



Dressing for history

Students from Dutton/Dunwich Public School dress up as pioneers during educational day May 27 during Talbot Settlement Days at the Backus-Page House Museum near Wallacetown.

Looking right at home in their old-fashioned clothes are (from left) Emma Stone, Logan Patterson, Shiah Kosma, Owen Stafford, Jordan Kelly, Arianna Lethbridge, and Cassidy Abel. (Photo by Brian Wilsdon)

12 The Chronicle • Thursday, June 9, 2011



Robert Chauk QMI Agency

How to make rope

Simon Crouch, a Tyrconnell Heritage Society volunteer, shows rope-making to students from Dunwich-Dutton Public School taking part in Relive the Talbot Settlement May 27 at the Backus-Page House.



Robert Chauk QMI /

Relive the Talbot settlement

Leah Girardin, left, Jordan Kelly and Shiah Kozma, all Grade 3 students at Dunwich-Dutton Public School, try their hands with quill pens during education day May 27 at the Relive the Talbot Settlement annual weekend at the Backus-Page House, Tyrconnell. Students from several area public schools took part in the full day of hands-on activities explaining pioneer ways

Community Snapshot



Ready, set...

June 1st 2011

Lyle Haves takes aim, while his son Josh blows a warning whistle that American troops were approaching during a War of 1812 re-enactment, part of the 'Relive the Talbot Settlement' event held May 27-28 at the Backus-Page House Museum in Wallacetown. (Photo by Brian Wilsdon)

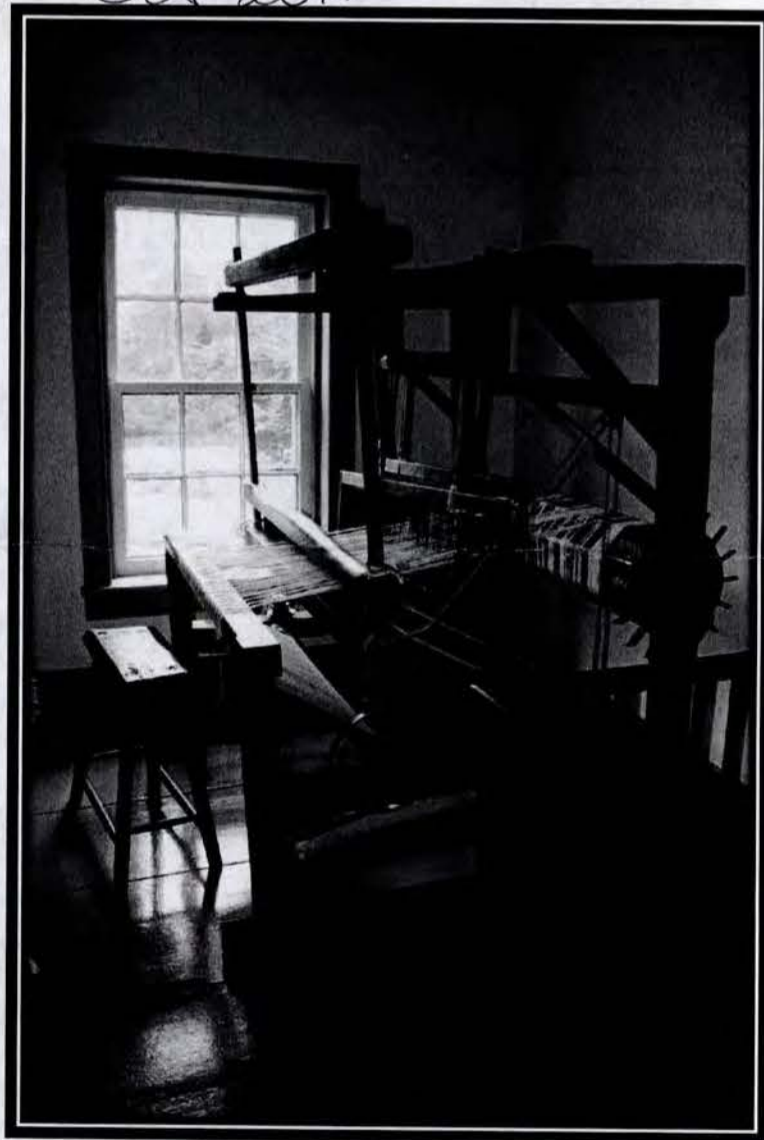
**Featured from the Backus-Page House Museum
Collection**

The loom located on the second floor landing is available for viewing thanks to the generosity of the MacLean Family of Fingal. Leon MacLean remembers his mother spending many hours weaving on the loom and he has worked on the loom himself.

Administrative paperwork indicates the origin of the loom to be the Iona area, circa 1850. This kind of loom is often referred to as a "barn frame" loom. 'Old Looms Glossary', a manuscript by Gene Valk (a member of the Complex Weavers Historic Manuscript Group), defines a barn frame loom as such; "Any of the looms constructed of large beams, with mortise and tenon joinings, and with dowels and/or wedges as fasteners. The beams and cross pieces (girts, rails) support the cloth and warp beams, as well as the harness and beater. Three main types are: four post, sleigh, and cantilevered. Some looms have diagonal braces or supporting struts for added stability. This construction resembling the framing of a barn, gives the looms their name...."

