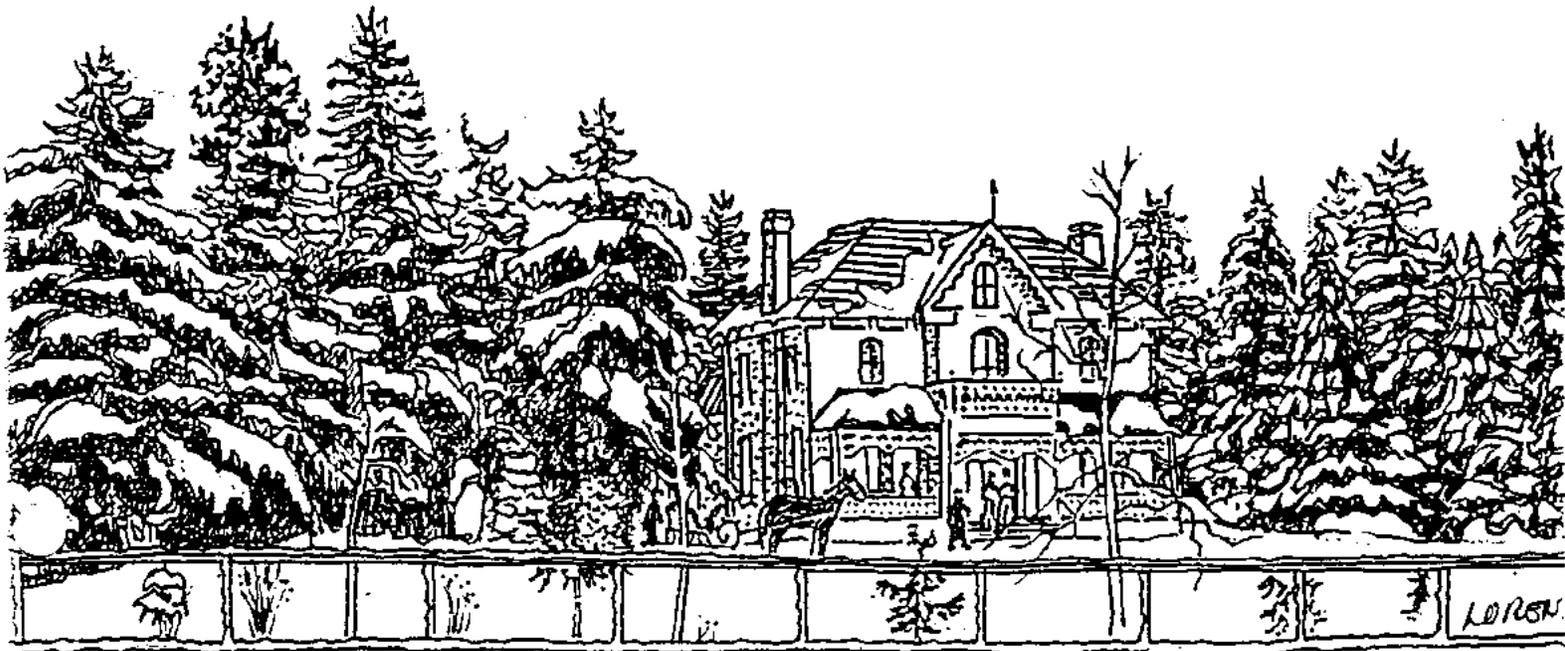


Opseongo Lines

June 1993

*Mr. and Mrs. James Allan, Public Land Surveyor
and
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Barnet
cordially invite you to an
Open House and Reception
in honour of the
1993 Lumber Baron
Mr. John R. Booth
on Friday, July 23rd, 1993
at the Renfrew Estate depicted below*

(Sketch from an 1890 photo. Can you guess which house in Renfrew this is? Clues on page 2.)



