

# Wolfville Historical Society Newsletter

Founded in 1941



VOLUME 11, ISSUE 2

DATE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2011

## Letter From the President

I am sometimes asked: "What does the Wolfville Historical Society do?" Rather than give a generalized statement of our activities I think the following list below might provide a better answer. All events/activities have taken place since January of this year, or are in the planning stages, and are in complete accord with our mandate to promote the collection and maintenance of records and artifacts related to the history of Wolfville and its surrounding communities. (Please visit our website at <http://wolfvillehs.ednet.ns.ca> for more detailed information.) The following is a *partial* list of WHS activities.

- ◇ Arranged public presentations of topics of historical interest
- ◇ Co-hosted the international UNICEF dinner held as part of "Nomination Grand Pré"
- ◇ Readied for imminent publication John Whidden's "Historical Walking Tours of Wolfville"

*Cont. on pg. 2*

## Fall Program...

**September 21:** "The History of Water Service in Wolfville"

presented by **Ford Spidle** and **Greg Kerr**.

Wolfville Fire Hall, 2 PM.

**October 21: Fall Fundraising Dinner—Wolfville Lions' Hall**

Guest Speaker – **Sara Beanlands**

"Dr. Andrew's Brown's 18<sup>th</sup> Century Diaries one of the earliest accounts of the Acadian Deportation" (details pg.7)

6:30 for 7:00 p.m. Ticket: \$30. (Tax receipt for \$15.)

Contact John Vaillancourt, (542-9766), John Whidden (542-5061) or Elizabeth Browne (542-2279) for tickets

**November 21:** "A History of Cookbooks"

presented by **Clara Jefferson**.

Wolfville Fire Hall, 2 PM.

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# Summer Musings

By Victoria Gerrard

Hello, I'm Victoria Gerrard and I have had the pleasure of working at the Randall House this summer. I began volunteering, and working for the museum in the spring and summer of 2007. After graduating from Acadia in 2009 with a BA in History I spent three months in Europe and upon returning, I made the decision to move back to Wolfville. I had a lovely summer working alongside Bonnie and Katie. I also very much enjoyed working on the VON exhibit. Other highlights were meeting the Patriquin family, and celebrating Mud Creek Days with a Victorian Tea. I was very pleased to work with all our hard working volunteers, and learned a great deal about collections from Christine and Jan. At the end of September I will be leaving for Dartmouth to continue my career in the museum field. It was so lovely to be part of the WHS and meet and greet all the visitors this summer. I have always had a keen interest in the history of Wolfville, and felt proud to represent the Museum again this summer.




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*President's letter cont. from page 1*

- ◇ Raised, through donations, grants and fund-raising activities, over \$50 000.
- ◇ Made necessary repairs/upgrades to the Museum.
- ◇ Employed two students, Katie Titus and Victoria Gerrard, to work as museum assistants under the direction of our curator, Bonnie Elliott.
- ◇ Added to our extensive archives of historical photographs, papers and artifacts—generously maintained by Acadia University—under the direction of our archivist, Heather Watts.
- ◇ Provided input into the Clock Tower Park renovations via the expertise of our two engineers, John Brown (WHS board member) and Derek Watts (former board member).
- ◇ Undertook an initiative which, if successful, could result in lower heating, insurance and taxation costs of the owners of municipally, provincially or federally registered historical properties.
- ◇ Started scheduling work towards a fund-raising presentation by the noted and absolutely hilarious comedian Lorne Elliott.
- ◇ Continued work on our plans to install two memorial plaques at Horton Landing (one in French, one in English) honouring the Planters as the group initiating democratic institutions in Canada.
- ◇ Undertook repairs to the Acacia Villa cairn at the corner of King Street and Wharf Road in Grand Pré.
- ◇ Baking, painting, serving, planting, pruning, writing and a host of other activities all undertaken by our volunteer supporters.

And this is just some of what we do. If you would like to join us as a WHS member, volunteer, or board member you might write to me at [johnvaillancourt@eastlink.ca](mailto:johnvaillancourt@eastlink.ca)

John Vaillancourt  
WHS President

## Kent Lodge CELEBRATES 250 Years!!



Kent Lodge is 250 years old this year. Wolfville's oldest structure and one of the oldest and most important in the province, it was begun in 1761 when New England Planter John Atwell built a small one-storey house with a loft, what is now the west end of the building, on Acadian foundations. The property was purchased in 1780 by Elisha DeWolf who over several decades made additions until the house achieved its present appearance; the family lived here until 1863. The name Kent Lodge comes from the stopover made by the Duke of Kent, commander of the British army in Nova Scotia and father of Queen Victoria, in 1794. In the intervening years, bits large and small were added and then removed by various owners. The Wolfville Historical Society is presently co-operating in the attempt to have the house designated as having national heritage significance.

