds for racing, there is little difference. The iceboat then owned and sailed by George Evans, of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, and the subsequent boats owned by him and by Thomas Tinning, the champion oarsman, and others were all of triangular shape, with the single steering skate aft. In this region the iceboat was developed, not primarily for racing, but for the taking out of large parties from the yacht clubs and for general jollity in the long winters.

However, the *Journal and Transactions of the Wentworth Historical Society* for 1902 claims the use of the triangular design a good twenty years earlier:

Even ice-boating had its votaries in those far away days; It is claimed that the first one to make its appearance on the bay was in the winter of 1836. It was launched by William Johnston, Nat and Angus McAfee, and William Rayner, and was a clumsy triangular structure of scantling, shod with skate runners, an old quilt serving as a sail. A brisk southwesterly breeze sent them merrily along at express speed, and the fun was much appreciated till they drew near the beach and took down their sail. Owing to the front runner being

immovable, their pike-pole proved useless to diminish the rate of transit, and they struck the shore with sledge hammer force in the vicinity of John Dynes', and were shot like peas off a plate about twenty-five feet amongst the scrub that then fringed the shingle, their hands and faces cut and torn, their clothes much in need of a tailor. The quilt was the only uninjured feature of the craft. Dynes' wind-mill received the bruised voyageurs until night fell, when they made their weary way homeward, more than satisfied with their first experience of this animated sport.



Photo Source: Maritime History of the Great Lakes

Stereograph image of lateen-rigged stern-steerer ice yachts on Lake Ontario c1900

Iceboats of the flat-bottomed hull variety had been in use in Northern Europe and particularly in the Netherlands for centuries for the transport of goods. These utilitarian craft were also used along Lake Ontario, especially for accessing icebound islands. Wolfe and Garden islands relied on iceboats and ice punts when the ferry was laid up over the winter. Early newspapers reported the condition of the ice for these transport craft, but also enthusiastically reported the exploits of the new faster iceboats.

Kingston Daily News, February 27, 1878

Ice Boating - Ice boating is being largely indulged in in the harbor, the ice being in fine condition. A new boat has been put on by Capt. Dix, which is the fastest and best equipped ever seen in Kingston. When on the move it leaves every other boat behind.

Kingston Daily News, January 6, 1879

The Ferry Crossing - The ice this morning was sufficiently strong in the harbor to necessitate the laying up of the ferry boats for the season. Crossing was made from Garden Island by means of an ice boat, which broke through several times.

British Whig, February 24, 1880

Ice Boating - Yesterday Capt. Dix, who has an excellent boat, took a sail to Bath, making the distance in remarkably good time considering the stoppages that were made while the party built bridges and crossed gaping and dangerous cracks. At the Brothers the crew had to do some nice navigating, so uncertain was the condition of the ice. The trip homeward was made in much better time. It is not considered possible that the run between the city and Garden Island can be made in 2 minutes.

Serious ice yachting was taken up in North America in the mid 1800s and by 1861 the Poughkeepsie Ice Yacht Club became the first club established to support early stern-steering iceboat races on New York's Hudson River. It wasn't until more than thirty years later that dedicated ice yachting club made an appearance in Canada with the formation of the Kingston Ice Yacht Club in 1896. The huge interest in the sport at the time is evident in the flurry of yachtsmen to join the club – in its inaugural season the club boasted 100 members manning 23 ice yachts.



