

# BRUCE BULLETIN

THE BRUCE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Box 1083, Port Elgin, ON N0H 2C0

NOVEMBER 2021

VOLUME 32, ISSUE 4

ISSN 1184-7387

## From the President

Hello Members,

If the number of leaves on the ground is any indication that we are much closer to winter than we are to summer, then I suggest that it's time to change your vehicle tires, remember where you put the snow shovels, purchase several bags of ice salt and make sure that your boots are high enough to get you through the predicted deep snowbanks in the coming months.

It is also time for our Annual General Meeting (**AGM**), being held via ZOOM, on Monday November 22 at 7 p.m. By now you will have received either a phone call or email message seeking member nominations or members who would let their names stand for office at that meeting. It is still not too late for you to do that. Please submit names to me by November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Once I am satisfied that we have no further nominations, I will ask the Executive Committee for approval of the proposed **Slate of Officers** for 2022/23. At the same time we hope to approve a revised copy of the **Bruce County Genealogical Society By-Laws and Duties of the Executive Committee**. Once approved both documents will be sent to each of you for your feedback before the **AGM**. I will call for a motion at the **AGM** to elect the **Slate of Officers** (as approved) and another motion to adopt the revised **By-Laws and Duties of the Executive Committee**.

I look forward to seeing you soon,

**Glenys Johnson**

[glenysjohnson07@gmail.com](mailto:glenysjohnson07@gmail.com)

**November 22nd AGM for Bruce County Genealogical Society at 7pm**

**Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89637710212>**

**or phone +1 647 374 4685 Canada using Meeting ID: 896 37710212**

## A NEW MEMBER ASKS FOR HELP!

### Lorraine Roy would love to hear from you!

I am rather new to genealogy but always been interested in history. Since retiring, I have had lots of time to look into my family's past. I have been all over the place tracing my mother's Irish and Scottish ancestors and my dad's Hungarian ancestors, with the result being that I have a lot of facts dealing with dates and names but little background information. I would desperately like to flesh out these ancestors so that I could really know something about their lives.

**My GGGG grandparents, Evander McLeod** born around 1750 and **Mary McGregor** lived on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland. Their son, my **GGG grandfather Donald McLeod**, born around 1782, and GGG grandmother **Henrietta McLeod** (1794- ), also called Effie (maiden and married name were McLeod) lived in Tolsta Chaolais on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland.

They and their 6 children were part of a large exodus to Canada in 1851 settling in Huron Township. That must have been an exciting but scary time. Traveling across the ocean to a strange country, not only **not** speaking English but having to learn the necessary skills to survive. It must have been helpful that they were toughened by hardships living on the Isle of Lewis. My GGG grandfather died the following year leaving Effie and 6 children on their own. **Their fourth child was Donald (1826-1896) who married Isabella MacDonald (1834-1920).** Both immigrated to Canada on the same boat from the Isle of Lewis. Her parents were John MacDonald (1804-1883) and Ann Matheson (1812-1891). Both emigrated from Upper Shader, Isle of Lewis. It was a second marriage for both, and they went on to have 13 children when they combined their two families.

**Donald and Isabella had 9 children.** 1. Catherine (1859-1917), married Murdock Matheson (1853-1925) and lived in Southampton, ON. 2. John (1860-1949) married Margaret Stevenson and moved to Rosedale, B.C. where he at first operated a blacksmith shop and later took up farming. 3. Donald (1863-1940) married Margaret McKinnon staying in Ripley, Ontario. 4. Margaret (Maggie) married James Duncan and moved to Vancouver, B.C. **5. My Great grandmother Mary (1870-1962)** came to Rosedale B.C. to visit her brother John. On a neighbouring farm she met Isaac Henderson and were soon married. My Great grandfather Isaac had emigrated from Donegal, Ireland. He loved music, dancing and mountain climbing. He was so fond of Mt. Cheam, being the first white man to climb the mountain (which he climbed over 28 times) that he wanted to get married at the top of the mountain, but Mary said no to that. My Great grandfather Isaac died suddenly of a heart attack in 1915 leaving Mary with the farm and 4 children under the age of 10. She could have gone to New Westminster to live with her sister or to Langley to live with another brother, 6. Malcolm (died 1946), but she was determined to stay on the farm and raise her children there. Mary was a very independent, strong-willed lady much loved by her children and grandchildren. We still have her long braid of hair which



Isabella [MacDonald] McLeod

she cut off one day after coming in from a long day of milking and caring for the cows! I'm only sorry I didn't personally know her better, but my mom had a very close bond and from mom's memories I have learned to admire this lovely lady.



Mary and Maggie

The last three children were 7. Colin who died in 1910 in Langley, B.C. 8. Henrietta (1877-1942) who married Donald Matheson and lived in Vancouver, B.C. and 9. Annie (1882-1929) who married Kenneth McKenzie (1875-1960) and lived in Goderich, Ontario.

As you can see, I have a lot of dull dates, but I would like to get a better picture of these ancestors.