The Society and the Town owe congratulations and a great debt of gratitude to Pat and Reg Moore who, over their period of ownership, have traced the details of the original construction and then restored the house to near original form. They have also uncovered information on the succession of previous owners, and, not the least, created showcase gardens to surround the house. At the front is an Acadian garden, with plants common in this area in Acadian times, which members are welcome to visit. The Moores provide for us an example of dedication to the preservation of heritage, while at the same time creating a comfortable home in a very old house.

John Whidden



## Curator's nook

By *Bonnie Elliott*



As we head towards Labour Day my mind's been going in two directions. While reflecting over the summer I have been thinking about all the visitors from near and far that have come and spent some time at the museum. I've also been thinking about next year and the exciting plans we have in store for you.

This summer has been marked by group tours and at the risk of sounding like the social columnists of old, I'm going to list a few. Kicking off the season was the **Canadian Culture Class** from **Acadia** arranged by Gallery Director **Laurie Dalton** whose multi-cultural students enjoyed their experience. (Who knew a Burka and a corset complimented each other in a kind of zany way!) This was followed by the **Grade 2 Class** at **Gaspereau Elementary School** who soaked up the Bead, the Birch and Porcupine exhibit. **The Anglican Church Women** spent a leisurely morning enjoying this year's displays before heading off to a superb lunch at the **Blomidon Inn**. July kicked off with Canada Day celebrations in the Park and the **Wolfville #1 Scouts** were also celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. On behalf of the museum once again they did a fine job at barbecuing. (Did you know that this is the oldest troupe in Canada with a charter?)

**Margaret Coghill** organized many residents of the **Wolfville Nursing Home** to have a tour of the museum and a picnic in the kitchen. In mid July **Mayor Bob Stead** and fellow councillors were on hand to greet the **Patriquin clan** and were served delicious strawberry shortcake provided by WHS members **Elizabeth Browne** and **Pat Stewart**. The **Red Hat ladies** from Hantsport livened up a Friday afternoon with tea, chat and laughter. Many members of the **Kingsport Fitness Group** attended the Victorian Tea and brought with them their own fans then gave the try on corsets and crinolines a work out! The **VON nurses and volunteers** arrived



to open the final exhibit of the summer marking 90 years of VON in Wolfville with nurse Mary Harry being the first nurse. **Phyllis Holmes**, Wolfville's nurse in the '50's, loaned her precious uniforms that are currently on display. Over all, the response to our exhibits has been favourable which only helps to fuel the incentive to do better next year. With such a great team of staff and volunteers who put a lot of time and effort into their jobs, the next year's season looks encouraging. We'll miss all the help and expertise that Elaine Slauenwhite has given over the past 5 years and wish her all the best in her other endeavours.

The museum closes on the 15<sup>th</sup> so if you haven't had the chance to visit, there's still time.

This photograph was taken on the occasion of the wedding of Flora B. Patriquin and Donald C. Gordon, parents of Donna Lockwood. The couple were married in the living room of Randall House on October 24, 1933. According to Donna, her mother was wearing a deep burgundy velvet dress and matching hat and she was holding a bouquet of Talisman roses. Left –Right; Sarah Patriquin, Dr. Alvah H. Gordon, Flora Patriquin, Donald C. Gordon, Gertrude (Curry) Gordon and Charles Patriquin.

Photo courtesy of Donna Lockwood.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* MYSTERY UNSOLVED: Georgian Spoons from \*  
 \* a Horton Planter come home \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

There must be a Magpie gene in all of us who find shiny objects irresistible. I had seen pictures of the 6 silver spoons but it wasn't until I laid my eyes on them that their glossy appearance mesmerized me. Their almost pristine condition defies their almost 300 year age; solid, serviceable yet noble. The elegant lines of the style topped off with the expressive curves of the monogram [that reads more like a decorative motif rather than someone's initials] set these spoons apart from modern day silver ware. Their large size is striking for everyday table spoons and a complete set of six is rare.

