

May 26th 2008



Maxine Hendrick, who demonstrated First Nations crafts Saturday at Backus-Page House Museum during Pioneer Days, looks out from her wigwam. (T-J photo)



Museum brings new life to collection of artifacts

BY PATRICK BRENNAN
TIMES-JOURNAL STAFF
TYRCONNELL

Museums which focus on static displays to show off historical artifacts are not that hard to find.

A living history museum which uses its artifacts to re-enact different periods is much less common.

The Backus-Page House Museum, operated by the Tyrconnell Heritage Society, demonstrated how popular the living history approach is on Saturday attracting big crowds to its Pioneer Days displays

"We must have had 600 students through on Friday," said Lori Milos-Ivanski, co-ordinator for the museum.

Milos-Ivanski said there were 28 presenters at the various stations, which included butter-making, blacksmithing, a canon firing, and quilt-making. There were also horse-drawn wagon rides and native craft demon-

strations.

"We wanted to present an awareness of things historical," she said. "We have a very rich heritage here."

"We're providing people with an opportunity to experience a time of life they wouldn't ordinarily be able to experience."

She said she believes home crafts, like baking and quilting, are making a return in popularity.

"You see a lot more who are home-cooking, canning."

The house is working toward a designation as a living history museum.

This year, it will employ three students to greet people on daily tours.

Improvements this season will include renovations to the barn to allow it to be used for more storage.

"We would like to be open year-round," she said.

Located just east of the south end of Currie Road — near Lake Erie's north

shore where Col. Thomas Talbot landed to blaze Talbot Settlement — Backus-Page House weatherproof with a furnace and washrooms another building.



Dalon Ricard, left, and his brother, Dmitri, gets some tips on making butter from Carolyn Cameron at the Backus-Page House Museum on Saturday during Pioneer Days. (T-J photo)

The Questers Fall Convention

Oct 30th 2008



The Questers are an international organization that works to educate through the research and study of antiques. The organization also donates funds for the preservation and restoration of artifacts, existing memorials, historic buildings, landmarks and to promote educational programming. The Questers was founded in 1944 by Jessie Elizabeth Bardens. Jessie was a Red Cross production chairman living in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, who, with an invitation to co-workers to come to her home and "bring an antique and a sandwich" laid the foundation for an organization that would grow to be 15,000 members strong.

The Questers became an international organization in 1967, when Maple Leaf #311 received its charter in Windsor, Ontario. There are now ten chapters within Ontario with a membership of about 240 and as of 1991 the Questers became known as the "International Questers". There are over 900 chapters in 43 states and 2 provinces. Each chapter has between 8 and 30 members and meetings are usually held in homes unless there's a tour, trip or a convention. Members give short talks at their monthly meetings on an antique or collectible after researching information on their topic.

The Questers work to promote historical preservation as well as the restoration of memorials, historical buildings and landmarks. Questers Chapters extend aid in the form of hands-on help or funding to a variety of causes and institutions. Various chapters have donated funding to award scholarships, repair historical buildings and facilitate programming that promotes historical interpretation, restoration, education and preservation.

On October 30th, 2008 representatives from the Tyrconnell Heritage Society were invited to attend the Questers' October Convention in Windsor Ontario. Stacie Littlejohn brought the early years of the Talbot Settlement to life for those in attendance. Clad in pioneer clothing Stacie became settler Mary Storey as she might have been later, nearing the end of her life. Lighting a candle, Mary sat at her table reading aloud the letter she had just finished writing to her grandson Andrew Backus. As the narrative unfolded, Mary's life was presented to listeners and all were taken back to the years and places that defined the birth of the Talbot Settlement. Stacie's interpretation was followed with a PowerPoint presentation by Backus-Page House Cultural Manager Lori Milos-Ivanski. Lori reviewed this year's programming and outlined the direction the Tyrconnell Heritage Society is hoping to take for future site restoration projects and educational programming.

The October Convention was an opportunity for Questers Chapters to present funding to help advance historical preservation and education. The Tyrconnell Heritage Society was honoured to be a recipient of the Questers' generosity. The Ontario Association of Questers awarded the Society a \$1500 grant in recognition of the Society's years of dedication to preserving Ontario Heritage and to aid in the restoration of the Backus-Page House barn.

The International Questers represent a true commitment to the preservation of our heritage and a love of learning about history. The Tyrconnell Heritage Society is greatly indebted to The Ontario Association of Questers and all members of the Questers organization are dedicated to saving our past for present and future generations.





Christmas from 1850

By PATRICK BRENNAN

TIMES-JOURNAL STAFF

TYRCONNELL — Christmas with no Christmas tree nor electric lights around the house?

At the Backus-Page house Saturday, it was Christmas from a different era.