Obverse of the Kingston Ice Yacht Club Challenge Cup 1895-96

The nascent Kingston club commissioned a stunning Challenge Cup for that first 1895/1896 season. Its obverse side was engraved with a racing scene showing both gaff and lateen rigged ice yachts. Apparently these craft were big enough to accommodate a crew of four. A more vigorously contested prize appeared on the scene the following season. The Walker International Challenge Cup was presented by the distiller Hiram Walker & Sons to encourage Canadian clubs to compete in the newly glamorous sport of ice yachting. That intent is unambiguously inscribed on the cup:

*for competition among
the Ice Yacht Clubs of Lake Ontario
the Bay of Quinte and River St. Lawrence*
**TO BECOME THE
PROPERTY OF ANY CLUB
WINNING IT THREE SEASONS
1896-97**

What is somewhat ambiguous is the sequences of challenges that led to final victory of the Kingston Ice Yacht Club over its challenger, the Cape Vincent Ice Yacht Club. The sport of ice yachting was avidly followed in the press of the day, with reports often giving play-by-play details as each boat rounded the mark on the three legged course. Much can be gleaned from contemporary reports, but gaps in the reporting make it difficult to discern a definitive time-line.

The Walker Cup was ultimately won by the Kingston Club in March 1901, having also captured the title during the previous two seasons (1898/1899 and 1899/1900). The initial challenge was issued by the

Kingston club during the 1896/1897 season, with heats run in February 1897 to determine which three craft from the Kingston club would compete in the three-on-three challenge races. It was the Cape Vincent club that won the cup that year. As the challenge does not appear in the press for the 1897/1898 season, it is likely that the ice conditions that winter were not suitable for ice yachting. In any case, by the time of the start of the 1898/1899 season, the Cape Vincent club was the holder of the cup.

With the ultimate victory of the Kingston club in the first international ice yachting challenge, Canadian ice yachtsmen had made a name for themselves as formidable contestants. The Walker Cup was retired and in 1902 the Cape Vincent Club offered a silver loving cup for contests to be sailed out of Cape Vincent.



Obverse of the Walker International Challenge Cup Presented by Hiram Walker and Sons Ltd. (1896-97) showing single-man gaff-rigged stern-steerer ice yachts with Kingston skyline in the background

The Kingston Ice Yacht Club remained active until it was absorbed into the Kingston Yacht Club in 1910. Several other cups and trophies initially offered in 1896/1897 and 1897/1898 seasons were contested by ice yachtsmen within the club, and remain on display along with the Walker Cup at the clubhouse today. Ice yachting continued as a winter pastime for members of the Kingston Yacht Club, with many of the current members of the club remembering contests from the 1940s and '50s and with a few still iceboating today. While most of the craft sailed nowadays are of the modern bow-steerer variety, members of the club still have in their possession a few old small wooden stern-steerers.



**Photo Courtesy of Ralph Shaw
Gaff-rigged stern-steerer iceboat at the Kingston Yacht Club
The Cathcart Martello tower on Cedar Island in Kingston
harbour in the background 1996**

In 1903 some of the large ice yachts underwent a major design modification, flipping the triangular base of the craft to transform it from a stern-steerer to a bow-steerer. This change helped prevent spinouts and "flickering", much improving the stability and safety of the craft. However, these improvements did not prevent the ice yacht's fall from fashion – it was the large size of the ice yachts that lead to their demise. Transporting these craft to and from regattas was done via railway flatcars, and then by wagons or sleighs to the frozen shore. By the late 1920s this was becoming overly arduous and expensive, and by the 1930s these large ice yachts rarely left their home clubs. It was the introduction of the smaller iceboats in 1938 that triggered the greatest decline in the popularity of the ice yacht. This was the case with one of the larger and most prestigious ice yachts to sail out of the Kingston Club. The *Snow Cloud* joined the Kingston fleet in 1899 and was one of the three ice yachts to complete in the final series that ultimately won the Walker Cup for the Kingston Ice Yacht Club in 1901. The *Snow Cloud* continued to compete internationally but by the end of the 1920s she sailed mostly in Kingston Harbour. Built of cedar and basswood these large ice yachts were light, but not particularly durable. While she continued to be sailed out of the Kingston Club during the 1930s and '40s, by the 1950s the *Snow Cloud* had succumbed to the elements and lay as a wreck along the Kingston shoreline.

