



CHRISTMAS DINNER

Congratulations to Dixie Peters and Bill Smith winners of our 2001 Fundraising draw, an old fashioned Christmas dinner for six. After speaking with Dixie and firming up a date, the final plans began.

As December 14 arrived, I went through a mental checklist: put up decorations, menu planned, food donations received, chairs and dishes borrowed and the table set. All that was left to do was cook. As the day went on and mealtime approached, the weather took a turn for the worse. It was our first snow of the season. I worried. What would I do with the food if we had to cancel? I hoped that Bruce and Cathy Bedell would be able to make it in from London, as they were to be our hosts. With the fireplaces lit and the glow of oil lamps, the house was soon warm and cozy. The only hints of modern times were the microwave and electric stove tucked away behind closed doors in the kitchen. Time for a mental checklist again: Consume in the crock pot, rolls in the basket, main course staying warm in the oven, relish trays ready to put on the table. Oh yes, pour the juice in the pitchers. How I'd hoped nothing important had been forgotten!

Our guests had arrived shivering with cold and were treated to the warmth and smell of turkey and venison with all the trimmings. Introductions were made and our guests settled in to a little taste of life in the 1850's.

With dinner served, our guests retired to the parlour with drinks and were delighted with readings from Bruce Bedell. We all felt a twinge of sadness as the evening drew to a close. Our guests lingered over conversation and finally left for home.

Special thanks to all who made this evening possible: Helen Mooser, Ruth Wight, Nancy Baillie, Alice Paterson, Eileen Hull, Audrey Littlejohn, Heather DeBruyn, Gerry Leeson, Ted Gill, Bruce & Cathy Bedell, Emily Dryfhout, Henry Dryfhout and all who sold tickets.

Thank you, to all who generously supported the Backus-Page House through ticket purchases and thank you to Laura Benson, one of our guests, who wrote a wonderful article of their dining experience for local newspapers.



TYRCONNELL HERITAGE SOCIETY

P.O. Box 26
Wallacetown, ON, N0L 2M0

Spring 2002 Newsletter

SPRING PANCAKE SOCIAL

When: Sunday, April 21 at 10 AM - 1 PM

Where: Camp Littlejohn

We welcome all of our Tyrconnell Heritage Society members to this annual event. Please circle the date on your calendars and bring your family and friends. This has become a very popular event -- a chance to have an excellent breakfast complete with pancakes, fresh maple syrup, scrambled eggs, sausages and bacon -- all cooked by some of our most experienced THS 'male chefs'.

The price is right -- only \$5.00. All proceeds go toward the operating costs for the Backus-Page House. We look forward to seeing you for great food and an excellent opportunity to socialize.

TRILLIUM FOUNDATION GRANT

Many of you know that we have received a second grant from the Trillium Foundation. This \$17,900.00 has been used to begin restoration of the interior of the Backus-Page House. The new heating system and air conditioning have now been completed, the electrical work is progressing well and is near completion.

Shown here is the cheque presentation in front of Backus-Page House.

Left to right:

Dutton/Dunwich Mayor
Rien Van Brenk,
MPP Steve Peters, Alice
Patterson founding member
of Backus-Page, Ontario
Trillium Foundation
representative Carol Kehoe,
Alison Pearce and far right,
Jamie Littlejohn, President
Tyrconnell Heritage Society.