**If after reading this, you know anything about the McLeod's and MacDonald's I would be very interested in learning more.**

Please email me - [lorraine.roy@telus.net](mailto:lorraine.roy@telus.net)



**BRUCE COUNTY**  
museum & cultural centre

33 Victoria Street North,  
Southampton, Ontario N0H 2L0  
1-866-318-8889, [brucemuseum.ca](http://brucemuseum.ca)

### **News from the Bruce County Archives**

*Deb Sturdevant, Archivist*

*Sue Schlorff, Archival Assistant*

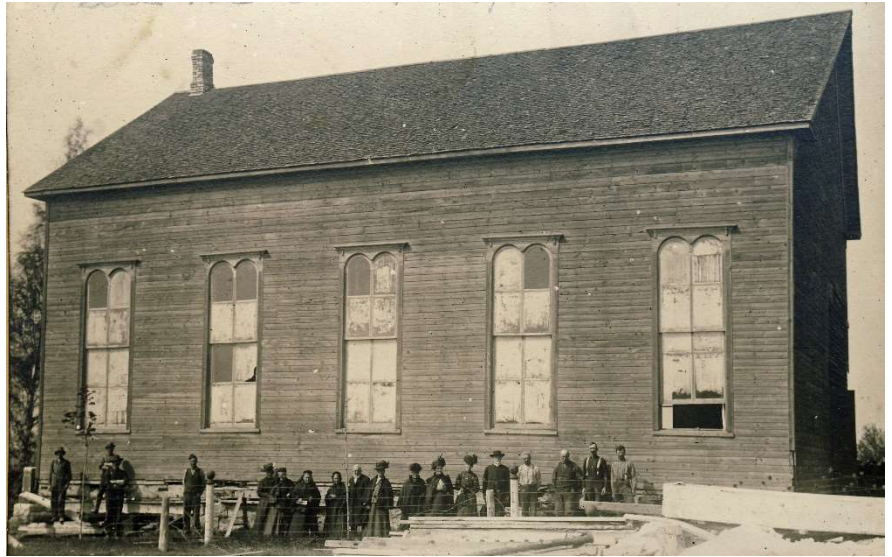
*Heather Callaghan, Archival Assistant*

The "A Tapestry of Voices" exhibit at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre explores themes that touch the lives of speakers of every language in Canada, and answer questions like: How have the languages of Canada changed over time? What happens when languages come in contact? -and- How can our languages be maintained for future generations?

How has the culture or language of your ancestors influenced your family? Several archival items are on display until the end of 2021, highlighting a few of the languages historically and currently spoken in the area. The Ojibway – English vocabulary book was written by M.B. Madwayosh, First Nation Interpreter, for J. Craig, Southampton, around 1859. The "Dem Lieben Kinde" German children's book was originally given to nine-year-old F. Roy Dickison of Carrick Township in December 1908. The official French language is represented by the Ontario High School French Reader used by William Melville Johnstone in the early 1920s in Pinkerton and a conversation manual used by Paisley-born Daniel Roppel overseas during the First World War.

**Continued on next page**

Our communities continue to knit a tapestry of languages; however, the dominant languages spoken here have gradually changed over the years. The 2016 census identified over 60 different “mother tongue” languages spoken or understood in Bruce County, including German which was then spoken by 2,040 people. Scottish Gaelic, on the other hand, was identified as a mother tongue by only five people in 2016, but previously by many more during the pioneer period when it was a dominant language in the County.



In “Tapestry of Voices,” you may view a Gaelic-English dictionary owned by John MacKinnon (1832-1919) and listen to Finnie MacKinnon (1888-1966) sing “Fear a’ Bhata” (“The Boatman”). This, and similar, songs were sung or hummed slowly, and with feeling, as one rowed a boat, as “Doc” MacLean would put sheaves band to band into a threshing machine, or at a neighbourhood “bee” when the chickens were being plucked. Finnie always hummed or whistled a Gaelic tune while walking to the barn or cleaning out a box stall, and Gaelic was always heard when he met with the MacLean neighbours on Concession 11 Kincardine Township. The largest and most homogeneous group of Gaelic speakers consisted of 109 families, from the Isle of Lewis, who settled on three concessions in Huron Township, an area still known as the “Lewis Settlement.” Many were former fishermen, and only with strength and perseverance did they clear their land and set up their farms. Other areas, such as Kincardine Township, also had concentrations of Gaelic speakers with representation from almost all Highland areas in Scotland. The Gaelic language and music continues to be remembered through resources at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, local Pipe Bands, and Scottish Festivals.

We want to see the culture of all Bruce County residents represented in our Collection! If your language is not represented among our artifacts, please consider donating an item to the BCM&CC representing your language and/or experiences in Bruce County.

Contact [archives@brucecounty.on.ca](mailto:archives@brucecounty.on.ca)

or Archivist Deb Sturdevant 226-909-2426 to discuss a possible donation.

Sources: MacKinnon, Archie. “Gaelic in a Bruce County Tiree Settlement: Some Recollections of Archie MacKinnon, 2007; MacKinnon, Archie. “Gaelic in the Bruce” BCHS Yearbook 1967.



## Bruce County Genealogical Society's November Webinar

### These Poppies Really Rock

With Jan Briggs-McGowan and Deb Sturdevant

2021 is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Poppy as a symbol of Remembrance in Canada, and Jan made it her personal project to paint a poppy rock to place on the grave of every veteran buried in the two main cemeteries in Walkerton.

Join us as she talks about using local newspaper clippings, on line sources and reaching out to the community to find those who served our county and our Allies. Jan also adds her techniques to paint 500 poppies on rocks, plus what happened next.

Joining her will be Deb Sturdevant, Archivist at Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre to talk about *Bruce Remembers*.