While the big ice yachts are definitely a thing of the past, the modern iceboat easily accepts the mantle of their larger forerunners, continuing more than a century of thrilling wintertime sport on the Bay of Quinte and frozen waterways around Lake Ontario.

A special thanks to David Page of the Kingston Yacht Club for aiding me in my research of the early history of the Kingston Ice Yacht Club, and to Ralph Shaw, also of the Kingston Yacht Club, for his assistance in photographing the beautiful old ice yachting cups and trophies still in the possession of the club.

LORD MINTO'S EXPERIENCE

Taken a Whirl on the Speedy Snow Cloud in Half a Gale of Wind

In winning the race yesterday for the Walker cup the ice yacht, *Snow Cloud*, skippered by H. S. Folger, made the record run of the season, covering the triangular course three times – twelve miles in all, in the remarkable time of twenty-nine minutes. The race was in half a gale of wind.

...

Lord Minto, governor-general of Canada, witnessed the race and at its completion congratulated M. Folger upon his brilliant victory. At Mr. Folger's invitation, lord Minto took a spin on the *Snow Cloud* at a speed approaching, if not surpassing, a mile a minute, and giving his excellency the fastest whirl he ever experienced.

Continued....

A WHIRL *continued...*

Lord Minto expressed himself as being delighted with the experience, and being keen on the sport, which he and lady Minto had once before enjoyed at Toronto, his excellency intimated that he had serious intentions of having a flyer built for himself. He considers ice-yachting the greatest sport in the world, the acme of outdoor exercise. He hopes to return to Kingston with lady Minto and again enjoy a spin in Kingston's fine harbor when the ice is keen

British Whig
February 22, 1900

Help Us Identify This:

Do you recognize this house or the woman sitting on the veranda? This photograph was in the Robinson family album donated to the Society by Mertie Jean Ackerman. The Robinson family was from Sandhurst. The shot may have been taken in the 1920s.



AFHS Photo

Feedback from October's Help Us Identify This:



No feedback was received to identify any of the people in this photo taken in front of the house at the Chalmers' farm.

Unmarried brother and sister Albert & Gertie Chalmers owned the farm on Lot 7, Concession 2 South Fredericksburgh Additional. The farm was on the north-east corner of the Gore road and County Road 8, opposite the Parma schoolhouse, then situated was on the north-west corner. The schoolhouse was removed from the site in 1963 and the Chalmers farmhouse burned down in 1965.

Do you have an old photo for which you cannot identify the people, the place, or the occasion? Let us scan it and we can feature in an up coming issue of *The Neighbourhood Messenger*. One of our readers might know something that you don't!

The Big Snow

Jane Lovell

The photo of the snow plow featured as our *Glimpse of the Past*, dated as being from the 1940s, and the one below, dated March 1946, brought to mind a conversation I had had with Lyle Smith a few years ago.



Photo Courtesy of Susan Wright

Captioned: "Winter 1945-46 Mar 46
Week for bulldozer to go from Bath to
Ferry"

Lyle told me of a visit he had made to the Plested farm on Bass Cove, also in the 1940s, in order to attend an auction of farm equipment. The auction took place in the spring (March) and the snow still on the ground necessitated the use of a horse and sleigh to travel between the Smith and Plested farms.

The Plested farm was sold in early February 1949, and so the auction would likely have taken place in the spring of the previous year. However, an online search revealed that it was 1947 rather than 1948 that was the year of the big snow. The snowfall between New Year and early March of 1947 was record setting and certainly headline-worthy for many communities in southern Ontario and as far north as Sault Saint Marie. The Bay of Quinte area also received heavy snowfall, but the citizens of our local communities seemed to take it in their stride – mentioning the unusual weather, but carrying on nonetheless.

In the following excerpts from the *Napanee Beaver* for the winter of 1947, the correspondents comment on over-ice travel as well as by road, and tout the continued use of the farm horse when motorized vehicles were incapacitated by the deep snow.