She goes onto to write ... "They were framed like barns because their makers were familiar with construction methods of early barns and homes. Their framing gives them their name: barn frame looms."

Currently the loom is set up to weave rag rugs, a sample of which is included with the long-term loan.



West Elgin

Chronicle

www.thechronicle-online.com

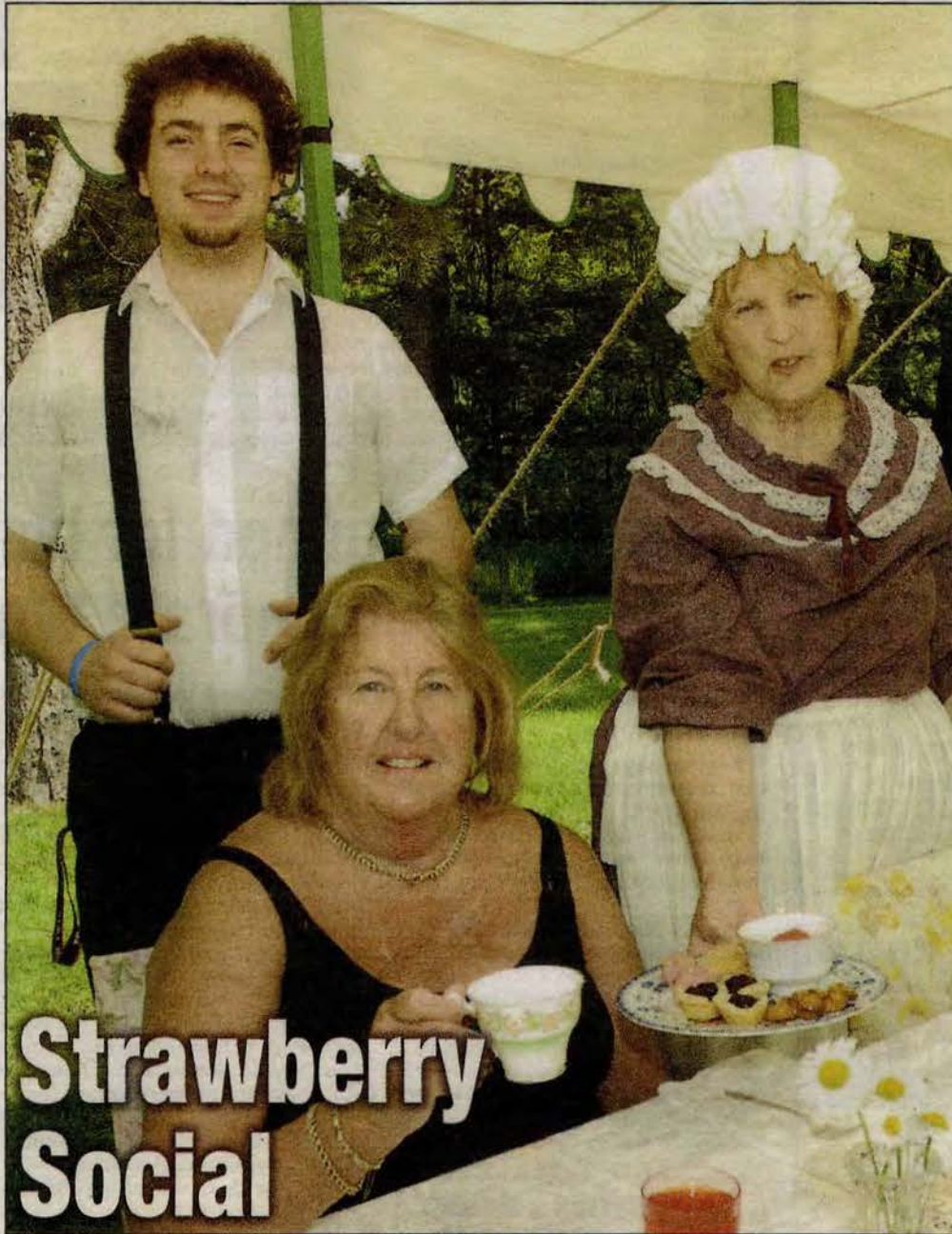
June 30th 2011



Strawberry Social~ June 26th 2011
Advance tickets @\$15 each

Low tea will include strawberry water, tea,
scones with cream & jam, tarts with
custard, berries in bowls. Tickets will be
available after May 1st. Call the Carriage

House Office
at 519-762-3072.



Strawberry Social

GMI agency photo

Graham Wood, left, of the Backus-Page House greets Helen Van Brenk at a strawberry social June 26. Serving food is Norah Bennetto, right. A total of 31 were served period food and beverages at the strawberry social.



■ **BYGONE DAYS:** St. Paul's Cathedral youth paint Huron Choir camp quarters in 1966



In this July, 1966 photograph, some of the young people from St. Paul's Cathedral in London were hard at work staining the staff bunkhouse at the Huron Choir camp at Tyrconnell. The camp was set to open with the first group of choir boys due to arrive for a week of singing and camping. From left — Christine Davies, 12; Kenneth Hillgartner, 13, both of London; and Ken Harris, 13, RR 3, Komoka. Anyone with information on this photograph or to request a reprint, please call 519-631-1460 ext. 154. To view or comment on this photograph, visit the Archives' flickr site: <http://bit.ly/cP3YCX>.