Visitors to the home over the weekend got a glimpse of what

SEE SCENT, PAGE 4

Volunteers Leta West, left, and Martha Foster hold a handmade wreath Saturday at the Backus-Page House in Tyrconnell. The home was opened to show what a settler's home would look like for Christmas in the 1850s. It was also one of the stops on the Dutton Christmas Tour of Homes. (T-J photo by Patrick Brennan)



Tracey Gordon, a volunteer with the Tyrconnell Heritage Society, places cloves in fruit Saturday at the Backus-Page House. The home was open on the weekend as part of the Dutton Christmas Tour of Homes and to show off how homes were decorated for Christmas in the 1850s. (T-J photo)



Jackie Leitch, left of Dutton looks over the boughs hanging above the fireplace at the Backus-Page House in Tyrconnell on Saturday. With her is Alice Paterson, a volunteer with the Tyrconnell Heritage Society, who showed visitors around. (T-J photo)

Scent of cloves and home baking

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Christmas in the historic home would have been like in the 1850s.

While there was a beautiful handmade wreath on the front door, inside decorations were limited to hanging greens over the mantels of fireplaces and formal place settings at the dining room table.

Spread throughout the house was fruit, some apples and oranges spiked with aromatic cloves, while the smell of Christmas cooking and baking was in the air.

A full-size Christmas tree, introduced by Germans in the 16th century, was nowhere to be seen, but tabletop Christmas trees were used, said Lori Milos-Evanski, co-ordinator at Backus-Page.

The Tyrconnell Heritage Society opened the home on the weekend to make it one stop on the Dutton Christmas Tour of Homes, a project to raise money to help pay for the expansion of the Dutton Medical Centre.

"We're thrilled to be able to help the community," Milos-Evanski said.

The society kept its decorations true to the settlers period for the home, she said, but still had fun doing it.

Volunteers found pine, spruce and yew boughs in local woodstands and even some holly.

While the main house was decorated, the carriage house served as a showroom for handmade wreaths the society sold to raise money.

The wreaths, made from local boughs, were attached to local grapevines.

Wreaths evolved from the hanging of the greens, Milos-Evanski said.

"There's a whole series of traditions that came from the hanging of the greens," she said.

Milos-Evanski said research about Christmas at that time showed Christ-

mas cards had not yet been introduced and gifts were usually of a very modest and practical nature.

It wasn't unusual for settlers to hang a kissing ball made of cones and berries in the house.

Dinner was a special event for settlers with the best meals being prepared and, because the weather prevented much outside work, families and friends reserved the time for visiting.

The weekend's Christmas activities were the final public events for this year until the Backus-Page House reopens in May for another season.

St Peter's Rectory Barn is Reborn

As the Agricultural History Program Development Assistant at the Backus-Page House this summer (a position funding through the Ministry of Culture and the Summer Experience Program) Molly McWilliam wrote the following article to share some of the information she learned over the season as well as what she was able to contribute to the barn improvement project.

Many people do not realize how important a barn was (and still is) to a working farm. In fact, it was so important to many homesteaders that they often built it first, before anything else. The barn provided a place to store food for animals as well as shelter for them from predators and bad weather. A farm cannot function without a barn. The St Peters Rectory barn, located at the Backus-Page House, has played a significant role for St Peters Church in the past and will now play an important role for the museum.

The Rectory barn has undergone many changes. Its primary use was most likely as a stable at St Peters. It wasn't the first barn on that site. The first Rectory barn was destroyed by a fire in 1896. In that same year, a new one was built and that is the barn that now resides on the Backus-Page House grounds. In 1965 Alistair Littlejohn purchased the barn with plans to move it to his farm to use as a sugar shack. Unfortunately, the man he had lined up to move it passed away. The barn sat, virtually unused, behind the Rectory for almost forty years before the Littlejohn family decided to donate the building to the Tyrconnell Heritage Society.

The process of moving the barn began early in 2005. Heavy machinery was brought in to remove a large branch that had fallen on the back of the barn that winter. Small trees and branches in front of the barn were also removed so that the barn would be more easily moved. Holes were then cut in the east and west walls and long pieces of timber were fitted through them. Holes were cut in the north and south walls and timbers were then fitted through them too. The 12 ton barn was then lifted off its foundation and began to be pulled. But the ground was not frozen so a heavy tractor had to be called in to help. They pulled it onto the road and carried it to the Backus-Page House. During the spring of that year work was done to strengthen the foundation.

Through the generosity of the Tyrconnell Heritage Society membership, funds were donated that allowed the renovation of the hundred year old barn to move forward. In 2008 volunteers began the rebuilding process. All the changes made to the barn were completed in order to improve its structure while retaining its period features when possible. New cedar shingles were put on the roof. The walls were replaced with 12 inch pine boards and pine battens were put in place to fill the gaps between them. Once quite hazardous to walk on due to deterioration, the upstairs tongue and groove hickory floor was redone with tongue and groove white ash flooring of exceptional quality.



The barn project has come a long way since 2005. There are still many more improvements that need to be made so that it can meet all the needs of the local community. Windows for natural lighting and wiring for electrical lighting will be put in place both upstairs and downstairs when funding becomes available. The upstairs of the barn houses many farm implements and artifacts that need to be properly displayed with cabinets and tables and identification plaques. There are also tentative plans to build standing horse stalls on

the main level but again adequate funding plays a part in determining when that project will be completed.