January 8:

DECEMBER SNOW TOTAL WAY UP

Last month's snowfall was the heaviest since 1929, it was reported by Prof. George H. Kimble, director of the McGill Observatory, in a statistical review.

A total of 38 inches fell, some 15 more than average. In December 1908, there was a record fall of 53 inches.

Dorland, Jan. 4 -- Everyone has been busy for the past week shovelling snow and stoking fires. Snow plows have been busy, but travelling is difficult. The ice under the snow adds to the problem.

January 29:

Dorland, Jan. 25 -- The blizzard late Wednesday afternoon caught quite a number on the road, and, while nothing serious happened, several experienced difficulty in finding their way. Driving has been tricky generally, as the rains washed away the snow and sand, so one was apt to strike unexpected slippery places. Quite a few persons have suffered nasty falls. Most people do not consider the bays safe for travel.

February 12:

Dorland, Feb. 8. --- The sixty-four dollar question is soon going to be "where to pile the snow?". The snow plows are kept busy and the banks are becoming higher and higher, but still not comparable with those reported farther west, nor has communication been cut off, though few people drive for pleasure. Farmers are getting behind in their winter program, as they have to spend so much time shovelling around buildings, etc., little opportunity is left for other work. The depth of snow in the woods makes wood cutting difficult.

Conway – Sandhurst. Feb 10. – After the mild and pleasant January we find ourselves shivering and somewhat annoyed with so much snowing and blowing. In spite of the almost continuous drifting, snow plows have faithfully kept on the job and all roads have been kept open for traffic.

On Friday night of last week the pupils of Conway and Sandhurst Schools, and a number of local young people, were treated to a delightful sleigh ride. Mr. Lorne Wannamaker picked up the merry crowd at Sandhurst Hall and a joyous hour of driving followed.

February 19:

Dorland, Feb. 15. – By degrees the district is emerging from the depths of snow. Traffic began moving on the main roads on Tuesday, but the plow just began work on the township roads this morning. Some contact has been maintained with the outside by means of horses, another proof that horses cannot be entirely dispensed with.

February 26:

Conway – Sandhurst, Feb. 24. --- Old man winter has been frolicking rather recklessly this past few days. Heavy drifts have been piled high on many roadsides. Still we feel we are not so badly off with all our stormy weather. We have plenty of food and fuel for which we are very thankful. Many countries, and even other communities in Canada are not so fortunate.

March 5:

Winter's Worst Storm Ties Traffic Up in East. Ontario Record Snowfall Creates Problem for Road Men

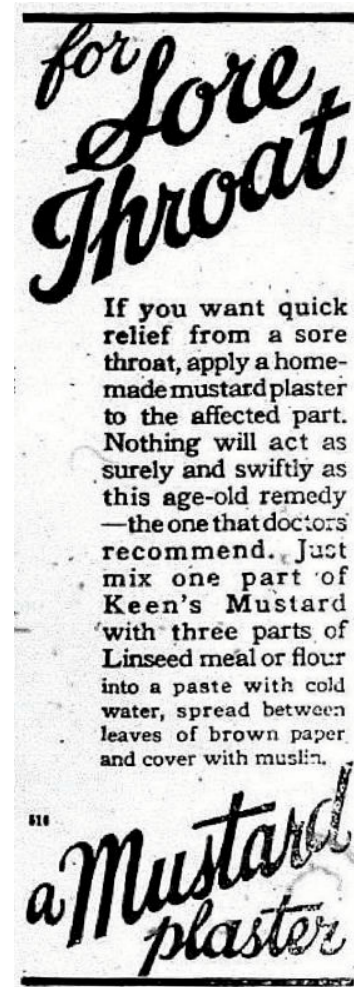
The snowstorm, which started during the early evening on Saturday, steadily increased and continued without letting up until early Monday morning. It made motoring decidedly hazardous and in fact almost brought it to a standstill.