CLUES re MYSTERY HOUSE:

- It belonged to the late James Allen, P.L.S (Public Land Surveyor), a friend of J.R. Booth.
- An addition has since been put on the rear.
- The porches have been downsized.
- The original trees on each side and behind the house give an excellent idea of the land cover settlers chopped down when they came to Renfrew; the trees are gone now, replaced by asphalt, lawn and smaller trees on the north (left) side.
- The tiny row of trees planted in front are now fully grown.
- It's on what used to be called Horton Street.
- It was later also owned by a local Lumber Baron whom we celebrated a few years ago.

ANSWER: It's the old Barnet Home, now owned by Jimmy and Mary Deslauriers, on Raglan St. South.

....AND HEEEEEEEEEEEEERE'S JOHNNY,

A MESSAGE FROM THE PREZ.....

Heritage is always an eyeopener....and my pleasurable experience of being President of Heritage Renfrew this year has only served to reinforce that thought. I have not only had my eyes opened to the level of interest in heritage in this area, but also to the incredible amount of good work this organization does. Your very active board of directors have been very, very busy. Where could I possibly begin?

Well, that's not too hard. The Heritage Renfrew Archives located in the National Archives building (formerly Mitel) has become a going concern. It is not only the setting for our board meetings, but has been open every Monday to Friday since January. We are currently on summer schedule, open to the public for research every Wednesday from 1 to 4. We also have a list of Directors who are on call (list posted in the Public Library) who will go in any time the main building is open for special cases. Our Archives has been the scene of family tree work, university theses, ghost stories, murder mysteries and publication research.

Nor have we been idle in other fields. Some assorted activities since January:

During Heritage Week (Feb 15-20) we

- held our successful Annual Heritage Luncheon,
- offered prizes to the schools and judged Heritage Day posters, dioramas etc.,
- visited at senior citizen's facilities.

Members also

- made many presentations to schools, institutes and other groups in Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec, and have planned more for the summer and fall;
- wrote articles for this bulletin and also for other

- publications, e.g. in Sarnia, U.K.;
- assisted many with research projects at the Archives;
 - donated items to our growing collection;
- We have plugged into the UI adult student training scheme and with the help of four trainees have
- transcribed onto computer diskette the first Minute Books for Horton Township and the Village of Renfrew to ensure that they will not be lost completely and to facilitate research by using the computer's word-search capabilities.
 - presented same to Township and Town officials for their vaults and will send copies to the National Archives of Canada and the Archives of Ontario.
 - computerized the information for all Home Children sent from Westminster Diocese in London, England. This will form the basis of a report now being written for the Catholic Family History Association in England.
 - started the computer cataloguing of tens of thousands of Cal Green's negatives in our collection.

Your directors are also

- planning our annual Fall Colours bus trip for 2 October
- involved in Lumber Baron Festival:
 - orchestrating the Lumber Baron's walk-about;
 - researching the Baron and his effect on local history;
 - arranging the Open House with its attendant entertainment, special events, art collection, etc.;
 - arranging for future speakers on the tie-in with Algonquin Park;
 - making posters and the painting to be used and auctioned off;
 - arranging for window displays and liaising with the Historical Society;
 - attending organizational meetings;
 - preparing material for the press.
- currently planning another Home Children Family Reunion to coincide with the Burwell's Steam Show in September.
- also planning a joint meeting with the Upper Ottawa Valley Genealogical Society for the fall.

We have also completed our collection of available Census records for Renfrew County. (We also have some microfilms of the Pontiac.)