July 14th 2011
TJ.

ST. THOMAS TIMES-JOURNAL COLLECTION,
courtesy of the City of St. Thomas



Autumn Issue 2011

THE LAKEVIEW SENTINEL

Backus-Page House Museum, P.O. Box 26, 29424 Lakeview Line, Wallacetown, Ontario

Uelcome to the first edition of the LAKEVIEW SENTINEL, the newsletter of the Tyrconnell Heritage Society and Backus-Page House Museum. We thought you would be interested in how we came to the new name for our quarterly newsletter.

The Marketing, Fundraising and Grant Committee has been working to promote the site and the museum. Those efforts have included the creation of a brand for the museum defined by the terms "historic experience" and "connection". A new Victorian inspired logo was designed and readers may have already noticed it in use. The latest step in revitalizing our marketing program has been the renaming of the Society's newsletter to better illustrate the brand of the site and the area in general.

An anecdotal interpretation exists that relates the supposed habit of Mary Jane Backus, the first chatelaine of the house once known as Lakeview. Mary Jane would sit on the second floor landing, weaving on her loom and watching for ships coming from distant ports to dock at Port Tyrconnell. Thus, she provided an ever-watchful eye to the comings and goings along the shoreline of "Little Ireland".

Mary Jane's loom is long since gone. The house, once called Lakeview, has been renamed to honor both of the families that called it home. The days of sailing ships are far past and the old port is more likely to be visited by seagulls soaring low over Lake Erie's shallow blue grey waters than anything else. Trees now block the view so the lake cannot be seen from the second story window. What still remains is the house, the history of Tyrconnell, its port and the area that had become affectionately known as "Little Ireland" due to the lineage of its original inhabitants.

The mission statement and strategic plan of the Tyrconnell Heritage Society lays out a purpose for the organization and the site; "Through its work, the Society seeks to address the social and cultural needs of the community and provide leadership in the preservation of heritage resources.Cultural, social and economic inclusiveness with respect to exhibitions, education programs and special events are central to the way in which the Society seeks community involvement in the life and work of the museum."* The Society feels it has an obligation to the Public Trust in preserving and interpreting the history of the site for current and future generations. Like Mary Jane Backus, the organization has become a guardian of sorts. It is one that works to guarantee that a rich heritage will remain available and accessible to the local and global community. This role is highlighted with the renaming of the Society's newsletter. The LAKEVIEW SENTINEL will celebrate the history of the house and the estate, and our dedication to stand guard by fulfilling our mandate and commitment to our community.

A Family Affair by Angela Foreman Bobier~ THS Volunteer

July 2011

One of the definitions of family is "a group of people related to one another by blood or marriage". By this definition, the first settlers to Tyrconnell were the truest definition of family. To find out how they were connected, read on.

Tyrconnell's Founding Families BACKUS, PATTERSON, PEARCE, & STOREY 1809-1810

SIBLING CONNECTIONS:

Colonel Leslie Patterson and his sisters, Mary Patterson-Storey and Frances Patterson-Pearce
Lydia Backus-Patterson and her brother, Stephen Backus

MARRIAGE CONNECTIONS:

Colonel Leslie Patterson married Lydia Backus;
Mary Patterson was the widow of Andrew Storey;
Frances Patterson married John Pearce;
Shortly after arriving in Tyrconnell, Stephen Backus married Anne Storey on 25 March 1811.

THE 1809 UNMARRIED CHILDREN OF THE SETTLERS:

Joseph and Walter Patterson, sons of Leslie & Lydia (Backus) Patterson;
Anne, Walter, Sarah, and Robert Storey, children of Mary (Patterson) & the late Andrew Storey;
William, Leslie, and Catherine Pearce, children of Frances (Patterson) & John Pearce



Note: Mary Patterson-Storey was a widow when she came to Tyrconnell, so Andrew Storey was not one of the settlers.

Stephen and Anne (Storey) Backus were the parents of Andrew Backus, the first owner of what is now the Backus-Page House Museum.

Another definition of Family is "all the descendants of a common ancestor". If you are related to any of the 4 Tyrconnell Founding Families, we'd like to hear from you.

Please email backuspagehouse@gmail.com with your family connection, pictures and stories. This will assist us in our museum research. Your story may be featured in an upcoming edition of our newsletter or on our website.

Information gathered from "The Early History of Dunwich Township Volume I" and www.ancestry.ca
Some sources show Mary Patterson-Storey's husband as Walter Storey and some show Andrew Storey.

Keeg 2011

Tea Traditions by Dora Foster~ THS Volunteer

Tea was forbidden to the young Princess Victoria. Her governess refused her to take tea at all. When she became Queen in 1837, one of the first things she did was to order a cup of tea.

Before tea came to England, they had only two main meals: breakfast and dinner. Breakfast consisted of ale, bread, and beef. A debate arose with tea's introduction. The Clergy was convinced that it must be a sin, since it came from a heathen country. Doctors were of the opinion that it was undoubtedly unhealthy, which gave the government an excuse to tax it to the tune of 5 shillings a pound on dry leaf in 1689, causing prices to soar. Brewers were afraid that it would replace ale as a breakfast drink.