Apparently the storm was most severe from Trenton east for on Sunday all transport companies issued orders for their drivers to stop at Belleville and wait there until the roads were made passable. Belleville streets were reported to be lined with heavy traffic during the weekend. Several large transports, some bearing new cars, remained in Napanee on Sunday night.

Snow plows were busy in Napanee and the surrounding district all day Sunday, through Sunday night and up to the present time hurrying to make the roads, at least, partly passable. The highways and county roads were reported to be available for one way traffic on Monday. The banks of snow on each side of the road are so high it is difficult to dispose of the snow from the travelled portion of the roads.

Some motorists who came from Toronto to Napanee Sunday night were on the road for eight hours. They reported finding snow conditions worst from Trenton east. Drifts were said to be up over the headlights and travelling was necessarily very slow. One Napanee resident started to drive to Toronto at three a.m. on Monday morning but got only as far as Deseronto where he was forced to turn around and return to Napanee.

The storm was undoubtedly the worst of the season in the Napanee district, and present indications are that it will be some days before the roads will be opened sufficiently to make motoring fairly safe.



Napanee Beaver
January 15, 1947

March 12:

Dorland, March 10. --- Traffic is moving once more, after being blocked for two weeks on some roads. Like every other place, mail service was tied up for days, and milk trucks, etc. could not get through, while bread and other supplies ran low. Fortunately there was no serious illness in the locality.

No service has been held in the United Church for three weeks. The first two Sundays road conditions were the cause, and last Sunday it was cancelled owing to the illness of Rev. H. G. Steers.

March 19:

Dorland, March 15. -- The mild weather and the rain on Friday have lowered the snow but in places the banks are still several feet high and roads call for careful driving. Farmers are very busy rushing to get caught up before the grand breakup. All wood saws are busy. A few have tapped their sugar bushes but labor under difficulties owing to the depth of snow and lack of frost. There was a good run on Wednesday, but not so much since. Crows are quite plentiful.

The Big Snow Plus 30

As seen in the photograph accompanying Ross Morton's article **Winter**, there was another big snow in 1978. There was also a huge blizzard the year before. Does anyone have "big snow" photographs or stories of being stranded or having other adventures in the winters of 1977 or 1978? Please send them in!!

**Big Reductions in
Winter Footwear**

Men's Lumbermen's Rubbers. Regular \$3.50 and \$4.00. On Sale	\$2.90
Men's Oil Tan Moccasins. Sizes 6 to 11. On Sale.....	\$1.95
Women's Overshoes, 4-buckle and 2-dome style. Regular \$4 and \$4.50. On Sale	\$2.95
50 pairs Women's Felt Boots. Regular \$2.50 and \$3.00. On Sale.....	\$1.95
SPECIAL REDUCTION! Odd lines of Men's Black and Tan Boots, Welt Soles. On Sale.....	\$3.95

Get your SKI BOOTS and SNOWSHOES at

Haines Shoe House

NAPANEE

Napanee Beaver
February 3, 1928

Clippings

CONWAY

We were visited with another severe storm on Sunday last, which makes the sleighing a great deal better.

O where, tell me where, did the little pony go on Saturday night last? Why it went across the ice with one of Conway's fairest young ladies.

Charley has purchased a new violin. He intends furnishing music for the dances free this winter.

A concert will be given in the town hall, South Fredericksburgh, in behalf of the Presbyterian Church, Sandhurst, on Thursday, 2nd March. Let every young man come and bring his best girl.

Sunday last was a holiday as there was no church on the front.

Miss Anna Clapp is home attending her mother, who met with an accident by falling on the ice.

Our enterprising fishermen are meeting with great success. Bill and Tom always takes the lead in securing the large ones.

Napanee Express
February 24, 1893

BUSH, David F. B., On Monday evening, 2 young men, JAMES PRIME, in his 24th year, and DAVID F. B. BUSH, in his 18th year, went skating in the front of Fredericksburgh twp. Passing Mr. McKenzie's farm, between his house and the house of Mr. Campbell, they fell through the ice and were drowned. Their funeral was on February 24th.