**Date and Time: Monday, November 8, 2021 at 7PM EDT**

**Register:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_OSHDG7hMQd2BruBQifqv-A](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_OSHDG7hMQd2BruBQifqv-A)

Or email [BCGSWebinars@gmail.com](mailto:BCGSWebinars@gmail.com)



## Bruce County Genealogical Society's December Webinar

**"To encourage, bring together and assist those interested in the pursuit of family history and to preserve our Ontario genealogical heritage."**

Janice is a proud 8th-generation Canadian, with English, German, Irish, Welsh and First Nations ancestry. She is going to tell you a few stories about what she has learned over the last year plus and make a few suggestions for how she thinks all of us in the genealogy community can do a better job of embracing diversity and inclusion and why it's a great idea.

Janice is a professional genealogist based in Toronto. Her expertise includes Upper Canadian history, Ontario criminal justice records, turning bare bones genealogies into shareable family stories, and using genealogy gifts and games to create a legacy.



Janice Nickerson

**Date and Time: Monday, December 6, 2021 at 7PM ET**

**Register:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_qAaVCRWOShGyqifh0v6viA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qAaVCRWOShGyqifh0v6viA)

Or email [bcgswebinars@gmail.com](mailto:bcgswebinars@gmail.com)

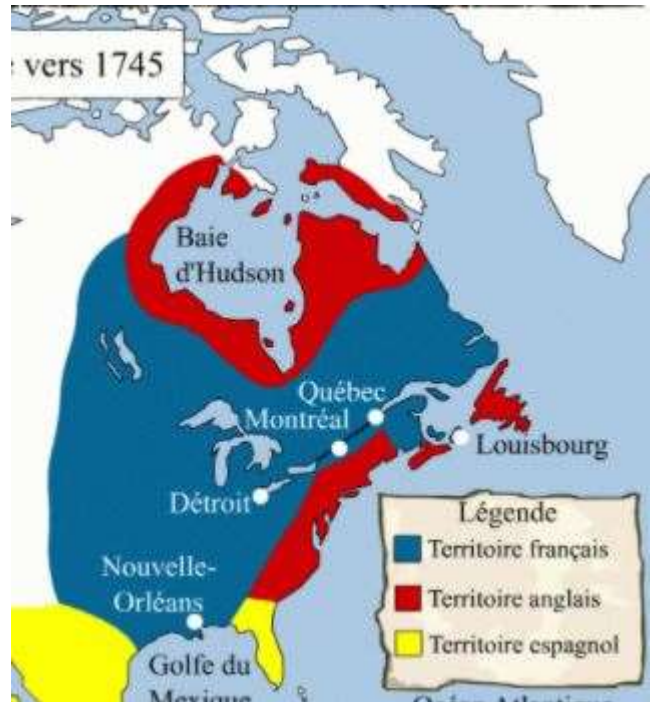
## Bruce County Genealogical Society's January 2022 Webinar

### Researching French Canadian Heritage

You likely already know John Kaminski from his presentation earlier this year regarding tracing Eastern European roots. He has given the AGEN20 (Adele's Genealogy 2020) bug to his wife and has increased his researching knowledge by helping Adele trace her French Canadian heritage. Using at least 6 online sources, they have been able to trace Adele's maternal lineage through documentation back to the early 1700's, almost all exclusively born in Nouvelle France.

John and Adele have not pursued much farther back than her 7th great grandparents, but know there are a few Acadian and French links, including Filles du Roi, convicted salt smugglers and military personalities.

**It has been a wild ride through Canadian history not taught in the classrooms!**



**Date and Time: Monday, January, 2021 at 7PM ET**

**Register:** [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_0pmG3uS-S\\_WM8o5mByxk2w](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0pmG3uS-S_WM8o5mByxk2w)

**Or email [bcgswebinars@gmail.com](mailto:bcgswebinars@gmail.com)**

### Bruce County District Women's Institute

#### By Judy MacKinnon

The Women's Institute first formed on February 19, 1897 at Squire's Hall, Stoney Creek, Ontario. At a meeting in Guelph, Mrs. Adelaide Hunter Hoodless spoke to a group of men. She told them they were more concerned about the health of their livestock than the health of their children. Erland Lee was in that audience, and he asked Mrs. Hoodless to speak at a "Ladies Night" at Saltfleet Township Farmers Institute on February 12, 1897. She told the group, she felt there was a need for an organization to help women with homecraft and mothercraft. So, a meeting was called. They expected about 35 ladies but 101 showed up - the one was Erland Lee, himself! The Women's Institute began. We are now a worldwide organization, and the motto is for "Home and Country".

One Project that the Women's Institute took on, is the recording of Local History. They are called "Tweedsmuir Community Histories". During Lord Tweedsmuir's term as Governor-General of Canada, his wife, Lady Tweedsmuir spoke at a meeting in Leeds County and suggested that there was a need for preserving the history of Canada. She felt that in 1936, it would be easy to record the history of your area as Canada was in reality a new country. Thus, the Branches of Ontario Women's

Institute began a very valuable task to record history of the area in which they live.

Here in Bruce County, the Members have recorded a tremendous amount of local history which includes many volumes agriculture, village history, council, family history, veterans, Women's Institute history, church, school, photos and much more. Some volumes had been microfiched and microfilmed. However, in 2001, The Bruce County District Women's Institute decided to photocopy existing volumes with 1 copy for the Branch, 1 for County Library and 1 for County Archives. So, we leased a photocopier and began the task of photocopying the original volumes. At that time, we had 66 branches but not every branch did a Tweedsmuir book. So, we made a brief summary, in order that those Branches would still be included.