This year, as the Agricultural History Program Development Assistant, it was my job to help direct the setting up of the loft level of the barn as a display area. With the help of volunteers and my fellow summer students I created display areas for some of the smaller artifacts (period farm tools) through the use of low

harvest tables that we received from Fanshawe Pioneer Village. For some of the larger implements such as seeders and a cultivator I was able to use wooden pallets donated by Steve Nagy. Although I was able to label some of the artifacts through research and resource material we had on site it was still very difficult to identify every object in the barn and to know how it was used. To help with identification my great uncle Norman McWilliam came to visit and to look at the items in the barn. He is full of farming information since he has farmed his entire life and loves history. It was very interesting to hear him talk about farming and how he used to use many of the kinds of tools that are now a part of the museum collection in the barn. My hopes for the barn are that it will continue to grow more and more into a working exhibit space.

Molly McWilliam

~Agricultural History Program Development Assistant, Backus-Page House 2009

John E. Pearce Park

Amanda Eckersley has worked as support staff at the Backus-Page house for two summers. Her position was made possible by the Summer Experience Program through the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Office of the Port Burwell Provincial Park. Amanda shares some of what she has learned during her time at the Backus-Page House and the John E. Pearce Provincial Park.

The Pearce family was one of the original founding families having come to this area in 1809. John Pearce arrived in Port Talbot (from Pennsylvania) in July of that year. He brought his wife and three children with him. The Pearce family came to Upper Canada with the Patterson and Storey families (Stephen Backus, whose sister Lydia was married to Leslie Patterson, would follow the next year). John and his wife, Francis Pearce, were given lot 10 in the 10th Concession of Dunwich Township. The families all worked together to build a community. Port Tyrconnell (from the Irish *Tír Chonaill*-anglicized as Tyrconnell was the name of a kingdom which covered much of what is now County Donegal.) was a thriving port and as the families were all of Irish ancestry the community was soon known by the nickname "Little Ireland".

In 1896, John Edward Pearce was born in the township of Dunwich. He was a descendant of that first John Pearce who settled in this area in 1809. He was the son of Thomas L. Pearce and Sarah Ann Backus Pearce. In 1955 John E. Pearce and his wife donated 28 acres of woodlot in order that a public park might be created. John Pearce decided to donate this land to ensure that the historical and natural properties of the area would be preserved for future generations. He took pride in the history of his family and dedicated the park in memory of



his ancestors. There were certain conditions that John Pearce stated to the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests in order for them to receive the land. Those conditions were that the park must be called the John E. Pearce Provincial Park, that he would receive all revenue from logging or other forest products and that he would be able to use the park for the tapping of maple syrup. The Ontario Department of Lands and Forests accepted his requests and graciously took his offer. To recognize John E. Pearce, a 3 ton marble plaque was created by Donald Inman and still remains in the park today.

The January 18th 1961 edition of the Dutton Advance indicates that the Department of Lands and Forests had taken the opportunity to expand the park by purchase options; "...the balance of Lot 11. Con 10 from John E. Pearce and the park will extend from the line between Lot 10, owned by John S. Pearce, to Lot 12 owned by Alistair Littlejohn, excepting a little more than half an acre owned by Louis Marcus."

In 1968 the park boundary was once again enlarged by the purchase of 100 acres, including the Backus-Page House, from Morley and Grace Page. Currently the park encompasses approximately 68 hectares. There are 3 kilometers of hiking trails and during the peak season an access road provides

the opportunity for visitors to stand above the towering clay bluffs and look out over the expanse of Lake Erie. The park is open to foot traffic year round and is traversed by the Trans Canada Trail.

The John E. Pearce Park is classified as a nature reserve. Nature reserve parks are established to represent and protect the distinctive natural habitats and landforms of the province. These areas are protected for educational and research purposes. Due to the fragility of many of these natural features, only a few nature reserves are accessible to the public. The Pearce Park is one of those few parks. It protects many native Ontario species in the deep reaches of the Carolinian forest. It is a great spot to view birds such as bald eagles, red tail hawks, kestrels and all kinds of woodpeckers. In spring the tundra swans fly overhead and turkeys frequent the

park year round. Visitors can enjoy a picnic lunch at the picnic area above the bluffs or learn about the diverse flora and fauna that can be found on the Spicer Trail behind the Backus-Page House. During the open season visitors can drop by the Carriage House to view our growing nature display. A red tail hawk preserved specimen provides an opportunity for a rare close up look at this shy predatory bird. The display also includes a beaver pelt, mink pelt and ferret pelts all available for the curious to experience with their own hands.

The park has something to offer visitors year round. The Carolinian growth includes a broad variety of tree species. You'll find Trembling Aspen, America Basswood, Butternut and Black Locust along the trails that change their faces with each season. In the spring ephemerals such as Red Trilliums, Cut-Leaved Toothwort, Dutchman's Breeches and Yellow Trout Lily carpet the woodland floor and later in the year salamanders bask in the summer heat. Be sure to visit the site year round and even at various times of the day to discover all the faces of the John E. Pearce Provincial Park.