Christian Guardian
March 16, 1842

Melancholy Occurrence - On Wednesday last (the 11th inst.), as Mr. Caleb Roblin, son of Philip Roblin, Esqr., of Sophiasburg, was crossing the Mohawk Bay, to the former place, with a load of oak lumber, his horse and himself fell through the ice, where all were unfortunately drowned. He had in company with him a young man by the name of Peter Wood, with another team, which was also lost; Wood only making his escape. Diligent search was made for the body of Mr. Roblin by the surrounding neighbours, (to whom his relatives feel themselves under heavy obligations for their kindness and humanity), but having toiled till after midnight they abandoned the search till day light, when the corpse was found. His funeral took place on Saturday - a very impressive discourse was delivered on the occasion by the Revd. Mr. Marcus from these memorable words: "Jesus wept." His remains were followed to the grave by a numerous assembly of friends and acquaintance.

Mr. Roblin was an active, promising young man, aged twenty five years. His loss will be long and deeply felt by all with whom he was acquainted. How true it is, that "in the midst of life, we are in death!" (Com. Sophiasburg, February 15, 1835)

Kingston Chronicle & Gazette
February 21, 1835

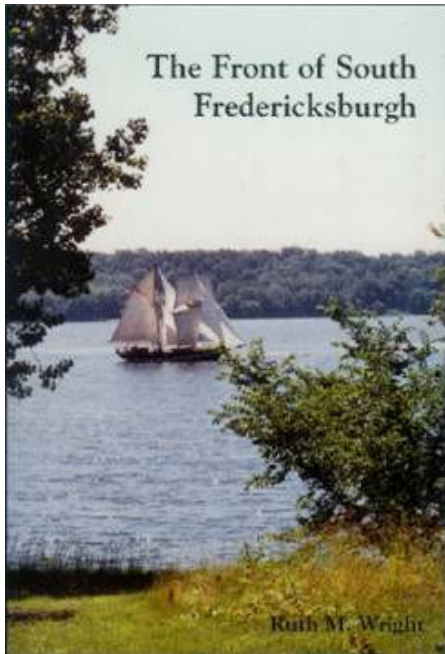
Clippings courtesy of Susan Wright
& Jane Lovell

To see more old newspaper clippings check out the Articles page on our website:
<http://www.sfredheritage.on.ca/articles.html>

From the Book Shelf

The Front of South Fredericksburgh

Ruth Wright



This indexed book would be a valuable resource for anyone doing genealogical research pertaining to the original settlers of the third township, Fredericksburgh. A century later this township was divided into North and South, with no changes effected as to lots or concessions.

The "Front" or Front road was the description used in earliest days to identify the land area of Fredericksburgh bordering on the Bay of Quinte.

In laminated soft cover, this 164 page book includes two fold-out maps, lot by lot, of the Original and Additional Lots of Concession 1 Fredericksburgh.

The Society periodically publishes books reflecting our local history. Our catalogue now contains thirteen titles. (See our website (<http://www.sfredheritage.on.ca/Books.htm>) for a full list, along with a brief description of each book.)

AFHS News

Angela Cronk

Our annual Heritage Harvest Dinner was held on October 30, 2013, and was once again a huge success! The roast beef meal provided by Roxanne McCaugherty and her team was amazing, as usual, and appreciated by all as was evidenced by the number of people enjoying second helpings!

This year we welcomed Captain Brian Johnson, veteran captain of the Wolfe Island Ferry Service as our guest speaker. He regaled us with many a tale from his experiences as ship's master, as well as reams of information about the history of the "Islanders". Many of us could relate well to his stories as there would be personal recollections from our local Glenora ferry (especially this winter!). Brian had a wonderful archive of photos and documents on his PowerPoint presentation that really enhanced his presentation but it was his humour and enthusiasm that made the evening very enjoyable!