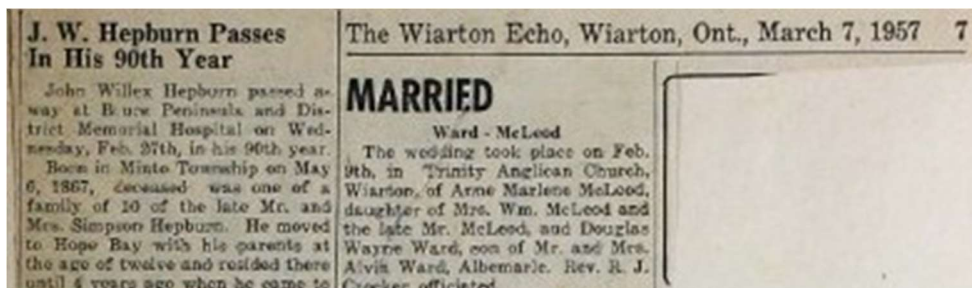


Then in 2004, Federated Women's Institute of Ontario teamed up with Ontario Genealogy Society to digitize our Tweedsmuir Histories. Bruce

County was selected first because we had already gathered our books for photocopying. So, I scheduled a timetable for books to be brought to the County Museum to start. Members helped with opening and closing the volumes to be done which amounted to 175 volumes and 26,000 pages. However, OGS ran out of funds and FWIO had the material returned to them.

In the fall of 2016, the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario were awarded funding from the Library and Archives Canada through their Documentary Heritage Communities Program. This was a three-year project with \$100,000.00 per year to help us digitize more Tweedsmuir collections and other record books and add to our Virtual Archives. The company to do the work was Image Advantage in Mallorytown, ON. They were a great company to work with - they picked up the material, digitized it and returned the original documents to us.

However, before any books could go, there was a certain amount of preparation. All the books had to be found, volumes numbered with Branch name, pages counted in each separate volume. While we were gathering for this project, we also gathered minute books and other W.I. material as some Branches were disbanded and we needed to close out their volumes. Each active Branch was responsible for getting their books in order so I could do up the sheets that stated the Branch, Volume



No., number of pages. It was an interesting process but by September 25, 2019, Tweedsmuir Community Histories were ready to go

I filled 21 Rubbermaid tubs with 170 Tweedsmuir Community



Histories with approximately 21,000 pages to do. Each tub had to have a sheet stating the Branches and Volumes inside plus there was a sheet that had to be put in each volume as well. I worked with Linda Mitchell, FWIO Digitizing Co-ordinator who lives in the Kingston area. Lots of emails and phone calls to be sure we were getting everything in order. In fact, one day I called her and asked if it was snowing in the area. Dedication, I would say, she had her work with her in Florida as she had many books over the province to see they were ready for pick up etc.



Elsinore School 1892  
with all the children's names listed!

The Tweedsmuir Books were returned in July 2020 to the Bruce County Museum and Culture Centre and Archives. Then I had to go through the books again to check for privacy concerns before these could be put online. The copyright of the material remains with the Women's Institute of Ontario, namely the Branch should be mentioned as the ladies in that Branch did the work.

If more funding becomes available, the Minute Books of Branches will be digitized as well. The Minute Books also contain a

wealth of information and are fun to read. Like back in the early years up to about 1970's the women were referred to Mrs. Joe Brown, now our first name is used.

As a Member of Williscroft Women's Institute for over 50 years, I have always enjoyed the history of the Area. This project of getting the Tweedsmuir Community Histories digitized was not really work but a work of sharing the History of Bruce County that dedicated W.I. members have done over the years.

Check out the **Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario:** <https://fwio.on.ca>

**You can search for the Branch where your family lived by clicking on the link:**  
<https://collections.fwio.on.ca/search>

**A big THANK YOU to Judy MacKinnon for all her work to preserve the WI books of Bruce County. *The photos in this piece were taken from FWIO website.***



**The Secrets of the Radar Museum**  
**Was aired on September 13 2021. Still available on “For Members”**

**Research by Glenys Johnson**

Of course, like any inquisitive genealogist, as soon as you mentioned someone from Chesley, I had to research him. Why... because I live in Chesley. Russell Clifford Adolph (of Swiss descent) was born on July 26, 1913, in Chesley to Henry Edward & Isobel (Isabella) (Addison) Adolph. They lived on Long St. His parents were married on September 30, 1904, in Elderslie Township. The family was Methodist. His father was a carpenter who may or may not have worked at one of the furniture factories in town.

Russel was taking a radio repair course when Canada entered the war in 1939. He enlisted in the Air Force, was sent for radar training and served as a radar mechanic. His first post was on the south coast of England, then was transferred to the mountains above Hong Kong where he was taken as a prisoner of war by Japan. He was released at the end of the war. (Taken from Bruce Remembers.)



Russell came home after the war to Chesley where he worked as a general labourer. Voters lists indicate that he and his wife Barbara were still in Chesley in 1957. By this time, he was a clerk. I have no idea where and for whom. By 1963 he was clerking in Walkerton.

As you indicated he was imprisoned by the Japanese. Records say from March 8, 1942 until September 2, 1945. I'm sure that experience never left him.

The Adolph family are buried in the Chesley Cemetery.