July 14th 2009

■ TALBOT SETTLEMENT: Bicentennial celebration

Another chapter in the history book

PATRICK BRENNAN
Times-Journal

TYRCONNELL — Any event that recalls the glory of the founding of the Talbot Settlement is a reason to celebrate in Elgin county.

Saturday, descendants of the founding families who arrived at Port Talbot to begin the Talbot Settlement came together as part of a weekend of celebration at the original homestead on Lake Erie.

It was a bicentennial event Mary Clutterbuck of Shedden was proud to be a part of.

"We picked the weekend closest to the anniversary," she said.

Not only was it a chance for descendants to reconnect, it was an opportunity to write another chapter in the history books of the families.

Proof of that was the signature photo of all the par-

ticipants taken on the lawn, which will be used as a future bookmark to verify who was there when the event is recalled years from now.

On July 14, 1809, the Patersons, Pearces and Storeys arrived at Port Talbot, earning the distinction of being the first settlers of the Talbot Settlement.

John Pearce was one of the original settlers and his sons settled in what is now Wallacetown and the current Pearce-Williams property.

Clutterbuck's grandmother was Ann Orchard, a child of one of John Pearce's sons.

Clutterbuck noted she met family members who she had been out of touch with for years.

"Our last big Pearce reunion was in 1959," she recalled.

Those attending came from as far away as Ottawa, Alberta, British Columbia,

Nunavik, Texas, California

"This one family member has lived up in Nunavik for 30 years," Clutterbuck said.

She added the celebration included not only visiting the Pearce homestead, but also the nearby Backus-Page House and St. Peter's Anglican Church.

Reunions are held every 50 years, Clutterbuck explained.

Detailed records help preserve the family history, she said.

"Over the years, they kept good records."

The reunion also provided an opportunity for family member and author Alison Pearce to show off her 550-page hardcover book on the history of the family.

It covers every detail in the family story, including several foldout photos from past reunions with a key identifying who attended.



PATRICK BRENNAN Times-Journal

Posing in a carriage on the front lawn of the Pearce homestead are front row, left, Alison Pearce, holding a copy of her new book on the family history, Elaine Brown, a Pearce family descendant and one who grew up in the home in the background, back left, Mary Clutterbuck, also a Pearce family descendant and Jean Gow-Leitch.

■ **TRACING LINEAGE:** 200th anniversary for first families of Talbot Settlement



PATRICK BRENNAN Times-Journal

Mary Clutterbuck, left, Jean Gow-Leitch and Alison Pearce, trace their lineage on a genealogical chart at a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the first families of the Talbot Settlement Saturday in Tyrconnell.

July 14th 2009

FAMILY HISTORY

In 1800 Leslie Patterson and six siblings left Fermanagh, Ireland, for Baltimore, Maryland. They later moved to Erie, Pennsylvania where they met Joseph Backus and family from New York and John Pearce from Rhode Island.

In 1808 John Pearce and Leslie Patterson walked around the eastern end of Lake Erie, met Colonel Talbot, and made plans to purchase land in Upper Canada and remain loyal to the British Crown.

On July 14, 1809 thirteen people arrived by boat at Port Talbot; Leslie Patterson, his wife Lydia (Backus), children Joseph and Walter; widow Mary Storey (Patterson) (her husband Andrew had died in Ireland), her adult children Walter, Sarah and Anne; John Pearce, wife Frances (Patterson) with children William, Leslie and Katherine. It is said that Colonel Thomas Talbot met them and carried 4 year old William up the beach.

They had purchased the land five miles west at Tyrconnell the year before, from Colonel Thomas Talbot. The following year, in 1810, Stephen Backus joined them and married Anne Storey in 1811.

They faced many hardships, privations and toil but changed the unbroken forest into the beautiful farms that are there today. In the midst stands St. Peter's Anglican Church, on land donated by Mary Storey, and its doors are still open for services 175 years later. Across the road is the cemetery where many of the early settlers are buried. Beside the cemetery is the John E. Pearce Provincial Park, a lasting legacy.

localnews



NATASHA MARAR Times-Journal

Backus-Page House Museum volunteers Natascha Beisswenger-Mooney, left, and Sarah Nagy give visitors a tour of the home, built in 1850. The tours were part of Canada Parks Day events at the Dutton/Dunwich museum.

■ **HERITAGE:** Guest relates story of fur trade

Parks Day big draw at home

NATASHA MARAR
Times-Journal

TYRCONNEL — People revisited West Elgin's history during a Canada Parks Day event at Backus-Page House Museum in Dutton/Dunwich Sunday.

Approximately 60 people stopped by to tour the museum, a home built in 1850, walk along the Lorne Spicer Trail and learn about the Canadian fur trade from wildlife enthusiast Greg Balch.

Balch is a London Transit bus driver by day and a collector of stuffed animals on the weekends.

He travels across the province teaching students about wildlife management, and gave a two-hour presentation on the subject at Backus-Page House Museum.

Balch brought with him more than 70 stuffed animals and fur trade artifacts.

"Kids like to walk up to the (stuffed) bear and get down to look into its eyes," he said.

Balch is hoping to one day add a polar bear and more breeds of ducks to his collection.

