

The Newfoundland Historical Society



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NEWSLETTER

Winter 2001

President's Message

Executive 2000-01:

President,
Eleanor Dawson
Vice presidents,
Linda White
Joan Ritcey
Past president,
David Bradley
Treasurer,
Chris Butt
Recording secretary,
Frances Warren
Office manager
Mary Bridson

Members at Large:

Anita Best
Terry Bishop-Stirling
Karen Cole
Linda Cullum
Larry Dohey
Garfield Fizzard
William Frost
Rosemary Healy
James Hillier
Darrell Hillier
Fred Winsor

Committees

Publications:

Garfield Fizzard (chair)
David Bradley, *NF Quarterly*
Representative
Mary Bridson
Linda Cullum
Anne Hart
James Hillier
Darrell Hillier (editor)

Programme:

Terry Bishop-Stirling (chair)
Karen Cole
Rosemary Healy
Linda White
Fred Winsor

Membership:

Bill Frost (chair)
Mary Bridson
Larry Dohey

Welcome to the new year and the new century. In December the Newfoundland Historical Society reached a significant milestone by signing up its 500th member. Encouraged by this level of interest we anticipate another busy year. At this point I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Barbara Crosbie and Carol Mitchell as they step down from the executive. Over the past two years Barbara Crosbie chaired the successful "History in the School" committee, while Carol Mitchell did an admirable job of keeping our books in order.

In addition to sponsoring our numerous public events, the Newfoundland Historical Society is continuing its lobbying efforts on behalf of the heritage sector. With a leadership convention looming and a provincial election on the horizon, we must make every effort to bring the concerns of the heritage sector into the public forum. Elections are all about votes and the decisions which guide the formation of government priorities are based on demand - the squeaky wheel gets the grease. Collectively this sector represents a potent electoral force which we have not yet effectively harnessed. It is time for the heritage sector, its patrons and public, to make their voices heard in an unmistakable fashion during the upcoming campaigns. With less than \$100,000, the budget for the provincial heritage grants is grossly underfunded. When you consider that last year seventy-two groups competed for a share of that money, including the two provincial associations, MANL and ANLA, it is not difficult to realize how little there was for the local heritage groups. These community groups are remarkable success stories. They have woven themselves into the fabric of our communities by engaging volunteers and pooling limited resources to preserve and promote our heritage both for ourselves and for visitors. We all benefit from their work. The lame excuses and half-hearted commitments of our politicians are a challenge for us to rally Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in support of a strong commitment by our political leaders to our provincial cultural heritage and expression. Apathy or fatigue are not luxuries we can afford at this time. The Newfoundland Historical Society encourages you to join our efforts in making heritage concerns an issue in the forthcoming election campaigns.

Eleanor Dawson
President

Finance:

Chris Butt (chair)
Eleanor Dawson

History in the School

Curriculum:

Fred Winsor (co-chair)
Nfld Historical Society
Hope Squires (co-chair)
Beothuk Institute

Anita Best
Nfld Historical Society

Jim Hiller
Nfld Historical Society

David Bradley
Association of Heritage
Industries

Jean Brown
Wessex Society

George Chaulker
Heritage Foundation of
Nfld and Lab

Jessie Chisholm
Association of Nfld and
Lab Archives

Janet Story
Museum Association of
Nfld and Lab

Regional Committee:

Linda White (chair)
Darrell Hillier

Gordon Bradley
Bonavista South

Ivy White Tong
Bonavista North

Lorna Stuckless
Notre Dame Bay

Sandra Wheeler
West Coast

Doug Wells
South Coast

Robert Parsons
Burin Peninsula

Ken Tulk
Placentia Bay

Joan Fleming
Placentia

Betty Jerrett
Conception Bay North

Ross Dawe
Conception Bay South

Bob Balsom
Trinity South

David White
Trinity North

Maureen Sullivan
Southern Shore

Dale Kennedy
Northern Peninsula

Office News

Office Hours

The office is located in the basement of the Colonial Building and is accessible through the main entrance to the Provincial Archives. It is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 am to 4:15 pm. For researchers unable to make those times, arrangements can be made to consult files in the reading room of the Provincial Archives. Call or leave a message at (709) 722-3191; fax (709) 729-0578, or e-mail nhs@thezone.net