Ontario Trillium Foundation gives grant to Backus-Page

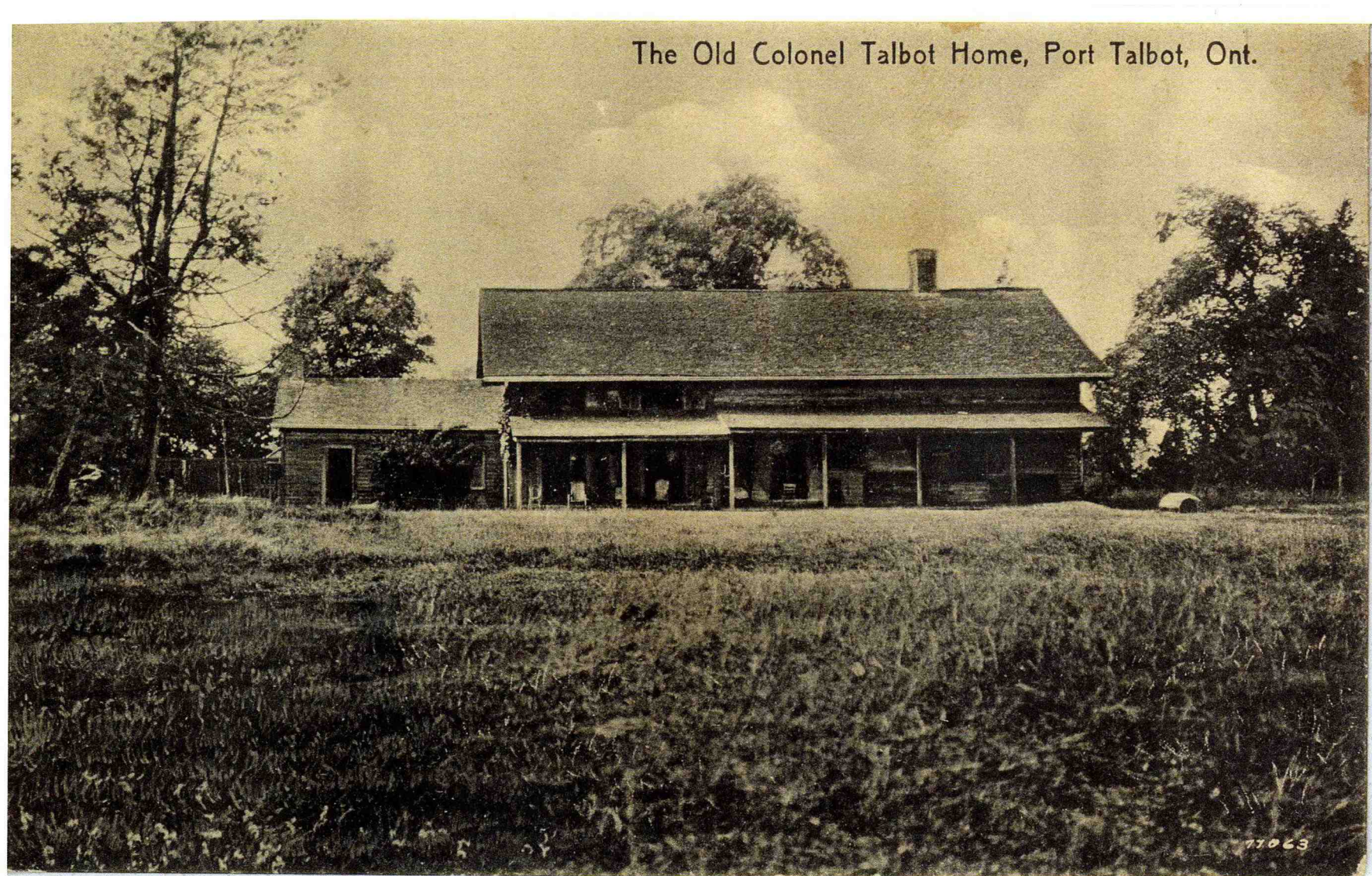


DAY'S

GONE

BYE.

The Old Colonel Talbot Home, Port Talbot, Ont.



Date - Unknown

Given to the WI
By Dorothy Lamb.



Given to the WI
by Dorothy Lamb.

"
The Cameron Homestead"
in Wallacetown
Date unknown

No. 1007 - Edition J. P. Evans, Manufacturer and Dealer in Pictorial Post Cards, Port Rowan, Ont. Made in Germany

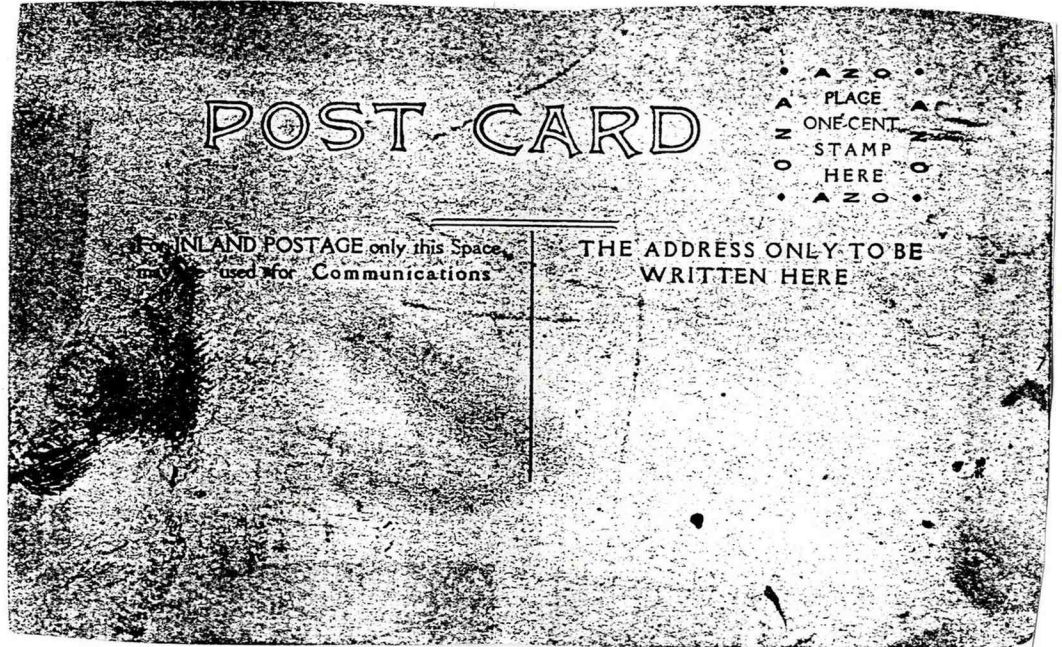
9th Con. Thur.