Anna the 7th Duchess of Bedford, one of Queen Victoria's ladies-in-waiting, is credited as the creator of afternoon teatime early in the 19th century. The Duchess suffered from "a sinking feeling" at about four o'clock in the afternoon, and decided to take tea to assuage the hunger of afternoon between breakfast and a late dinner. Soon she was inviting friends to join her for her tea around 4:00 or 5:00, and served a light luncheon of tea, sandwiches, small cakes and sweets. This became so popular that she began sending cards to her friends asking them to join her for "tea and a walking the fields".



Afternoon tea became so popular that soon Tea Gardens popped up everywhere. The Tea garden was one of the few places ladies could enter a mixed gathering in public without criticism. It is said that Lord Nelson (who defeated Napoleon at sea), met his wife, Emma, at a tea garden. The Tea Gardens were open air restaurants where ladies and gentlemen could walk along flowered walkways with lovely floral entwined arbours. Many had bowling greens, concerts, gambling, and fireworks.

History of Afternoon Tea

Most people refer to afternoon tea as high tea because they think it sounds regal, when actually, high tea, or "meat tea" is dinner. High tea, in Britain, tends to be on the heavier side. On the other hand, American hotels and tea rooms misunderstand its meaning and offer tidbits of fancy pastries and cakes on delicate china when they offer a "high tea".

Afternoon tea, (called so because it was usually taken in the late afternoon) is also called "low tea". This is because it was usually taken in a sitting room or drawing room where low tables, like coffee tables, were placed near sofas or chairs.

There are three basic types of Afternoon, or Low Tea:

Cream Tea - Tea, scones, jam and cream

Light Tea - Tea, scones and sweets

Full Tea - Tea, savouries, scones, sweets and dessert

NOTES FROM THE CARRIAGE HOUSE OFFICE

Exhibit Summary

Nov 2011

October 10th marked the close of the museum's latest exhibit "St. Peter's Anglican Church, Celebrating 184 Years". The exhibit illustrated and celebrated the church's history, architecture, and artifacts. Items on display included the original deed to the land for St Peter's (dated 1828), a silver communion service donated to the church by Charlotte, the second daughter of the late Governor Simcoe (dated 1844) and portraits of the church reverends from 1829 to 1925

Margaret Bennetto curated the exhibit. Margaret worked as Junior Director of Operations for the Backus-Page House Museum in 2004. She attended the University of Waterloo and received a BA in Classical Studies and Anthropology and then went on to study Museum Management and Curatorship at Sir Sanford Fleming College. Margaret is currently employed in the museum field in Ottawa.

Special thanks to Dave and Jenny Phillips of the Village Crier, Reverend Canon Brenda Clark, Grace Ford, Anna Tokarz and Leslie Whittington-Carter for their contributions to the exhibit.



Backus Page Museum

Aug 2011



Photo- St. Peter's Church. "From a painting by E.J.N. Kelly in the early fifties."
Source: St. Peter's Church. 1827-1928, by Anna F. Docker and J.E. Pearce, 1928. p. 7

Sept 27th 2011



St. Peter's Church

Celebrating 184 Years

July 17th to October 10th

Backus-Page House
Museum

29424 Lakeview Line,

Wallacetown, Ont.

519-762-3072

www.backuspagehouse.ca



Sept 23/2011, Lake Erie Beacon



Presentation honours members of the Page family

Andrew Hibbert

A perfect fall afternoon with sunlight streaming through the trees at the entrance to the Spicer Trail was the setting for a presentation to honour one of the founding families in the Tyrconnell area, the Pages.

In 1845, Jonas Page, with his wife and young son, arrived from England at Five Stakes, Upper Canada, which is now known as Talbotville. He was looking to settle in the area and was directed to the home of Colonel Thomas Talbot. Talbot had obtained a large land grant from the British government along the shores of Lake Erie and was charged with organizing the settlement of the area.

Jonas, on his second trip to see Talbot was awarded with a parcel of land at the princely sum of \$2.00 an acre on the shores of Lake Erie, 2 miles west of Port Tyrconnell. Jonas and his wife had 10 children. It was his namesake son, Jonas Jr., who came into possession of the future home of the Backus-Page House Museum. Jonas bought the property from the Backus family for his son Morley and daughter-in-law Grace in 1925.

The property would remain in the Page family for the next forty years.

Morley and Grace farmed the land, raised a family and grew old in the "Lakeview House". In 1968 Grace and Morley sold the house and farm to the Ministry of Natural Resources and retired to a local apartment with winters spent in Florida. Members of the Page family continue to play a part in the history of the Backus Page House as active members of the Tyrconnell Heritage Society.

On Sunday September 18th Patrick Mooney President of the Tyrconnell Heritage Society led the dedication of two decorative benches to past members of the Page family. The benches will be placed along the Spicer Trail, which begins on the Backus-Page property for the convenience of hikers.

The first bench (*above right*) was donated by the Page family in memory of Shelly Page Broad 1965-2010. Shelly was the daughter of Ardythe and John Page.

The second bench (*above left*) was donated by the Page family in memory of Grace and Morley Page the last residents of the Backus-Page house.

The concept for the benches came from Don Playton who looks after the grounds and trails at the Backus-Page House Museum.