Neatly incised on the back are two initials: S·L, which confirms its maker and places their date in a 50 year time frame. The silversmith was Samuel Leach (1745–1780) a craftsman from Philadelphia who was not as well known as some of the other craftsmen from the same town.

The mystery has begun. It is this type of mystery that keeps researchers, historians and curators doing what they do even though after hours of digging, a definitive answer may never be found. Kudos to the Byers who wished that these precious spoons be returned to the area in which they were used by several generations during many a meal and obviously treasured through subsequent generations.



Provenance aside, their 18<sup>th</sup> century origins reveal themselves. One only has to look closely at the size, depth of bowl, the drop and handle, and then compare one to the other. They're not all perfectly matched—small differences in detail are slightly discernable. Their simple design may fool the modern viewer into thinking that these were 'knocked off'. On the contrary, from the original silver billet a basic long narrow shape or 'blank' would have been hammered out. From this stage the spoon shape was formed using a die and block. Hours of filing, grinding and finally polishing by hand (probably by an apprentice) only then resulted in a smooth and uniform shape. The monograms came later and not necessarily at the time of purchase.

We are very grateful these spoons have come back to us and that for many years to come we can share the certainty and the mystery of these fine and shiny artifacts that once held many spoonfuls of soup and that graced the table of generations of a Wolfville family.

Now then, how to display them...

Bonnie Elliott



**By Sue Bissix**

# WANTED!!!

A photograph of a weathered, four-pane window on a wooden building. The window frame is made of dark, aged wood. The surrounding siding is light-colored wood shingles. A small, leafy plant with green and yellow leaves is growing out of the windowsill.



☆☆ **Congratulations!**

Each year the WHS awards a prize in history to a graduating student of the Horton District High School in memory of Dr. Watson Kirkconnell, President of Acadia University. This year it was awarded to Sarah Atkinson. Best of luck to Sarah who will be attending Acadia University in September to study history.

## Fall Fundraising Dinner

### Wolfville Lions' Hall

Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011 - 6:30 for 7:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker – **Sara Beanlands**

“Dr. Andrew’s Brown’s 18<sup>th</sup> Century Diaries  
one of the earliest accounts of the Acadian Deportation”

Ticket: \$30. (Tax receipt for \$15.)

**Don’t Wait!! Tickets are limited.** Contact John Vaillancourt (542-9766), John Whidden (542-5061) or Elizabeth Browne (542-2279) for tickets.

In 1852, a tattered box of papers was discovered in the foyer of an Edinburgh boarding house. Inside was a collection of manuscripts relating to the early history of Nova Scotia. This collection belonged to Rev. Dr. Andrew Brown, a Scottish Presbyterian minister, professor and historian who lived in Halifax and ministered at St. Matthew’s Church from 1787 to 1795. Sara Beanlands is a graduate of St. Mary’s Master of History programme. Her thesis included an annotated edition of Brown’s manuscript entitled “Removal of the French inhabitants of Nova Scotia by Lieut. Governor Lawrence and His Majesty’s Council in October 1755”.

*A fond farwell...*

Over the last two years the WHS has been very fortunate in having the camaraderie and professional services of John Lawrence of **Bishop & Company Chartered Accountants Inc.** as society treasurer. Thank you John and all the best in your new position.

Wolfville Historical Society  
Randall House Museum

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Wolfville, Nova Scotia

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E-mail: randallhouse@live.ca

*"We are the  
community's collective  
memory"*

**We're on the web and in  
colour!**

<http://wolfvillehs.ednet.ns.ca>



**Wolfville Historical Society**



## Bulletin Board

- ◇ Classified Ads— *coming soon to this newsletter*
- ◇ Last chance to shop in the TAX FREE Gift Shop at Randall House. On offer is beautiful local jewellery, lavender products, handmade soap, bees-wax candles, Heirloom Bears, books and more books.
- ◇ Haven't paid your 2010 dues yet? Don't panic, there's still time

Now that summer is coming to an end, it is an apt time to thank all our wonderful sponsors who helped make this season a success.

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## Wolfville Historical Society

### Annual and Sustaining Membership Application Form for 2010

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Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_ P. Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to receive your newsletter by e-mail? Y or N

Annual Membership: Individual - \$20.00; Family - \$30.00

Annual Sustaining Membership: Individual or Couple—\$100.00

A receipt for income tax purposes will be issued.

Please fill out the above form and send it along with payment to:

Wolfville Historical Society  
259 Main Street, Wolfville N.S.  
B4P 1C6