Row 11 ADOLPH - Henry Edward 1878 – 1961, his wife Isabella Addison 1879 – 1954:

Russell Clifford Adolph 1913 – 1986, wife Barbara Isobel Campbell 1924-1994

**Research by Patrick Lengyl**

John Turner went to war circa 1939 and was seconded by the British, presumably because of some aptitude (According to Maya Hirschman, most of the recruits had ham radio interest prior to the war). He was put in charge of a radar station in Cornwall and remained there for the duration of the war. He had a team of about a dozen women working for him who operated the equipment. He was billeted out to a nearby farmhouse and was given a Sten gun and had to walk the however many miles each day to and from the radar station, alone, but armed. The British, unlike the Canadian military, did not pay their soldiers and because he had been seconded, he had to live in England with no income for the entire war. The family sent him food, like chocolate because it was allowed, and he traded it for goods/services as needed. As with most, their father didn't discuss the war much at all after returning. He did donate a lot of his stuff – uniform, etc. – to the museum in Winnipegosis but it remains closed for the pandemic, and I've not been able to locate anyone who can access it and help flesh out the details.

John Turner's grandson is Dan Turner in Southampton, Ontario!

## BEST NEWS

### KEEP THE LIGHT BURNING

By Cori Mordaunt, one of our authors from the August Webinar

**Winner of The Word Award for Young Adult General Market Fiction, announced September 28, 2021.**



**Congratulations Cori!**

***COSTUME and fashion are not synonymous terms. Fashion is often regulated by caprice, and its changes are so frequent that we keep a monthly record of them. The laws that regulate costume are less mutable; they depend on the progress of the arts and on the climate and policy of the countries.***

[*Costume in All Ages*, ---. Godey's Lady Book and Magazine, 1860, page 59]

	<b>Men's Clothing</b>	
--	---------------------------	--

*Continued from August Bulletin*

During the nineteenth century, however, fashion did not change as dramatically for men as it did for women. Obvious changes included the general style and colour of clothing. Starting at the beginning of the century, men's fashions became more muted and conservative than in the previous century.

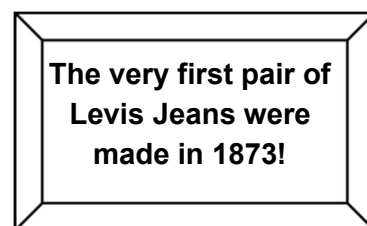


Image: Man's Morning Coat Suit from Eaton's Fall and Winter 1894-95

A nineteenth century man's clothing might include trousers, pantaloons, waistcoats, coats, and suits. Variations and nuanced styles existed within these larger categories. Depending on the area and the decade, some men wore cotton and flannel, a combination particularly common amongst rural workers

For their outer apparel, men might choose between a frock coat (longer style), or a morning coat (short in the front, but with longer tails at the rear). Additional options included the box coat (shorter without a waistline) and the sack suit coat (a loose style of coat). For the harsh Canadian winter, men might decide to wear an overcoat on top of their ensemble.

Additional options included the box coat (shorter without a waistline) and the sack suit coat (a loose style of coat). For the harsh Canadian winter, men might decide to wear an overcoat on top of their ensemble.



Gentlemen often preferred to carry an umbrella, walking stick or cane. By adding cravats, ties, collars

and cuffs, men could change the appearance of their outfits. Cravats were fabric pieces that tied around the neck, forming an attractive knot.



Image: Examples of a man's suit (left) and a man's overcoat (right). These sketches come from the 1892-3 Eaton's fall and winter catalogue.

Some men used these accessories to make their outfits more ornate. For example, 'dandies,' might insert padding into their chests or wear oversized cravats. In some cases, these pieces were so elaborate that the men could no longer nod their heads.

A man's hat was also an important element of fashion. In the early nineteenth century, men wore the top hat, which was narrow brimmed with a tall crown. This style of hat was made out of a variety of materials (including silk or beaver felt) and came in a variety of colours. The proper height and width of the crown would change throughout the century. Other popular hats included the homburg and the deerstalker. Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, who first appeared in print in 1887, famously wore a deerstalker hat.

The adult male clothing choices mark a strong contrast to that of a young boy. As infants, boys would wear dresses, only changing to trousers sometime between the ages of three and seven! Then they might wear a smock on top of pantaloons.

Boys' outfits also changed in fashion. During the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, one of the most popular outfits was the sailor suit. Although some Victorian couples might purchase new clothes for their wedding, not everyone could afford that expense. Instead, couples typically wore their 'Sunday Best' to the ceremony.

In most cases, the couple would continue to wear their wedding attire on other social occasions. As such, women's wedding dresses would vary in colour. While many couples now purchase a specific white gown, or rent a black tuxedo for their nuptials, this was not always the case. In fact, the tradition of wearing white did not exist at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The recent wedding between Prince William and Katherine Middleton attracted considerable media attention. Her wedding dress focussed attention upon her 'fashion sense'.

Royalty has always exerted substantial influence upon fashion trends and Queen Victoria was no exception.

In 1840, Queen Victoria married in a white satin dress. Her decision had an effect on fashion, solidifying the colour's dominance in wedding tradition.



As Godey's Lady Book attested, the nineteenth century did indeed witness rapid changes in what constituted 'fashionable' attire. Each trend, large or small, resulted from some catalyst, whether personal taste, social customs or a desire to demonstrate personal wealth.

Fashion is much more than costume or clothing. The adoption of fashionable clothing is designed to communicate an intended message about the wearer. What will the future say about our current wardrobe?

***At the time of this reprint, Rebecca Hicks has an M.A. in History from McMaster University and a M.A. in Museum Studies from the University of Toronto.***

*Thank you to Dave and Joan MacDougall's granddaughter Rebecca Hicks for sharing this article with us.*



Image: Queen Victoria's  
Wedding Dress courtesy of  
National Geographic.