In November, we elected our executive. It remained unchanged with the exception of the addition of Tom Talbot as our new Cemeteries Director. Thanks to all who continue to keep our heritage alive by attending meetings and supporting us through book sales and memberships for our newsletters.

We have been actively involved in the Greater Napanee project to study and improve awareness of our area's cultural, arts and historical assets. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input into the Town's Cultural Plan and to highlight our local heritage.

Let the science and research of the historian find the fact and let his imagination and art make clear its significance.

George Trevelyan

A Curious Thing

Angela Cronk

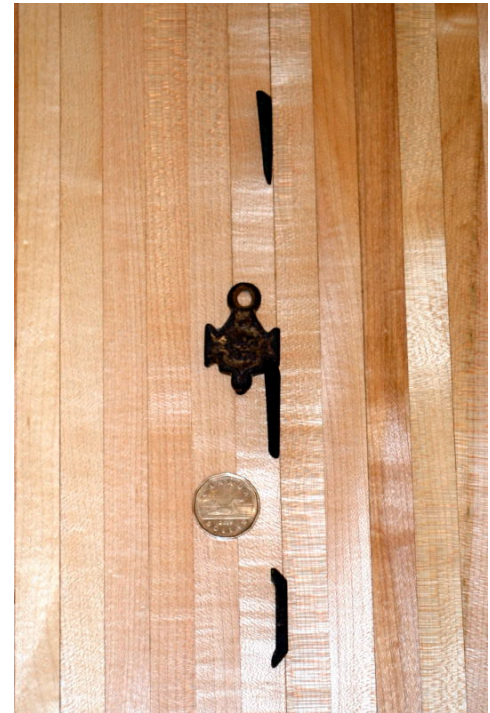


This 4½" x 2" snuff box was used in 1861 by the family of Lawson Staples' great grandmother from Ireland.

October's Curious Thing

What is this?

This item is used in a vertical orientation. The right-hand shot shows how it would engage while in use.



Submitted by Jane Lovell

Please contact angelacronk@gmail.com if you recognize the item. Tell us what it is called, what it is used for, during what era it was used, and anything else you can tell us about it.

Do you have some weird thing hanging around your home or barn? Take a photo of it and send it in – we can feature it here in a future issue.

From the Attic

We are looking for old photos and documents from Adolphustown, North and South Fredericksburgh. Just about any old photograph would be of interest: photos of people, homes, farms, schools, churches, or community or family events. Even if you do not know the people or places in the photos, maybe someone else in the community does. Old publications relating to township businesses, schools and churches often contain fascinating details of life in their era.

Some items we are currently looking for:

OLD PHOTOS or Real Photo POSTCARDS:

- The Adolphustown Town Hall
- The South Fredericksburgh Town Hall at Sillsville
- The U.E.L. Cheese Factory, Adolphustown
- St. Paul's Church, Main Street Adolphustown
- The Old Store at Adolphustown
- The Old Hotel at Adolphustown
- Conway Store
- Conway Wharf
- Phippen Cheese Factory
- Fredericksburgh Train Station
- McDowall Presbyterian Church
- Camp Le Nid
- Glen Island

Other Correspondence:

- Letters or postcards bearing postmarks from local towns and villages
- Letters from political figures such as Sir W. Laurier, Diefenbaker, etc.
- Correspondence from someone serving overseas during either WWI or WWII

BOOKLET:

- Constitution and Roll of Officers and Members of Camp Le Nid, 1902

If you are looking for any specific photos or documents, let us know and we will add it to our "Attic" list.

Newly added items will be highlighted in blue!

Contribute to *The Neighbourhood Messenger*

We publish *The Neighbourhood Messenger* 3 times a year: in February, May and October. If you have an old photograph or newspaper clipping to share, a story to tell, or an event to publicize, let us know. Submissions for the May issue can be sent to jane.lovell@kos.net anytime before the end of April 2014.

Contributors to this issue:

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All uncredited photographs supplied by Jane Lovell