"It was excellent," said Elaine Brown, who watched Balch's presentation.

Lori Milos-Ivanski, cultural manager at the museum,

said Canada Parks Day at Backus-Page House Museum has been increasingly geared toward bringing in local historians and experts to educate visitors.

"This weekend is about awareness and appreciation of what we have as Canadians," Milos-Ivanski said.

"People have forgotten how significant this area was to settlers (in the early 1800s) and the country as a whole."

She also said many people don't know that there are hiking and trail opportunities and a free day-use area along Lake Erie, John E. Pearce Provincial Park, located across the street.

"And we have very diverse wildlife," Milos-Ivanski said in an interview.

Woodpeckers, hawks and eagles are some of the noticeable birds in the area.

Backus-Page House Museum will hold its annual Heritage Farm Show on Labour Day weekend to share more of Elgin county's history.

The event will feature displays and activities such as steam engines, blacksmithing, heritage tours, wagon rides, antique cars and rope making, to name a few.



Backus-Page House Museum 2009 Events

Student Pioneer Day Friday, May 22nd

Historical interpretation of the early years of the Talbot Settlement, strictly for students, chaperones and educators. Contact the THS office to register.

Relive the Talbot Settlement 200th Anniversary Saturday, May 23rd

Interact with historical re-enactors, tradesmen and interpreters. Refreshments, children's activities and house tours will be available.

Canada Parks Day Celebration Sunday, July 19th

Lecture, house tours provided by costumed interpreters, light refreshments and guided park tours. To learn more about Canada Parks Day visit www.parksday.ca

Pioneer Day Camps July 27 - August 1 August 10 - 14

For children ages 6 to 12. Crafts, games and historical demonstrations. Cost is \$80 per child per week including 2 snacks a day. Registration is limited.

Heritage Farm Show Saturday, Sept 5th 10am to 4pm Sunday, Sept 6th 9am to 4pm

Farm themed displays and demonstrations featuring steam engines, working horses, threshing, blacksmithing, heritage tours and children's activities. Saturday barbeque and a Sunday pancake breakfast and church service. Contact the THS office for admission fees and information.

1850s Christmas Dinner Saturday, December 5

Win a genuine 1850's Christmas Dinner served at the Backus-Page House Museum. Raffle tickets will be available in July at the THS office.

Sept 2009.

PIONEER EDUCATION DAY
RELIVE THE TALBOT SETTLEMENT~CELEBRATING 200 YEARS

This year's two day event had special significance as the community marks the 200th anniversary of the landing of the original founding families on the shores of Lake Erie in "Little Ireland". Our Pioneer Education Day was a great success with hundreds of students on site to experience life in the early years of the Talbot Settlement. Students were both educated and entertained as they learned how to hook a rug, shear a sheep, spin yarn, march in proper formation, make rope and write with a quill pen. The stories of the camp follower, Cyrus Sutler, Mary Storey and Captain Bob took the students on a trip back in time. Visits to the native encampment and the woods revealed a new way of looking at our country, our history and the land around us.

On Saturday, visitors to the Backus-Page House were treated to a military re enactment complete with a raid on the house by members of the American forces. The inhabitants of the settlement put up a valiant effort and were able, in the end, to overcome the invaders. A sad note coloured the victory of our home forces as our brave blacksmith Patrick Mooney "fell victim" to the invaders.



MIDDEN TREASURES

May 2009

The Backus-Page House was built in 1850 and was occupied by the Backus family during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Andrew Backus died in 1885 and Mary Jane, his wife, died in 1892. Today, the Backus-Page House, which was known as Lakeview Farm during the nineteenth century, is presented as a living history museum, with the house restored to the 1850s time period. The house is furnished with pieces either on loan, donated or bought through auction for the museum. However, vestiges of that time period are evident around the house if you know where to look. The kitchen garden is turning up ceramic sherds which most likely belonged to the Backus family. The word sherd, rather than the more commonly used shard, refers specifically to broken piece of pottery. These sherds once made up vessels, such as bowls and plates, which the family used throughout their daily lives. Though they may seem insignificant they really are a direct connection to the Backus family and contain a wealth of information. One can only imagine one of the Backus children tripping and breaking a plate, with Mary Jane then having to toss the broken sherds out the back door.

During the nineteenth century the Industrial Revolution had taken hold of England and resulted in the mass production of goods. During this time period any of the ceramics that the Backus family would have used would have been most likely manufactured in England. England was the largest exporter of ceramics in the world and fortunately detailed records have been kept of the types produced over time. Thus, one can look at a ceramic sherd and know the time frame in which it was produced. As well, ceramic sherds allow one to look at socioeconomic status.

During their occupation of the house, Andrew and Mary Jane would have discarded their rubbish behind the house in a midden (garbage heap). It is traces of this midden that are evident in what is now the kitchen garden. It is highly likely that the midden would have been directly behind the house, as this was a pattern seen at nineteenth century European household sites across North America. Currently, and fortunately, only the surface is being scratched of this treasure-trove of information. It is in middens that archaeologists can learn the most about the occupants of an archaeological site.