## Lewis Family of Elderslie Township

By Mary MacKay

On February 28, 1876, John Lewis and his wife Flora Jane Drummond with their two little boys James 3 and William 2, left their home in Mono Township, Simcoe County, and moved to Lot 7, Concession 10 Elderslie Township, Bruce County. They were not the first family to settle on this lot. Twenty-two years previous William Rusk had brought his new bride to this farm which at that time was all bush. In 1957, James MacKay, a great-grandson of John and Flora Lewis brought his bride to this lot.



When the Lewis's arrived 70 acres were cleared with 30 acres still in bush. The first dwelling had disappeared when William Rusk built a sturdy house of barn frame style. It measured 24x18 and had a front door that faced the road and a back door they went in and out all the time. Inside was a big kitchen on the east side and two smaller rooms off the kitchen. Two doors hid the stairways, one to 3 bedrooms upstairs which John and Flora would need when their family grew bigger. The other stairs



led to the small cellar which they used to keep milk cool. The house was too small for William Rusk's family of eight, but it was perfect for John and Flora.

John Lewis gave William Rusk \$2000 for this 100-acre farm and William Rusk kept a mortgage for \$2500. Life was good. Their first child born in Elderslie, was a daughter, Cassie in October of 1876, followed by another son, John in 1878, Joseph in 1881, Margaret in 1883 and Ella in 1885.



One of the first things John and Flora did was plant a huge orchard west of the house and between the house and the road. They built a hen house and a shed for their cattle and horses. In 1878 the stoop at the back of the house was replaced by a summer kitchen and a few years later they built a woodshed to the east of the back kitchen.

The first disaster hit the family in 1884 when three-year-old Joseph came down with the measles. The doctor called it Black Measles because the infection went in instead of out

as a skin rash and he had black splotches all over his skin and died.

The second disaster hit four years later when John contracted consumption. Since he knew there was no cure, he made a plan and wrote his will. His plan was that the three boys would work together until each one had a farm of his own. He bought Lot 6 across the road. That was to be for James, the oldest, but they all worked to pay off the mortgage.

John Lewis was ill about eight months and died October 20, 1888 age 48, leaving Flora with six children, ages 16,15,12,8,5 and 3. His will may have been controlling but it was his way to look out for his family

when he couldn't be there.

The legal wording was a bit hard to follow but they understood their father's plan and followed it until each son had a farm all paid for. The girls were to help their brothers, and each receive \$100 when they got married.

James, the oldest son was the only son to marry. In 1904 he married Mary Miller Park and they lived on the farm next door, Lot 6 Concession 10 which



*Johnny, Ella, Flora (née Drummond) MacKay, Cassie, Willy*

belonged to his brother, Johnny. In 1918 James sold his Lot 6 and moved up the road to Lot 14.

John Lewis the youngest son moved into the house where James had been living on his farm and his sister Cassie kept house for him until her marriage in 1921.

Willie Lewis stayed on the home farm and made a home for his mother and sisters. His sister, Margaret, married William Wrightson and went to live in Bruce Township. His youngest sister, Ella, taught school for many years and retired to care for their mother when Flora had a stroke. Ella never married.

Flora Jane Lewis died December 15, 1932, age 83 and is buried beside her husband in Salem Cemetery. She followed her husband's plan and kept her family together for over forty years.

**A Lake Huron Tragedy**  
**Part 1 - The SINKING OF THE ERIE BELLE**  
***Researched and submitted by: Glenys Johnson***



If you grew up around Kincardine and swam at Boiler Beach, you spent time crawling over *the old boiler* without knowing its history. For those like me, it was just a fun adventure. But for the crew of the ill-fated *Erie Belle* tug it was a very different kind of adventure that would take the lives of four crew men on November 21, 1883.

The tug originally named the *Hector* was built in Cleveland, Ohio in 1862 with money supplied by the Northwestern Insurance Company. Her first duties were to haul raw materials and food stuffs necessary for the tremendous trade generated by the American Civil War, the length and breadth of the Great Lakes.

The *Hector* was purchased by C.H. Carey of Detroit, Michigan on October 31, 1865 and sailed the lakes without incident until May of 1867. While attempting to pull a grounded schooner into deeper

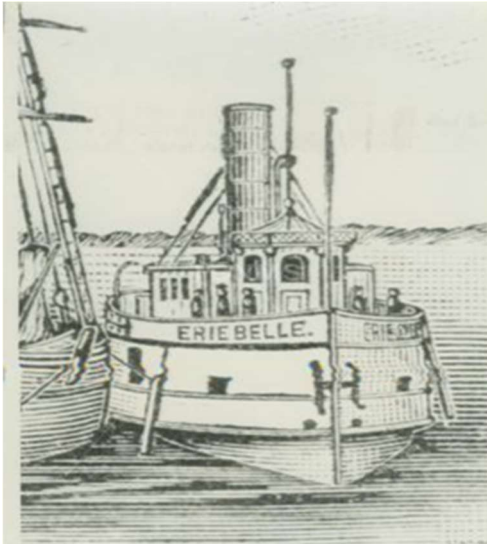
water at Long Point, Lake Erie, her engineer allowed the water gauge to reach too low a stage and her boiler was damaged by over-heating. No further incidents occurred until 1873 when in early May, sparks ignited and burned the fore and main sails of her tow, the schooner *John Magee*, en route up Lake Huron.

*James H. Strachan* of Detroit purchased thirty-two shares of the *Hector* on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1873. In November of that same year, she struck a shoal in the Detroit River, filled with water and sank. It was written off by the insurance companies as a total loss of \$15,000.00 but was raised by her owners and put back into service.