Members have also

- published and/or contributed to more books on Founding Families and on Mount St. Patrick. (Congratulations Carol McCuaig)
- compiled a history of SFX Parish and an aesthetic appreciation of the church building for the 25th anniversary (Kay and Dave Lorente) (Copy presented to HR.)
- organized a trip to Ireland - of special interest to Mount St. Patrick residents who are celebrating the 150th anniversary of their parish (Con Hunt).
- successfully lobbied all townships in the County to designate the Opeongo Road a Heritage Road (Con Hunt, Marge Lindsay, Hank Legris, et al).
- arranged to guide out-of-town groups on the Opeongo during the Flaming Leaf Celebrations.
- undertaken special projects such as the Trobridge's study

- into the causes of death in pioneer Renfrew and area.
- organized a 150th anniversary family reunion (Marge and Earl Lindsay)
 - been involved in following-up on THE VALOUR AND THE HORROR controversy.
 - been involved in looking into the O'Brien Theatre question.
 - established contact with historians in Dacre, England and will be exchanging 'a parcel of information' with them via personal messenger later in the year. (The Briscoes of Admaston came from there.)

We also continue to actively contribute to the Town of Renfrew by helping establish a link between Renfrew, Ontario and Renfrew, Scotland and Cumbria, England.

In brief, many thanks to a wonderful board that is working so hard, and thanks too, to each and every one of our members for your support.

See you at the Archives and at our Open House!

John

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES OF HERITAGE RENFREW, 1993

<u>Doris HUMPHRIES</u> , Past President, R.R.#5, Renfrew, K7V 3Z8	
Plaquing and Publicity	432-6252
<u>John STEELE</u> , President, 85 Munroe St, K7V 3K2	
Archives, Publicity, Research	432-7952
<u>Irene TROBRIDGE</u> , Vice-President, R.R.#2, Renfrew, K7V 3Z5	
Genealogy, Grants	432-2640
<u>Dorothy SKINNER</u> , Secretary, 547 Fortington St, K7V 1E5	
Archives, Lumber Baron Festival	432-2302
<u>Helen CLARK</u> , Treasurer, 135 Quarry Ave, K7V 2W3	
Membership, Mailing, Lumber Baron	432-4523
<u>Marjorie LINDSAY</u> , Past President, 321 Albert, K7V 1V6	
Archives, Architectural, Lumber Baron	432-3126
<u>David LORENTE</u> , Past President, 107 Erindale Ave, K7V 4G3	
Equipment, Genealogy, Newsletter, Home Children	432-2486
<u>Les ANDERSON</u> , Past President, R.R.#2, Renfrew, K7V 3Z5	
Membership	432-2486
<u>Bob TROBRIDGE</u> , R.R.#2, Renfrew, K7V 3Z5	
Genealogy and Equipment	432-2640
<u>Grace & Vaughan SIMMONS</u> , R.R.#2, Renfrew, K7V 3Z5	
TV, Scrap Books, Architectural, Lumber Baron	432-
<u>Con HUNT</u> , R.R.#4, Renfrew, K7V 3Z7	
Bus Tours, Newsletter, Lumber Baron	432-3269
<u>Les CHURCH</u> , Past President, 15 Lorne St., K7V 1K8	
Mailing	432-8986
<u>Judith ANDERSON</u> , Apt B, 101 Munroe Ave W., K7V 3K9	
Publicity	432-4426
<u>Jim FERGUSON</u> , R.R.#5, K7V 3Z8	432-2738
<u>Kay LORENTE</u> , 107 Erindale Ave, K7V 4G3	
Genealogy, Newsletter, Home Children	432-2486

Mary LESTER, 479 Barr St. S. K7V
Phoning 432-2937
Hank LEGRIS, 98 Street, K7V
Advisory on Plaquing, Genealogy 432-

ABOUT RESEARCHING FOR OTHERS:

We normally do NOT research for others. We will however assist you to do your own research and will open doors for you at other institutions. (Members have sometimes done research for overseas requests, but this is not normal situation, and a special interest perhaps prompted the person to do so.)

If you get someone to research for you, the ACCEPTED FEE FOR RESEARCH, as stated in a previous newsletter, is \$18.00 an hour, and, of course, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE that what you seek will be found.

We are reluctant to recommend local individuals because other organizations consistently warn against such a practice; the individual named may or may not do a consistently good job and the organization's good name suffers as a consequence.