The scattered sherds on the surface of the garden are made up of a number of different nineteenth century ceramic types. The type of material a ceramic sherd is made up of is called a ware type. The majority of the ceramic ware types evident in the garden are refined white and red earthenware, coarse red earthenware, porcelain and stone ware. The red earthenware and stoneware would have been used for more utilitarian purposes, such as vessels for the storage of foodstuffs and every day dinnerware. The Backus family would have served guests with finer white earthenware and porcelain. Porcelain in the nineteenth century was the most expensive type of ceramic and so represents wealth in a household. Porcelain was often decorated with Chinese inspired designs. Transfer printed wares were also more expensive than plainer types and so also represent wealth in a house. Among the sherds in the kitchen garden are transfer printed purple, black and blue refined white earthenware sherds. Transfer printed wares have images that have been printed on them. It is clear that the Backus family was not a poor family and held a position of some prestige in the community. It is also clear how dependent this country's earliest occupants were on England, with Port Tyrconnell being a small part of the vast trade network of England. Though ceramic sherds may be overlooked, it is important for us to remember that, as keepers of the historic Backus Page House, that they are a direct link to the Backus family, its first occupants.

Sarah Kristen Nagy

Assistant Museum Manager Backus-Page House

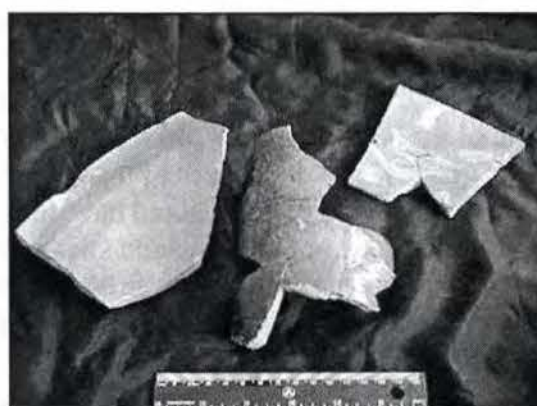
Examples of representative sherds similar to items found at the Backus Page House.



Transfer printed refined white earthenware†



Stoneware†



Red coarse earthenware†



Porcelain†

†Photography source- www.smu.ca/academic/arts/anthropology/ceramics

Photos taken Sept 2nd 200



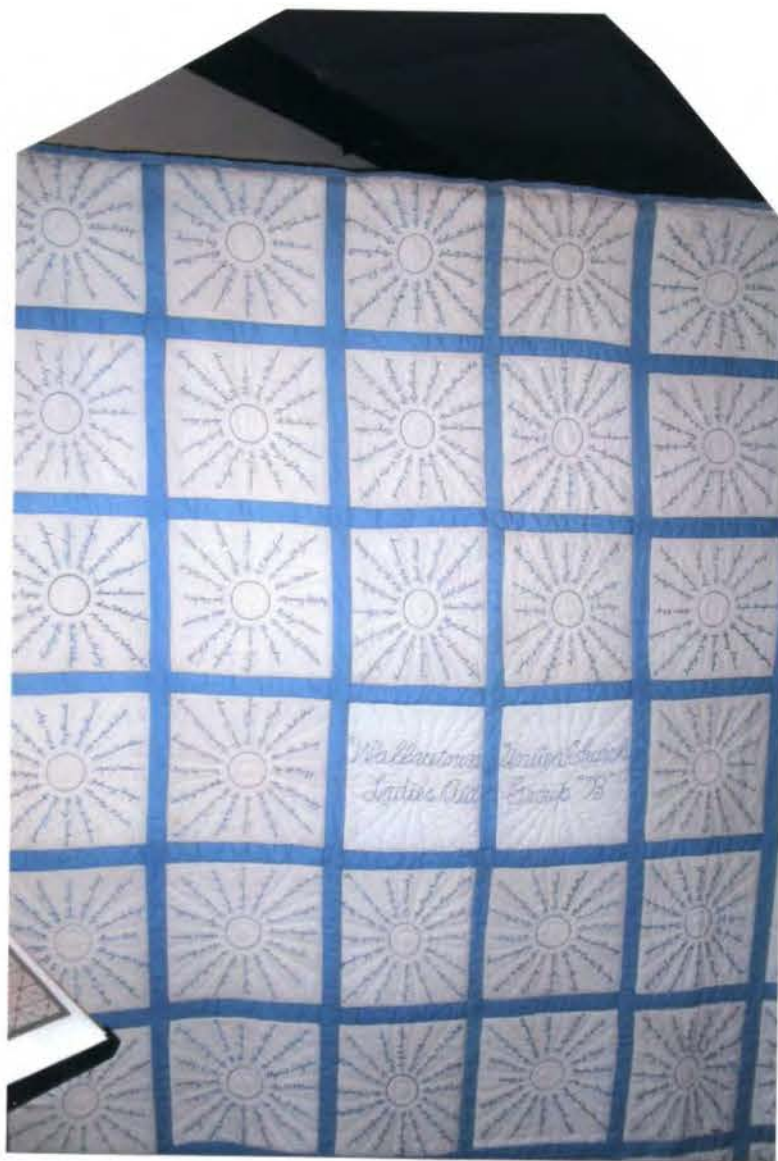
Wallacetown Unite Church Lodge
Group 'B' Signature Quilt 1929-19

These Quilts were taken
at The Backus - Page
House.