Museum Map

Please take one

St. Peter's Church Celebrating 184 Years

July 2011

-
- 1. Clergy or Bishop chair**
Donated by Mrs. Andrew Backus, 1860
 - 2. Deed of land for St. Peter's Church**
1828
 - 3. Bishop chair**
Donated by Mr. and Mrs. John Pearce,
1881
 - 4. Silver Communion service**
 - a. Flagon, chalice and two plates**
Donated by Charlotte, daughter of
the Late Governor Simcoe, 1844
 - b. Chalice**
Donated by William Pearce, 1883
 - 5. Pupil's work book**
John S. Pearce, 1926
Courtesy of Grace Ford
 - 6. Register from the 100th Anniversary
of St. Peter's Church**
July 23, 1928
Courtesy of Grace Ford
 - 7. Bishop chair**
Donated by Mr. and Mrs. John Pearce,
1881
 - 8. Communion linen**
Charles James Stewart, 1834
 - 9. Walnut Communion table**
Donated by Mrs. Patterson and
daughters, 1856
 - 10. Book of Common Prayer**
Written inscription reads, "*To the Glory
of Almighty God and in Loving
Remembrance of Mr and Mrs. John S.
Pearce, who departed this life 1923.
Presented to St. Peter's Church
Tyrconnell by Their Family.*"
 - 11. Common Prayer Book**
Written inscription reads, "*Mrs. John
Pearce, Tyrconnell from her affectionate
son, John Peabury, Xmas 1871.*"
Courtesy of Grace Ford
 - 12. The Psalter and Canticles, Chants
Ancient and Modern**
Written inscription reads, "*Sarah C.
Pearce. Wallacetown, 1889. From
Cousin John S. Pearce London.*"
Courtesy of Grace Ford
 - 13. Portraits of Reverends**
1829-1925



Books of Common Prayer

**The Congregation of Nativity/St. Peter's
welcomes you to St. Peter's Church, Tyrconnell**



**Our mission is to nurture the community and
inspire those whom we meet to share our love
of God and of all people.**

Silver Communion Service 1844

**Motto: Love in faith
Love in service
Love in hope**

Please enter here and be at peace

Here are some prayers

Those who work for change suffer resistance.
So make us strong.
Those who do new things sometimes feel afraid.
So make us brave.
Those who challenge the world, as it is, arouse anger.
So grant us inner peace.
Those who live joyfully are envied.
So make us generous.
Those who try to love encounter hate.
So make us steadfast in you.
(The St Hilda Community)

Circle us with your light and your love. (A Celtic Prayer)

OUR LOGO

The ship, with the Celtic crosses on the sails, represents the landing of families (with members of Irish descent) on the shores of what would be called Tyrconnell. These families are the spiritual ancestors of St. Peter's Church. The bluffs are reminiscent of the cliffs beyond Pearce Park and the Historic Cemetery. The Star of Bethlehem completes the present reality of the Congregation of Nativity/St. Peter's, a worshipping community since the early 1970's. After worshipping together for about 40 years, six months in one church and six months in the other, that one community made the decision in 2007 to sell Nativity Church in Dutton.

This logo is full of hope. While families came in 1809, settled and gave birth to a church for their worship, today we create a space where God's love may come to birth in our midst in many ways. It calls for openness, expectation and firmness of purpose.

We are very grateful for the pushes and promptings of God's ever-present Spirit among us. We have great dreams for a future yet to be!!!

Please keep us in your prayers!!!

Selective memories



The War of 1812 gave Canada a military hero, Sir Isaac Brock, and the Americans elevated Native warrior Tecumseh (above) to the status of inspirational legend.

BILL HARRIS
QMI Agency

Four "nations" fought in the War of 1812: American, Canadian, British, Native. The latter three were on the same side, kinda sorta.

But the picture that emerges from the new documentary titled *The War of 1812* — which airs Monday, Oct. 10, on most PBS affiliates — is that each of those four nations remembers what it wants to remember about the conflict.

Canada recalls the War of 1812 most fondly, viewing it as the point when we first defended our version of freedom. As Canadian Naval historian Victor Suthren puts it in the doc, "Canadians weren't quite sure who they were before the War of 1812, but (afterward) the key populations knew who they weren't: They weren't American."

Britain barely remembers the War of 1812 because it was preoccupied at the time, fighting Napoleon-led France in Europe. The British considered their struggle with Napoleon to be a righteous world war against tyranny, and they were furious with the Americans for choosing that moment to imperil colonial Canada.

For the Americans, they remember only specific parts of the War of 1812. Namely, the "bombs bursting in air" over Baltimore that eventually gave them their national anthem, and the routing of a British attack on New Orleans that did not involve Canadians and took place in early 1815, two weeks after the peace treaty had been signed (word had not reached either side yet).

While people can argue about who "won" the War of 1812 — both Canada and the U.S. celebrated as "victors" at the end, but territorially it was a stalemate, which equates to a victory for Canada in my mind — what is indisputable is that the Natives lost.

see TELEVISION | Page 14

Oct 8th 2011

TELEVISION

New doc shows how all four sides in War of 1812 remembered what they wanted to remember

FROM PAGE 13

Flush with decisive victories in the early parts of the war, Britain advocated the creation of a massive official state for its Native allies, essentially surrounding Lake Michigan. But even though the Americans already largely were beaten and bankrupt, they strung together a couple of notable wins toward the end of the war, thus taking the "oomph" out of Britain's self-serving push for a Native state that might have halted U.S. expansion into the West.