You should also know that we do not have facilities to make copies from microfilm or microfiche, so whole articles would have to be written out longhand, or read into a tape recorder. Both methods are time consuming. (At least one researcher used the Macro setting on his Video Camcorder, but we're not sure what results he got.)

MEMBERSHIP

Have you paid your 1993 membership? It's only \$5.00 per individual (this includes spouse). We'd like to tie a yellow ribbon around your newsletter to remind you that we'd love to have you come back into the fold. But heck, we're out of yellow ribbon and, in any case, the darn things would probably not be accepted by Canada Post. So, we've done something else instead.

If a yellow sticker has been stuck inside your newsletter it's an indication that our records show you have NOT YET PAID. Now if you think we are in error, please contact Les Anderson immediately. On the other hand, to remit 1993 membership fees...and 1994's if you want to, send the annual fee of \$5.00 to Helen Clark, our Treasurer.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Congratulations to Carol McCuaig (again) for publishing a third FOUNDING FAMILIES Book, and her PEOPLE OF MOUNT ST.PATRICK...all within a week. Each book is available from the author for \$20 (plus postage). For details call Carol at 432-8992.

BOOTH, LOGGING AND SETTLEMENT

by Les Anderson

Most of us have some ties...sentimental or otherwise...to the place where we were born. My tie is with Chisholm Township, a few miles north and west of Mattawa. This area was one of the last to be cleared of its pine and spruce by J.R. Booth who is being commemorated in this year's Lumber Baron Festival.

My Dad, as a young man and later as a pioneer farmer worked in Booth lumber camps as an axeman. His job was to notch each pine tree just ahead of two men with crosscut saws ready to fell them. It was a slow laborious work, and it included going back to 'top' and 'limb' the trees already felled. One winter's work would probably have earned him enough cash to buy a team of horses to make the clearing of land on his parents' newly acquired free grant land much easier.

The farm that Dad cleared, from turn of century up to 1914, is now a dairy farm operated by a grandson who ships milk 20 miles north to North Bay.

Writers who have researched Booth's life tell us that as a child on a farm in the Eastern Counties of Quebec he was interested in the use of waterpower, and that as a young man he managed and later built a sawmill on the Chaudiere Falls at Ottawa.

But like so many of his contemporaries, would-be lumber barons too, he wanted to own and control the sources of his supply; rather than buy logs from a logging firm, he must acquire timber limits and produce his own.

Contrary to the belief by some that he was given countless square miles of timber, he bid, sometimes lost, but eventually won and paid for specific timber limits. One of these which was up for auction was the Egan Estate timber limits for which he paid \$40,000,000. This was expensive, but money was well invested as it kept his subcontractors and jobbers busy for a good thirty years. One can imagine the Madawaska and Petawawa Rivers choked with logs driven in spring and summer to the Ottawa by dozens of river drivers.

Eventually Booth owned 7,000 square miles of timber limits on both sides of the Ottawa River, and we read that his mills were among the world's largest, producing not just cut lumber but laths and shingles. All this, besides the better known trade he had in squared timbers with Britain.

By the mid-sixties Booth's men had reached Mattawa, up till then a fur-trading post and about to be transformed into a logging depot with several service trades and outfitting stores.

Settlers generally follow very closely on the heels of the lumbermen but not for the fifty miles from Petawawa to Mattawa, for here the rocks of the Canadian Shield banish all hopes of farming. However a few years later, as the lumber men spread inland along the Mattawa River to Lake Nosbonsing they could see gentle slopes with good clay soil covered with hardwood trees and fewer pines. It would be good farm land, and some men persuaded their wives and families to venture up there, far from their home bases in Quebec.

The late Father Joseph Gravelle (whose parents were hotelkeepers on the site of Scott's Hardware on Renfrew's business street) has recorded the names and origins of many French Canadian settlers of the Bonfield and Nosbonsing townships.