Backus-Page House
one room upstairs
Sept 2ND 2009.



Wallacetown United Church
Ladies group "B"
Signature Quilt.
1929 - 1931.

May 6th 2010

Victoria's secret revealed

Jesse Cnockaert
The Chronicle

Visitors to the Backus-Page House Museum on Lakeview Line may now get a peek at Victoria's Secret, in a manner of speaking.

A soiree was held the evening of May 2 to introduce members of the public to a collection of 19th Century undergarments, all made by Tracy Gordon of Dutton.

Gordon has been sewing for over 25 years. The very first period piece she ever stitched was an 1837 tea gown that she wore to a church social commemorating Queen Victoria. Today, she works out of her home on Main Street Dutton creating historical replica undergarments as well as period underwear.

"When I decided I was going to pursue historical sewing...no one was doing underwear," said Gordon. "So I thought, 'what era has the most?' and the answer came, the 19th Century."

Gordon is also a former board member of the Tyrconnel Heritage Society and a historical re-enactor. Her undergarment display included drawers, corsets, stockings, bloomers, petticoats, pantaloons and others.

Lori Milos-Ivanski, Cultural Manager for the Backus-Page House, assisted Gordon with clothing research, and mapped out the display and made the display signs.



Jesse Cnockaert The Chronicle

Tracy Gordon, a historic textile artisan of Dutton, loaned a collection of 19th Century-style undergarments that she made herself to the Backus-Page House Museum. The collection will be available for viewing at the House until July 6. She is shown here with a ball gown.

"As a museum, we have a mandate to interpret the site... and we felt this was reflective of something that would have been the social culture of the time," said Milos-Ivanski.



11

A Peek at Victoria's Secrets

Exhibition Map Legend

- Figure 1. Chemise~ Circa 1920 *Hand embroidered, hand and machine sewed, cotton, possible trousseau piece*
- Figure 2. Panniers, corset and chemise~ Replica 1745 mode *Cotton, and acrylic boning*
- Figure 3. Short stays and chemise~ Replica 1810-1812 mode *Cotton, natural fibers*
- Figure 4. Dry-Rack- Top rung, Child's drawers~ Replica circa 1860 mode.. *Cotton*
Middle rung, Lady's drawers~ Circa 1860-1900.. *Cotton, hand sewed*
Bottom rung, Man's drawers ~ Replica circa 1860 mode *Cotton*
- Figure 5. Nightgown~ Circa 1910 *Brushed cotton (flannel)*
- Figure 6. Dry Rack- Top rung, Nightgown~ Circa 1890-1900 *Cotton*
Middle rung, Nightgown~ Circa 1910 *Cotton, possible trousseau piece*
- Figure 7. Chemise ~Replica circa 1880 mode, Corset, split bottom drawers and caged crinoline~ Replica circa 1860 mode *Cotton and natural fibers, steel boning*
- Figure 8. Civil War Ball Gown~ Replica circa 1860 mode *Manmade synthetic fibers, natural fiber and steel hoops*
- Figure 9. Chemise~ Circa 1890-1900 *Cotton, hand and machine stitched*
- Figure 10. Corset cover~ Circa 1880 with some restoration *Cotton*
Petticoat~ Circa 1910.. *Cotton, hand stitched and machine sewed*
- Figure 11. Bridal Nightgown~ Circa 1900 *Cotton, machine and hand stitched*
- Figure 12. Union suit and night cap~ Replica circa 1860 to contemporary mode.. *Cotton*
- Figure 13. Chemise~ Circa 1890-1910.. *Cotton, hand stitched*
- Figure 14. Left to right- Everyday wear petticoat~ Circa 1910 *Machine stitched*
Everyday wear petticoat~ Circa 1920 *Machine stitched*
Formal Petticoat~ Circa 1910.. *Machine stitched with hand sewn embellishments, possible trousseau item*
Bottom shelf- Cloche socks ~ Replica circa 1700s mode
Civil War Socks~ Replica circa 1860
- Figure 15. Corset cover~ Circa 1880-1910.. *Cotton, machine stitched, hand sewn button holes, partial restoration*
-

Exhibition Map

North Wall



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

East Wall



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

Center Room



Figure 8

South Wall



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12

West Wall



Figure 13

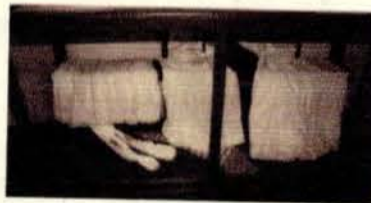


Figure 14



Figure 15

NEWS

Stained glass windows rededicated at Bobier Villa

Jesse Cnockaert
The Chronicle

Two beautiful stained glass windows have found a home at Bobier Villa, Dutton, after having been removed from the deconsecrated Nativity Church.