Membership

As of December 31, 2000, the membership stands at 504. Our official 500th member is Susan Chalker Browne, who signed up at the October 26 lecture, and she received a copy of our Confederation book along with the usual package. However, there are 136 members who still owe dues for this year. If you are one of them, you will find a reminder accompanying this newsletter. Please send in your cheque or Visa number as soon as possible so that you do not miss the next issue of the *Newfoundland Quarterly*.

Reference Statistics

From September 1 - December 14, 2000, there were 22 visitors to the office, 91 phone enquiries, and 37 written, faxed or e-mailed requests.

Obituaries

Garry Troake of Durrell, a member since 1998, was tragically drowned at Twillingate in October.

Raymond W. Guy of Musgrave Harbour, NHS Heritage Award winner, died November 24. [See page 3]

Donations to the Society's Collections

From member Frank Jones, his book *Looking for Captain Robert: The Jones Family of Trinity East, TB, Nfld.*, printed by the author, Feb. 2000.

From Mrs. Fox, via Dr. Shannon Ryan, three bankers' boxes of material, mostly manuscripts and notes of books, photocopied material, some tapes of lectures and a few photographs, belonging to her late husband Arthur Fox, who was an assistant secretary, and then Honorary Secretary of the Society from 1966 until his untimely death in 1977.

From Barry Wulff of Philomath, Oregon, a copy of his father's book published this year, *Bush Pilot Angler: A Memoir*, by Lee Wulff.

Obituary: Raymond W. Guy



The Society was saddened by the death of Raymond W. Guy of Musgrave Harbour on November 24, 2000, at the age of 88. Mr. Guy was a long time friend and correspondent of Bobbie Robertson, Office Secretary 1966-86, and a councillor of the Society in the 1970s. His career spanned service in the Royal Navy, business, politics, and gardening, but it was for his contribution to the written record of Newfoundland history, as author of winning entries in the Arts & Letters Competition, many newspaper articles, and several books of reminiscences about life in Newfoundland, that the Society presented him with a Heritage Award in 1998. His presentations at the *History of Sealing Symposium* in Newtown in 1998, and at the *Encounters With the Wolf Symposium* in St. John's in 1999, were electrifying, and brought the audience to its feet. Mr. Guy will be greatly missed by all who have been touched by his writing and oration.

For more on Raymond W. Guy see
the *Gander Beacon*:

www.rb.nf.ca/beacon/Dec18-00/articles/beafeat.htm

Heritage Foundation Board

The new board of the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador includes three of our regional members, Gordon Bradley of Bonavista, Betty Jerrett of Bay Roberts, and Robert Parsons of Grand Bank. The Society congratulates them all, and is glad to see that other organizations also recognise their worth.

Distinguished Teacher Awards

Doug Wells, regional member of the Newfoundland Historical Society for the South Coast, and a highly respected teacher and heritage enthusiast in Harbour Breton, was the Society's nominee in the 2000 Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History. Doug was short-listed from the 79 entries, and received an Honourable Mention Certificate. More information about the award is available through the web page of Canada's National History Society, which originated the awards in 1995, at:

www.historysociety.ca.

They will shortly be publishing lesson plans submitted by this year's finalists, and guide lines for future candidates are also listed.

Laird Rankin, Executive Director of Canada's National History Society, was awarded the Meritorious Service Cross by the Governor General in September, in part for his institution of the Distinguished Teaching Awards.

Heritage Canada Conferences

Heritage Canada has announced its upcoming annual conferences. October 13-15, 2001, in Toronto, the theme will be the economics of heritage conservation. September 26-28, 2002, in Halifax, the theme will be heritage tourism.