Like most Canadians, I learned about the War of 1812 in school. But when you're going over something so rapidly (and perhaps not paying close attention), it never made geographic sense to me.

So the Americans invaded Canada and thought they would be greeted as liberators (seriously, they did — sound familiar?). Plagued by incompetent generals and the ambivalence of the New England states, the American invasion was repelled.

But wasn't this the same war in which Washington, D.C., burned to the ground? How did that work?

Having seen this documentary, I now understand what happened, and where, and why, much better than I did before.

The War of 1812 gave Canada a military hero, Sir Isaac Brock; a folk hero, Laura Secord; and a fledgling identity.

As for the U.S., a future president — Andrew Jackson — enhanced his reputation at New Orleans. And, oddly, Americans subsequently elevated Native warrior Tecumseh to the status of inspirational legend, even though he had fought for the other side.

The nations involved in the War of 1812 all have selective memories. Myth-wise it's the war that keeps on giving, as disturbing as that would be to the poor souls who died fighting in it.

Nov 4th 2011

Barn Quilts and the War of 1812



Andrew Hibbert

As a follow-up to Mike Baker's article (Sand Plains Funding for Museum Barn Quilt Project) in our October 21st edition I thought it would be interesting to see how the Barn quilt Trail connects throughout Southwestern Ontario.

The Commemoration of the War of 1812 – 1814 Bicentennial begins in June of 2012. The 1812 Trail Blazers group meet regularly in Brantford to work out routes and the corresponding history for Route 1812. This work is coordinated by Adrienne Horne, the regional project manager for the Western Corridor War of 1812 Bicentennial.

Dave Benson and his colleagues in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent are developing the Tecumseh Parkway, another section of Route 1812. The Tecumseh Parkway starts at the mouth of the Thames River and fades into the Longwoods Barn Quilt Trail at Cashmere, where the Americans gave up chasing retreating British soldiers after the Battle of the Thames.

Mary Simpson (see The Longwoods Road Barn Quilt Trail in this edition) and Denise Corneil, under the banner of Ontario Barn Quilt Trails, are promoting barn quilts as a way to inspire rural communities to appreciate and market their assets. The vision is for barn quilts going viral throughout Ontario. The Sand Plains Community Development Fund is supporting the planning of a five county barn quilt trail. Denise Corneil, a barn quilt champion who has studied the American phenomenon says that: "A community cannot have too many barn quilts. Spying them unexpectedly in the rural landscape is a pleasure. Clever use of social media can allow businesses, farms, and



quilts can help rural businesses and non-profits cross the digital divide."

Once the quilts are designed neighbourhoods along the 1812 route begin painting the designs on murals 8 feet square. Then they are installed on heritage timber frame barns. Key locations include the sites of the Battle of the Thames and the Battle of the Longwoods. At the east end will be the British Encampment (Delaware Speedway). Tecumseh's Monument will be featured at the west end. The Longwoods Barn Quilt Trail will be part of "Route 1812", a loop running from Amherstburg to Dundurn Castle in Hamilton.

We hear about the military history but what about the suffering of the people? What do we know about the social impacts of the War of 1812? What do we know about the First Nations families and settlers who were affected? The women and children whose homes were destroyed? The aim of this project is to tell the story of the people through the arts – quilting, beading, painting, and writing.

Wardsville and area stitched a quilt and installed thirty blocks on barns and special places around Wardsville. There has been a great deal of interest

Above: On the Wardsville Barn Quilt Trail
Left: Le Moyne Star painted on a garage door by Allan Watson of Rodney.

in the barn quilts which tell the story of George and Margaret Ward – also a War of 1812 theme. People in Wardsville regularly spot tourists with map in hand, ticking off each barn quilt as they search out the locations. Quilters from across Canada met at Perth Hall in London at the Canadian Quilting Conference in May of this year. Many were familiar with the Wardsville Barn Quilt Trail as it had been featured in their national magazine. A group of quilters from England hired their own bus to visit Wardsville as part of their conference itinerary.

For maps and information about the barn quilt trail go to: www.wardsvillebarnquilts.wordpress.com

An 1812 overview worth watching

PETER WORTHINGTON
QMI Agency

Oct 7th 2011

It's a safe bet not many who are reading this realize next year will be the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812.

PBS and Canadian and British contributors have produced what could be called a two-hour "docudrama" on this two-year war that shaped the continent and which is largely unknown today.

It's an intriguing presentation which will air on PBS TV stations along the border at 9 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 10, and should be essential viewing for Canadians.

As a bevy of historians (American, Canadian, British and North American Indian) remind us, most Americans know very little about the 1812 war (perhaps because they lost it); the British barely remember it (they were fighting Napoleon at the time).

Canadians have reason to remember it because we won — defeated invading Americans in several battles. What we Canadians may not realize is Indians fighting on our side tipped the balance. Yet Indians were betrayed when British pledges to recognize their territory came to naught.

It was a curious war with relatively few casualties, judging by wars that followed. But it had brutal moments. And it took unexpected turns.

The Americans had far more soldiers (mostly militia), but were soundly defeated when they tried to invade from Detroit, Niagara (Queenston Heights), and a pincer attack towards Montreal.