Dear Mrs. Fox:-

We are glad to hear that Harry is doing nicely and hope he continues to improve every day.

Was talking to Mrs. Cameron yesterday. It is nice she is able to be there it helps you out. Raining every day as usual. Annie didn't come home yet but we hear she got her new ~~hair~~ wonder if she bolts her hair. Hope both of you will be home soon.

Jemie Campbell.



A Post Card sent to Mrs Fosc who was Dorothy Lamb mother. Date unknown.

West Elgin Genealogical Society wants you to visit Malahide Castle

At November 25 meeting of West Elgin Genealogical and Historical Society, Don and Marg

Carroll showed slides taken during their visit to Malahide Castle. It is located in the town

of Malahide in Fingal County which is on seashore. It was here that Colonel Thomas Talbot

played as a child and later made an aide-de-camp in 1787 at the age of 16. The Talbot family

owned it from 1775 to 1973 when the last of the male line died and it is now owned by Fingal County. The last remaining female decendant lives in Tasmania and returns annually. The gardens surrounding the castle consist of 8 hectares of both tropical and sub-tropical species including a Cedar of Lebanon which was said to be 200 years old when Talbot was still a child.

Slides shown of Talbot's home in Dunwich in 1843 and 1903 were a contrast to the castle. This building was demolished in 1997. Slides of other old Dunwich and Southwold homes were also viewed and the audience attempted to identify them.

Quilts help women deal with cancer

By Sandra Coulson

Free Press Lifestyles Reporter

You might say quilting kept Stacie Littlejohn from unravelling.

The Wallacetown area woman and avid quilter was diagnosed with breast cancer in November 1999.

Every week during her nine months of treatment and surgery, a package arrived in the mail at Littlejohn's farm. Each one contained a note of encouragement as well as a swatch of batik fabric from Judy Millard, a friend from Woodstock whom Littlejohn had met through the Ingersoll Oxford Quilters Guild, where both are members.

When Littlejohn's treatments were finished, she and Millard celebrated by getting together, pooling some additional fabric with the batik and making a quilt.

They called it the You've Got Mail quilt. It's a traditional Amish square-on-square pattern coming together in a way that looks like stars.

Each woman kept a piece of scrap from the quilt as a memento, then donated it to the Quilt Project, an auction of 351 quilts in Stratford to aid Canadian Cancer Society support programs for women with breast cancer.

"Quilting has absolutely kept me going," Littlejohn says. "There are so many quilting friends who have had breast cancer, it's just a real network."

Her story is one of many inspirational and touching accounts that accompany the quilts.

They've come from as far away as Haines Junction, Yukon, and Emeree, Nfld.

A Cornwall woman made one in honour of her 37-year-old daughter who died of cancer. A St. Catharines mother of eight made one while she lived with breast cancer.

The quilts will be in the Stratford Armoury from today till Sept. 2. They move to Casa Loma in Toronto Sept. 9 till Oct. 30 before returning to Stratford on Nov. 10 for a gala.

About half will be sold by silent auctions during the summer and fall displays in Stratford and Toronto or through the Quilt Project's Website at www.thequilt.com. The other half will be auctioned at the Nov. 10 gala.

The weekend of the gala will be packaged with hotel accommodations, an old-timers' hockey tournament featuring former Toronto Maple Leafs, and a cabaret by members of the local arts community.

The Quilt Project has blossomed far faster than founder Carol Miller, a breast cancer survivor and quilter from the Mitchell area, expected.

She was pleased in 1999 when 134 quilts were donated for the first fund-raiser. Last year, 156 came in — not an unexpected rise, she says.



DAVE CHIDLEY The London Free Press

Stratford Festival actor Cynthia Dale, "a hobby quilter," sews a few stitches on one of many quilts being sold to help breast cancer patients. The quilt's designer, Jane Vickery, titled it My Favourite Things, in honour of the festival's production of The Sound of Music, in which Dale stars as Maria. Dale also autographed the quilt.

But this year's jump to 351 was a surprise.

On the other hand, she also knows a quilters' network exists.

"They tend to go to the same stores, they go to the same Websites, they go to the same conferences . . . Guilds do connect with each other."

And since almost all quilters are women, breast cancer is not unknown among them.

Miller believes the craft helps with healing. "The idea is a group would do (a quilt) as a support project for their own healing. The process is the purpose. It's supporting people in their hour of need."