Report on the Fall 2000 Lecture Series

Dr. Christopher Sharpe started the Fall lecture season with an intriguing question - *Mr. Dunfield's Folly? The Development of Churchill Park Garden Suburb in St. John's, Newfoundland*. His lecture examined how concern about the dreadful slum conditions in the centre of St. John's in the 1920s onwards, developed into the building of a middle class model suburb outside the city boundaries twenty years later. Although the Churchill Park project did not create housing for slum dwellers, or even for many of the returning veterans it was later intended for, and the original concept of three self-contained villages along Elizabeth Avenue had to be abandoned because of escalating costs, Dr. Sharpe does not consider it a failure. Through the sheer force of his personality and confidence, Brian Dunfield, chair of the Commission of Enquiry and later of the St. John's Housing Corporation, achieved the orderly planning of an extended city with roads and sewer lines, green spaces and desirable neighbourhoods, without which later housing projects and expansion would have been difficult to implement.

In October we welcomed a special guest, Dr. Kenneth Osborne, Professor Emeritus of the University of Manitoba, who put into Canadian, international, and historical perspective for us a question that has been concerning the Society, and many others, recently - *Is there a crisis in history teaching?* His conclusion, following many years of research, is that rather than a life-threatening crisis, history teaching is in a serious chronic condition. These same concerns have been raised many times over the last hundred years, and none of the suggested solutions seem to have worked. Dr. Osborne feels that the best hope for improvement will come from the encouragement and organization of co-operative efforts by teachers and academics to give teachers confidence and up to date knowledge of their subject as well as teaching skills, and thus spark that very necessary interest in the subject among students. Additional funding for this lecture came from other organizations involved in the joint History in the School Curriculum Committee, the Beothuk Institute, the Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives, the Heritage Foundation, and the Association of Heritage Industries, as well as the History Department of Memorial University.

We closed the season at the end of November with a compelling portrait of a young Newfoundlander who was one of the first 500 to enlist in 1914, and who met an untimely death just a week after the battle of Beaumont Hamel in 1916. *The World War One Diaries of Owen Steele* was presented by Dr. David Facey-Crowther, who is editing the diaries for publication. Although officially forbidden, material such as diaries, photographs and letters of individuals involved in the First World War, have added a new dimension to our knowledge.

All the lectures were fairly well attended, with audiences of 60 to 70 people. Copies of the text of the first two lectures are in the Society's collection in the office, and an edited version of the November one should be available in the new year.

Mary Bridson

Heritage Canada Journalism Prize

The Heritage Canada Foundation announces the creation of the Heritage Canada Journalism Prize. This award is to be presented annually to a journalist, working in either the print or electronic media, whose coverage of heritage issues is judged to be outstanding. Through the introduction of this new component of their awards program, the foundation hopes to encourage and reward greater and better coverage of heritage issues in the media.

Nominations for the award will be accepted from individuals or organizations, provided that the nominator is not directly related to, employed by, or in any other way directly associated with, the journalist in question. These nominations, in turn, will be assessed by a national jury of outside experts similarly independent of the proposed candidate. The first Heritage Canada Journalism award will be presented in Toronto on October 13, 2001, at the Foundation's annual conference.

For information on this and other Heritage Canada awards, contact:

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www.heritagecanada.org

Donors 2000

The Society is very grateful for financial support received from the following friends and members during the year 2000. We also thank those who gave gift memberships to friends and family.

Marion Baker
Enid Barrett
Lynette Browne
Alan D. Cass
John H. Clarke
Howard & Leila Clase
Canon H. Rhodes & Mrs. Ruby Cooper
Mr. & Mrs. Norman Crane
Richard Crewe
John C. Crosbie
David Cumming
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John G. Fitzgerald
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Janet Story
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Dr. Frederic F. Thompson
Arthur J. Tomlinson
Jeffrey W. Vile
William H. Whiteley
Mrs. D.J. Williams



A Fisherman's Hut, Labrador
Holloway Studio
(Newfoundland Historical Society photograph, 7.02.106)