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1878 the *Hector* was sold to *Nelson Whipple*, whose brother Seth was a noted fine marine artist. Whipple surrendered ownership in Detroit on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 1879 to *Daniel B. Odette* of Windsor, Ontario. On April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1879 by an Order-In-Council, the ship's name was changed to the *Erie Belle*. Odette had the vessel rebuilt and changed into a passenger boat. The *Erie Belle*, under the command of *Captain Laframboise*, became the third steamer to provide Pelee Island with

scheduled government mail service, as well as passenger and freight service.

On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 1880, *Captain Laframboise* suddenly gave up his command of the *Erie Belle* to purchase a steamer that would run in direct competition with the *Erie Belle*. But, less than a week later he was back at the wheel of the *Erie Belle*, for reasons unknown, leaving Leamington for Kingsville Harbour. After loading all of its passengers and freight, the steamer swung away from the dock clearing the M.C. Upper which was moored close by. The captain was unaware that the M.C. Upper's big anchor had been dropped outside the harbour. The *Erie Belle* snagged itself on the anchor but still headed



up the lake. The steamer travelled 5 miles before it was noticed to be taking on water. The water came in faster than the pumps could work, so the captain was forced to run for shore. The *Erie Belle* grounded in ten feet of water about a mile east of Canfield's dock. Passengers and crew launched lifeboats and easily made it to shore. The *Erie Belle*, after much effort by divers and tugs, was raised in early May. The repair work was done in dry dock to make her ship worthy again at a cost \$500.00. Uninsured she was taken to Windsor and cut down into a tug.

An article in the Essex Record on Friday May 21<sup>st</sup> read: "*With her after cabins removed and housed in, she makes as fine a tug as seen on the river*". From this date on, her owners, *Odette & Wherry*, used her primarily in the wrecking and salvage end of

their operations.

The *Erie Belle* suffered another mishap in the summer or 1881 while she was towing a dredge and her scows up Lake Huron from Port Albert, to Bruce Mines. The tug broke her wheel.



In 1882 *Captain John Tobin* took over command of the tug. Little is known of the tug's activities during that year possibly due to inactivity. The spring, summer and early fall of 1883 passed by without incident until the 11<sup>th</sup> of November. The weather had been calm that month until the temperatures dropped and the winds on the lakes surged out of the west with hurricane force. Urgent requests went out for available tugs.

The *Erie Belle*, working in the Detroit River, arrived in Kincardine on November 20<sup>th</sup> to attempt to free the *J.N. Carter* which was grounded two miles south of the town. She harboured alongside the *John Martin*, which was captained by *John Cotton*, an old friend of *Captain John Tobin*. The crew of the *Erie Belle* stayed the night at the Walker House waiting for the winds and waves to abate. They did during the night, so both tugs pulled out of the harbour at 8 a.m. on Wednesday November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1883. The *John Martin* was bound for Sarnia and the 112-foot-long *Erie Belle* for the grounded schooner *J.N. Carter*.

According to Carl LaFrance, scuba diver and boat builder by profession notes that the *J.N. Carter* was on its last run of the season, heading home to Kincardine from Thessalon. She was not only loaded with lumber but extra men, broken machinery for repair and unneeded equipment for winter storage. It was so loaded that it sat 2 feet deeper in the water that it usually did when loaded. The boat obviously moved slowly as it left Thessalon but a good run home on a sunny morning was anticipated. But, as we know, the weather can change on a dime on our Great Lakes and this day



was to be no exception. To steady the boat on the now windy day, the ship's log<sup>1</sup> was deployed in case the weather closed in and the crew had to determine their position on the lake in zero visibility. The temperatures dropped and it began to snow but visibility was such that the Chantry Island Light could still be seen. The crew knew they were on route. They followed a plan used many times before because they were well aware the wind was behind them. It became apparent that they were not going to make it into the safety of the harbour, so the schooner was turned, heading down the lake. But in doing so and concentrating on sailing they forgot they were still towing the ship's log. When the *J.N. Carter* turned at the mouth of the harbour, the line of the ship's log went slack, and it sank to the bottom. When the line tightened again, the weight of the log ripped the fins off the ship.

Carl went on to say that south of Kincardine the water gets shallow a distance from shore. The water is about 20 feet deep but then gently rises to 8 feet. Because the ship was sitting so deep in the water and sailing at about 9 knots, the momentum of the schooner carried it far enough up on the reef and out of the water so as to prevent lifting and dropping and pounding it to pieces. The boat sailed on but just as they were about to turn around and head back to town, they ran aground about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from shore and about 2 miles from town. The crew was surprised about their predicament having sailed over the reef on many previous sailings but loaded as they were they now needed the assistance of a tug.

With no real load on the propeller, the engine was already going faster than it was designed for. It was only licensed for 65 pounds of steam. When the call for more steam came, the engine really started to wind up to 100 pounds of pressure. The engine began to seize, slowing it down. This caused the pressure in the boiler to rise faster than the steam engine could take away. When it got too high for the boiler to contain it exploded blowing the top off the boat. Debris was scattered in an area the size of 6-foot ball fields. Chunks of the boiler impaled themselves in the lake's bottom and what was left of the boat drifted across the deeper water and sank.

