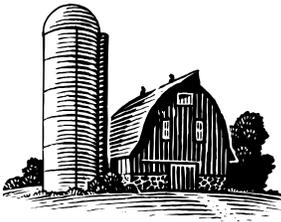


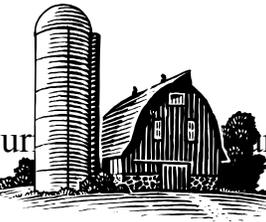
Cornwall Township Historical Society

May 2006



NEWSLETTER

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A New Chapter

I would like to welcome you all to the beginning of a new chapter in for the Cornwall Township Historical Society's Newsletter. Marland and Pearl Murray have decided to retire after publishing 52 incredible newsletters since June of 1994 and I have volunteered to take over. My name is Wendy Fox and I live in Greely, Ontario. I first became interested in the Cornwall Township Historical Society during the Doors Open of 2005.

My grandfather was Bill Lawson (son of Sam Lawson) of St. Andrew's West. Unfortunately I didn't have the pleasure of meeting my grandfather as he passed away before I was born.

Being a part of the Historical Society has allowed me to learn more of the Lawson family and the

A Great Big Thank You

Marland and Pearl Murray have decided to retire after publishing 52 incredible newsletters since June of 1994.

Your attention to detail and ability to create an informative and incredibly interesting story is unsurpassed. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for an amazing 12 years. It just won't be a newsletter without a story written by the two of you. I know in my heart that if I can create a newsletter half as good as what the two of you have put out 52 times in 12 years, I just might be able to do this. You know, you're always welcome to write a story or two between making violins.



Thank
You!

President's Pen

At the April 25th general meeting of the Cornwall Township Historical Society, it was agreed to postpone any activity commemorating Simon Fraser's three years of exploration (1806-1808) until 2008.

Maureen McAlear established a Stone Fence Restoration Committee. An initial meeting was held on site Wednesday May 3rd at 7pm. Mr. Dan Pilon, Public Works Manager for the Township of South Stormont was also present. The meeting concluded in the vestry with numerous questions remaining. It was agreed that a site meeting with the contractor Alain Cleroux would be beneficial. Ranald McDonell contracted Mr. Cleroux and a meeting is to be held on Saturday May 13th at 10am in the pioneer graveyard.

- Ranald McDonell



1849 Gold Rush

Last weekend Marland told a story of his grandfather, William...

In 1849, William left home at the tender age of 17 along with three cousins to try their luck at the California Gold Rush.

They traveled by boat down the Atlantic coast to Panama. Now, crossing Panama was quite the challenge back in the day as the Panama Canal had yet to be built. The only cross to the Pacific Ocean was by negotiating with the natives to take them down the local rivers and swamps. Once they reached the Pacific there were so many people with the hopes of striking it rich in California that it a month long wait before achieving passage up to San Francisco.

Once staking his claim, William did his best. Although he didn't strike it rich, he didn't do too badly either.

After some time he decided to return home but the cousins who traveled down with him decided to stay in California. As it happens with all gold rushes a lot of

gambling, thieving and murder follows the “get rich quick” dream. Unfortunately it means every for himself. Now, William was one of the lucky ones as he managed to not only find some gold but he also managed to find a travel companion to accompany him on the long trek home. It on the way home that they encountered some thieves and the companion was killed. It is unknown just what happened but William made it to safety into Montana.

It was from Montana that William walked home. In case you were wondering, that is not a typo. He did in fact walk home from Montana.

Arriving in his hometown, he walked into the local hotel looking for a ride out to the family home. Sitting across the room eating lunch was his Father. So he wandered over and asked for a ride into Martintown, his Father not recognizing him granted a ride.

Leaving home at 17, having never been expected to return, and arriving at 23 - 24 years old having walked from Montana, I wouldn't have recognized him either.

Of course William decided to play along and didn't tell his Father who he was. So when the buggy was pulled over to the side of the

road, he said “I think I know someone who lives down this road.” He continued with this until they arrived at the family home when he revealed who he really was.

Life carried on, working on the farm, getting married, raising a family until the hands of time fast forward to when William reached 73 years young.

It was at this time he decided that a branch from the maple tree in the front yard was blocking his view. So when Marland's father left for work, Marland's grandfather climbed the tree to remove the troublesome limb. Unfortunately he fell out of the tree and passed away 2 days later.

Not long after an image of a face seems to have appeared on the tree. Here is a picture of what is left of the tree including the “image”. We'll leave the rest up to you.