At sea, the mighty Royal Navy expected to easily demolish the tiny U.S. Navy — but was mostly defeated at sea, and on the Great Lakes, where Capt. Oliver Hazard Perry was the hero of the battle of Lake Erie.

So nothing turned out as expected. Essentially, three aspects benefited Canada: 1) a small core of professional British soldiers defended the country and rallied civilian soldiers; 2) Incompetence verging on cowardice of American part-time generals; 3) Indians, initially led by the great chief Tecumseh, went on the war path on behalf of the British and terrified American militiamen, who on occasion were mercilessly slaughtered and mutilated.

The Americans raided and burned York (later renamed Toronto). Bodies of the dead are said to periodically turn up in ground excavated near St. James Cathedral.

In retaliation, the Royal Navy sailed to Washington, then a village, and burned the White House. The Brits then attacked Baltimore which was a thriving seaport and centre of commerce.

After the peace treaty — Treaty of Ghent — the British attacked New Orleans where Andrew Jackson (dubbed by some historians as the physically bravest president the U.S. has ever had) won the battle. Neither side realized the war was officially over.

Out of that war emerged the *Star Spangled Banner* song that later became the U.S. national anthem.

In retrospect, Canada was defended by competent commanders — like Gen. Isaac Brock, killed at Queenston Heights — who knew how to fight a war, and who was hoping to return to Britain and fight Napoleon.

In 1812, Napoleon captured Moscow; England was mildly concerned about Canada.

One outcome of the war was realization in Washington the 36-year-old "revolutionary" country needed a professional army.

The sorriest aspect of the war was the Indians and Tecumseh — the great Shawnee chief who some see as hoping to emulate George Washington and unite Indian tribes from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico into a United Indian confederacy. Once the war was over, Britain forgot its pledge to Indian allies.

Well respected by Brock and British commanders, Tecumseh's death in battle ended his dream, and led to 50 years of Indian wars as Americans opened the West.

The War of 1812 is a painless history lesson that changed the direction of both Canada and the U.S. — and was completely unnecessary.

As one soldier of 1812 laments, it pitted people of the same background against one another. For what? No one is sure.



Nov 2011

In our last newsletter, a call went out to descendents of the founding families to share their stories with our membership. The following article was submitted to our office.

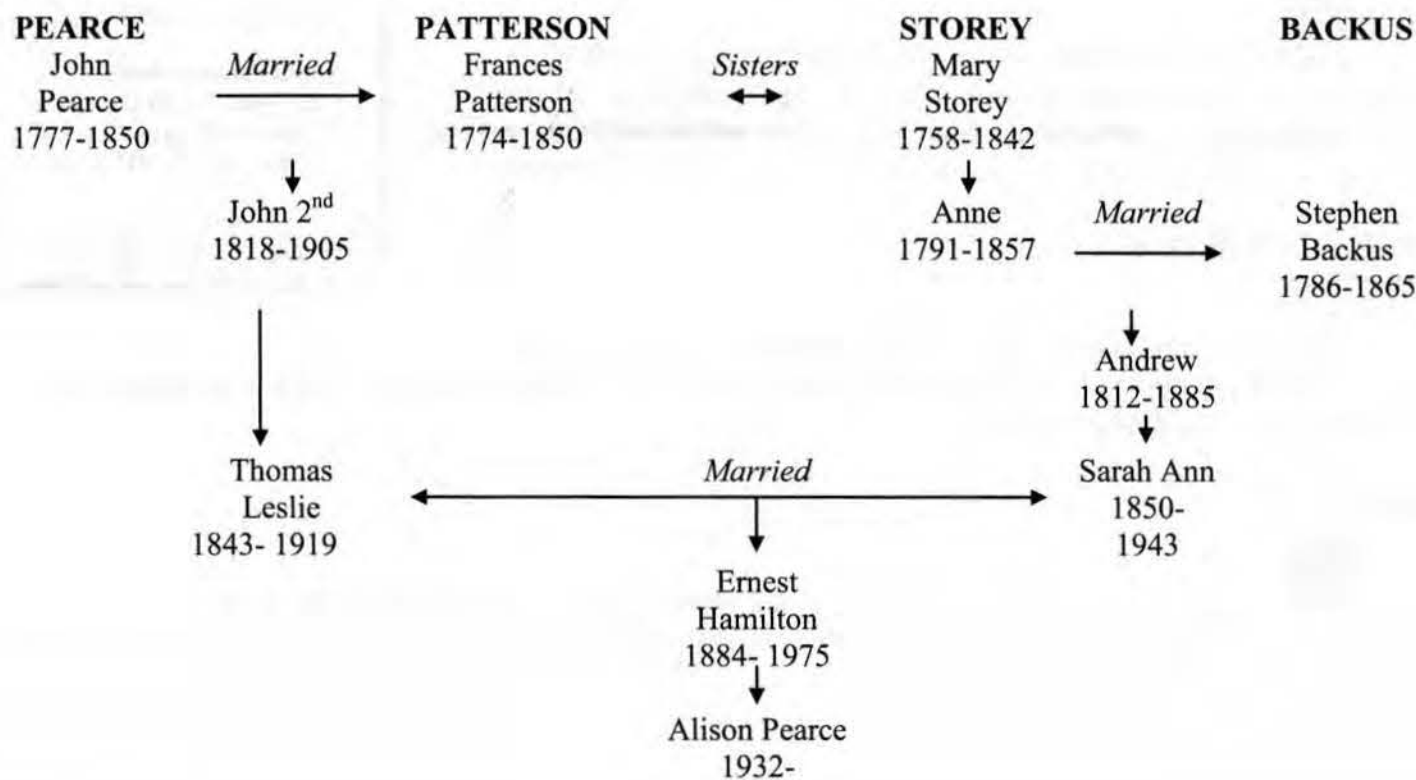
**Alison Pearce
A Descendant of the Four Founding Families of this Community**