The Nativity Church, located on Currie Rd., was deconsecrated in November, 2008.

"After the church was deconsecrated the parish became steward of its assets. Besides the building itself, the windows were the most precious items," said Reverend Brenda Clark, incumbent, Parish of Tyrconnell.

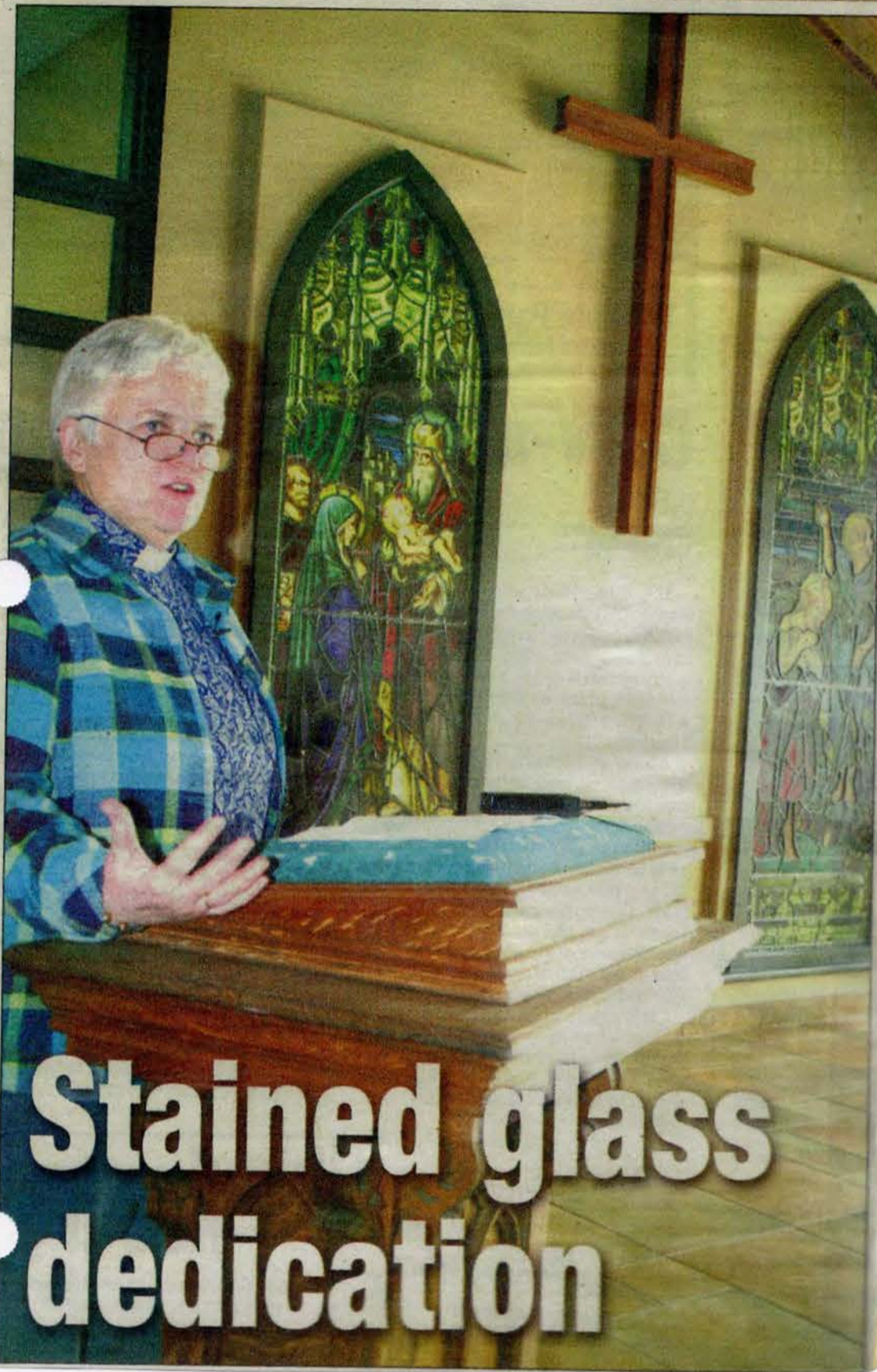
Clark said that the parish thought it would be great if they could find someplace local to keep the windows, and they found such a place at Bobier Villa. On March 18, two stained glass windows from the church were rededicated in Bobier Villa's chapel.

One window depicts Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist, and it was originally dedicated to the memory of Edward Bobier, who died Nov. 19, 1947. The second window depicts Jesus' dedication at the temple when he was eight days old, and it was originally dedicated to the memory of Thomas Hockin, who passed away Sept. 8, 1941.

Cameron McWilliam, Mayor of Dutton/Dunwich, also attended the dedication service to say a few words.

"We have some beautiful stained glass windows," he said. "It shows the dedication and goodwill that the residents have in our community towards Bobier Villa and to community projects."

Reverend Clark explained that, long ago, stained glass windows were used in churches as a visual way of telling stories from the bible, in a time when many people were illiterate.



Stained glass dedication