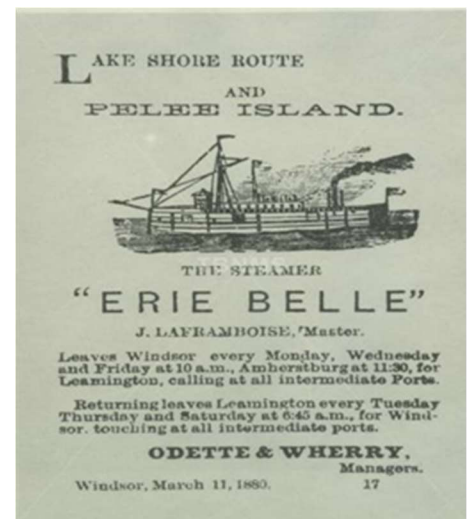
Rick Farquhar in his book: "Erie Belle- the Life and Death of a Steamship" cites the following recollection of James Gardiner (Jimmy the Bear): *"It was snowing hard, and Captain Tobin gave the order to build up steam for the hard pull the tug would need. With little luck in freeing the Carter,*



*engineer William Osgood charged the firemen to stoke it up more still. More heat, more steam, more pressure, harder work for the engine.*

*Then there was a burst of light, a roar of noise and a blast of cold air and the Erie Belle had blown apart.*

*Madness, wreckage, screams and cold wind were all around. And nothing I ever knew from that moment on could ever be the same. It was chaos for sure."*





Arriving at the scene were Captain Troy, James McGaw and J. Montgomery who indeed found that the boiler had exploded, and the ship had been blown to bits. Losing their lives aboard the *Erie Belle* were First Engineer, William Osgood aged 25 from Loraine, Ohio, Second Engineer Frank Eikenhurst age 32 from St. Louis Missouri, and fireman *William Sayles* aged 28 from Detroit, Michigan. It was later reported that a second fireman, William Johnston from Amherstburg, Ontario had also been killed. The Kincardine lifeboat manned by C.G. Ammond and J. Kompli and sent from Station Beach, rescued the tug's remaining crew struggling to survive in the cold waters of Lake Huron. Surviving the disaster were Captain John Edward Tobin, his brother and first mate William Tobin, watchman Daniel Finlayson, deckhands Henry Pocock, Frank Conroy, Isaac Drew, Mariner Shaw and Lewis Smith. The unnamed cook previously reported as dead had also escaped death but was dangerously scalded.



Three of the four volunteers who tried to rescue the crew of the ANN MARIA were McGaws. This picture was taken shortly after the ill-fated rescue attempt. From Left to Right: are Walter, "Big Tom" (seated) and John Jr.

The *Erie Belle* was valued at \$10,000.00 and was insured for \$7,000.00. Two weeks later another tug tried to pull the *Carter* out of the mud but failed to do so. As the lake froze, equipment and lumber was unloaded onto the ice. As a result, the boat came up 4 feet from the bottom. Then when the ice shifted in the spring, it sailed away into deeper water, its hull intact.



The boiler of the *Erie Belle* remained submerged for over 50 years when in 1934 the task to haul it from the lakes bottom was given to Charles MacPherson. He proposed that once raised it be moved to Victoria Park. The boiler would be painted and on it a plaque was to be placed telling the story of the *Erie Belle*. The boiler never made it any further than the shores of Lake Huron where remains resting on its side today

## 1. [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chip\\_log#cite\\_note-2](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chip_log#cite_note-2)

All nautical instruments that measure the speed of a ship through water are known as logs. This nomenclature dates back to the days of sail, when sailors tossed a log attached to a rope knotted at regular intervals off the [stern](#) of a ship. Sailors counted the number of knots that passed through their hands in a given time to determine the ship's speed.

***Part II, The Men of the Erie Belle will be in the February Bulletin 2022.***

***Brenda Montieth wrote us recently to let us know  
how her Family Search has gone.***

"I joined BCGS to learn more about the area and of course, in the hopes of being able to contact a family member perhaps researching our Thompson/Bryce family roots as well."

**UPDATE from previous Bulletins:** There could not have been ONE OTHER PERSON I would have wanted to talk to other than Glen. Can you just believe that? SERENDIPITY. Can you tell how excited I am? Years ago, I came across Glen's name in a Roots web post. The thread of conversation was with a Thelma H. Eventually I did connect with Thelma. However, her Thompson line intersected into our line but her roots were not my Thompson roots. I knew Glen's were. I knew this because of his Great Grandfather, Robert Thompson, buried in the Paisley Cemetery. He has two headstones, one of which says Born County Leitrim, Ireland. Years ago, when I started the research on this family line, this was the first definitive 'proof' I had of the county of origin in Ireland for my family. We have had a couple of email exchanges. He has been able to tell me that he has a part of the 1821 census from Ireland showing our family; I have been able to share with him that I can prove the existence of a sister that he was aware of but could not prove. Can I just also say, **it is so validating talking to someone that has been researching for over 50 years and he actually is backing up his research with sources!**



***CanGen Web Cemetery Project is under repair at the moment. They say that they'll be back! Unfortunately, our BCGS Cemetery Committee has been using this web provider to hold all our photos of cemetery stones. We'll be monitoring this closely.***

Here is what they wrote on October 19

October 19, 2021

**Website repair**

Just a short quick update on the status of the website.

First, yes it is returning. The problem, while small, is exceedingly time consuming to fix.

Unfortunately, we can't give it a time estimate. Soon is the best we can hope for.

In the interim you will notice the search features won't work and some of the pages look odd. Everything should be back to normal once full service is restored.

To be notified of updates you can subscribe to this [update blog](#) for email notifications or you can [follow us on Facebook](#).



Lolly Fullerton, Editor's Comments:

**THANK YOU TO THE WONDERFUL PROOFREADERS – Jan Briggs-McGowan, Anne Goeden, Daphne Kelly and Peter Wraight**