Alison grew up in this community, on the farm north of the Backus-Page house Museum. The Hentz family now owns her childhood farm and have resided there for over 50 years. She often tells the story that on a clear day from her bedroom window she could see the horizon to the south, of the deep blue thin line of Lake Erie meeting the lighter blue sky, over what was then the property of John S. Pearce- the original "Pearce Homestead".

Alison spent 41 years living in Toronto where she was deeply involved in education. Her last eight years before retirement, were spent as principal of the Bishop Strachan Junior School. She moved to London eleven years ago in order to work on the board of the Tyrconnell Heritage Society (eight years) while researching material for her book 'The Pearces of "Little Ireland" Tyrconnell 1809-2009'. Alison published her book two years ago, in time for the 200th anniversary reunion of the arrival of the four founding families – Patterson, Pearce, Storey and Backus – to this area.

When she came here eleven years ago, she said she really had no knowledge of how these families were related to one another. As she dug more deeply she was fascinated by the inter-relationship of all four families through marriage and how they worked together to build their homes and develop some of the best farming land in all of Southwestern Ontario. She tells the story of each individual family and their contributions to the area in several historic chapters in Part I of her book.

Alison is proud of the fact that she is descended from all four founding families. The diagram below shows this relationship.





Pearce Park Redheaded Woodpecker Population Part of Study

Nov 2011

A visit to the Pearce Park in summertime will, among many other pleasures, acquaint you with a charismatic and crimson-headed bird, aptly named the Red-headed Woodpecker. With little effort, you should hear their raucous territorial calls and drumming as they warn each other to stay away, and watch them fly catch from their favored perch, a brilliant flash of black, white, and red as they dive after their insect prey.

Though a sighting of Red-headed Woodpeckers at Pearce Park may be common enough, sadly the same cannot be said for the rest of the province. Once a fairly common species throughout their range, Red-headed Woodpeckers are now listed as threatened in Canada, with > 60% population loss over the last 20 years in Ontario alone. And why the species is disappearing throughout Canada and the United States, is puzzling both naturalists and researchers alike.

Historically, the Red-headed Woodpecker occupied savannas and open deciduous forests. Long ago, the settlement of Europeans in North America led to massive losses of these habitats, causing difficulties for many species that called these habitats home. Yet Red-headed Woodpeckers found that settlement towns and the resulting countryside to its liking, especially the new sources of food settlers brought, in the guise of planted fruit and nut trees. This trend of flexibility seems to continue today as Red-heads may be found nesting in a variety of areas with large dead and dying deciduous trees such as town centers, golf courses, animal pastures, cemeteries and woodlots. So here comes the tricky question: Why is a species, such as the Red-headed Woodpecker, that seemingly can make its home in many places, from a leafy downtown suburb, to deciduous woodlots, to cow pastures, undergoing such large declines?

The trickiest aspect of studying a species-at-risk is finding individuals to study in the first place! This is what led a research team from McGill University to Pearce Park. As part of a joint venture with Trent University and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the research team surveyed and monitored nesting pairs of Red-headed Woodpeckers throughout Elgin, Norfolk, and Northumberland counties. Thanks to the help and tips of local naturalist and citizens 47, Red-headed Woodpecker nests were located and monitored in 2011. Without the generosity of the local citizens with their time and sightings, the efforts of the research team would not have been near as successful.

Once the nests were found, they were visited every 4-5 days to monitor their status, record behavioral observations of the parent birds incubating the eggs or feeding their young, and note the presence of any potential competitor species or possible predators. Finally, once the nest was finished, the researchers braved ticks and wild roses to measure various aspects of the habitat including the species and number of trees, the amount of fallen dead wood, the canopy structure, and more.

With all this information in hand, it is my job as team lead, to work on answering the question 'Why are Red-headed Woodpeckers disappearing from Ontario?'. Our work in Pearce Park and our other locations in Ontario will allow us to put some of the puzzle pieces together. Such as, what is 'good' Red-headed Woodpecker habitat? Is there enough of it out there for them to use? Do they have to battle with other species to use the habitat? How well can they raise their young in a given area? Are they limited by their food supply, i.e. the number of flying insects? I hope, by picking away at these questions, we can begin to conserve and protect the Red-headed Woodpeckers of Ontario. And that would mean that visitors to Pearce Park in the future should also have the pleasure to be acquainted with the red-heads that call the park home.

To learn more about the project, please visit www.redheadedwoodpecker.ca.

Barbara Frei, M.Sc.
Ph.D. Candidate,
Dept. of Natural Resource
Sciences, McGill University