The Canada Central Railway had been built as far as Bonfield, and construction stopped there at 1882, while the government pondered whether to take the line over, then give it to a newly formed Canadian Pacific Company which would produce the line westward. There was also some disagreement among railway officials as to the best place to build a way station on Lake Nipissing (just 30 miles to the west). This line is not to be confused with the line which Booth built, the line across the Park to Parry Sound...long since closed and rails removed. This is another story in itself. Booth saw in railways a way of getting logs from far inland shipped straight to Ottawa whereas the frozen tributary rivers, ice-covered in the winter, could only be used for part of the year. His larger objective in building the Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound was to tap the grain trade at Georgian Bay, by-passing the Lower Great Lakes and Welland Canal system and bringing it across to Ottawa and Montreal. He didn't realize how expensive it was to ship by rail.

These early years of the 1880's were crisis years for land hungry immigrants, my grandparents from Ireland among them. All tillable land in Southern Ontario had been taken up. Some Irish at this time were breaking their hearts over clearing stones from slopes of Mount Saint Patrick, for lack of elsewhere to go! Many families moved to the United States and then on out to their West.

My grandparents and their family of a daughter and four boys were caught in this same dilemma. Having come from a tiny 22 acre farm in County Antrim, Northern Ireland, they heard of free grant land to be had in abundance in Ontario. They rented a farm at Caledon near Toronto but had no money to buy.

By 1885 the crisis was over, both for the Andersons and for immigrants in general; the C.P.R. was completed to the West, and also in that year, gaps in the line westward from Bonfield were constructed, including the thirty miles to North Bay on Lake Nipissing.

This enabled the two older boys, my uncles, to travel to North Bay, thence by steamboat to Nipissing Village, from where they walked (directed by the local Crown Lands agent) to the newly surveyed

township of Chisholm, 20 miles to the east. And would you believe it, Bonfield on Lake Nosbonsing was just over the watershed or height of land, just ten miles further east.

They found excellent land, reported back to their parents, and the whole family came up the same route. How did they get the few possessions they had with them over the 20 miles from Nipissing to Chisholm? That story has never been told...like so many others!

But I do know that John, ages 15, and much later to be my Dad, and Tom at 11 helped to clear a homestead, and eventually found work for much needed cash with Booth's logging contractors not so far to the east.

TROBRIDGES TACKLE TEDIOUS TASK

Several months ago Heritage Renfrew directors Irene and Bob Trowbridge launched themselves on a task near and dear to them. Bob is a retired surgeon -a heart specialist - and Irene has shared his hospital and private life as nurse/administrator, spouse and collaborator in special projects.

While researching local Founding Families they became intrigued with the frequency with which causes of death were mentioned and they resolved to make an in-depth study to satisfy their professional curiosity about such matters.

With the approval of Aldene and Les Church the Trobridges fed into their computer the BMD's (Births, Marriages and Deaths) recorded by the Church's in their volumes of Abstracts from the Renfrew Mercury (1871-1910). Before they started Bob had to write a computer program to facilitate the input and recovery of information. Irene proof-read and edited the notes.

The 6,600 entries they have put on diskette will greatly facilitate the retrieval of information for historians, genealogists and the curious. Copies will be available at our Archives.

The Trobridges are currently using their program to do their own study of health and the causes of death in Renfrew's early days. To date they have noted a high death rate in married women aged 25 to 30 years, and an apparently high rate of twin births. They caution, however, that the figures may be distorted by the rate of reporting of these occurrences.

More on this later. Stay tuned to this station.

Watch for Heritage Renfrew's fall Bus Tour...Where? To the new Algonquin Park Visitor's centre! Why? To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the park! Features J.R. Booth, Renfrew's 1993 Lumber Baron. Details to be announced.

Joint meeting with the Upper Ottawa Valley Genealogical Group Thursday, September 16, 1993 at 7:00 p.m. Speaker Ron Tozer from the Algonquin Park Visitors' Centre - to speak on Park History at the Library Program Centre, Renfrew.