IF YOU GO

What: The Quilt: A Breast Cancer Support Project.

Where: Stratford Armoury, 80 Waterloo St., Stratford

When: Today till Sept. 2. Sunday and Monday, noon to 5 p.m.; Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

Abandoned cemeteries bring safety concerns

For John McDougall, his work is merely an issue of overcoming liability and upholding heritage.

McDougall owner/operator of John McDougall Memorial Forming and Restoration has been recently restoring Black's Cemetery along Talbot Line in the municipality of Dutton/Dunwich.

He congratulates the municipality on taking the initiative to look after abandoned cemeteries like Black's.

McDougall says the cemetery has a lot of history including some once-hidden headstones dating back to 1856.

Some of the monuments are large pillars that today post a danger without restoration.

To combat this problem McDougall has been commissioned by the municipality to re-cement larger and deeper foundations to prevent the stones from falling over, smashing or even hurting someone.

Although the cemetery is abandoned, (the last member of the cemetery board of trustees died years ago) there are still some plots open and the grave site is visited regularly. Two new burials were made this year.

This is all the more concern that the monuments need to be brought back to safe standards. Some of the large pillars are leaning and deemed unsafe. McDougall says a crane will be brought in to lift them and reset them onto large

foundations. He also calls it a big operation that will take a few years to finish.

Originally, the stones and monuments were placed on slabs of cement, but eventually the cement breaks down and has no support beneath ground level and in some cases, the stone and monument falls. McDougall and other restorers are putting in a minimum of 4 feet of cement into the ground to prevent this from happening again.

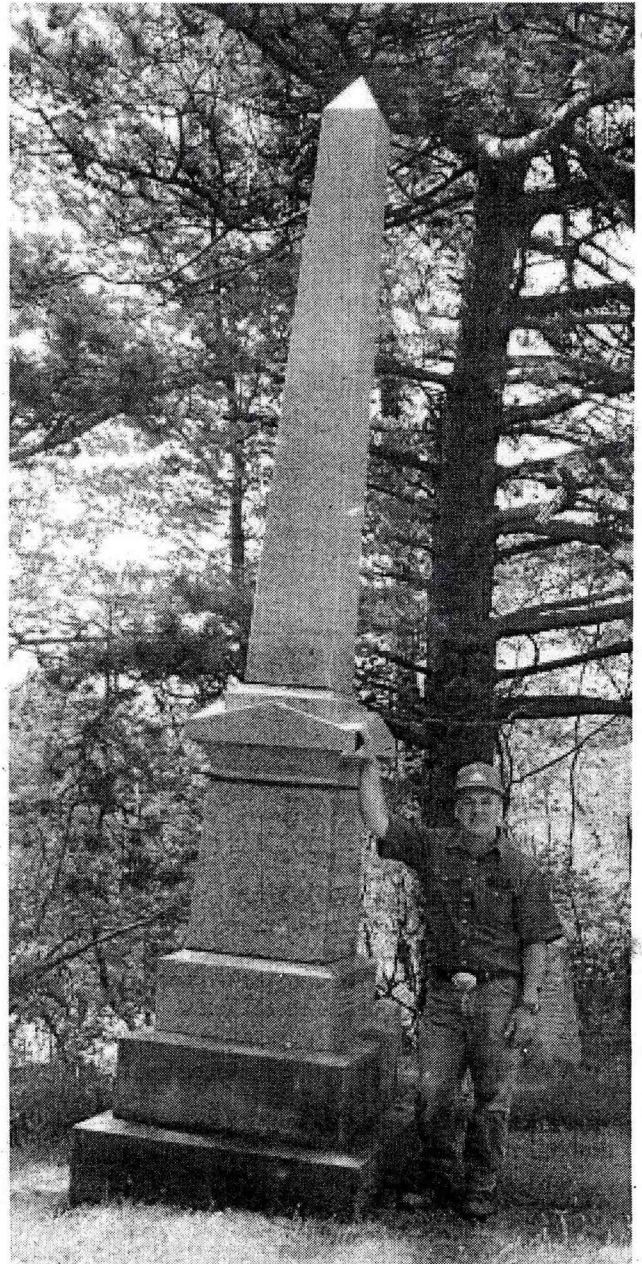
Once all the monuments are placed onto stronger foundations, a further step could be made. Many of the older monuments are made of marble and colourful stone and could be cleaned up to original form if the families of the deceased decide to have full restoration.

The pressure to have municipalities take care of abandoned cemeteries dates back 10 years with the revision of the Cemetery Act, which stated "abandoned" cemeteries become municipal property and responsibility.

The Act allows for two options when it comes to abandoned cemeteries. 1. Restore the cemetery and stones. 2. Remove and store the stones in one location.

Dutton/Dunwich has made a long term commitment to the restoration of Black's Cemetery at \$5,000 per year. That decision was made by the previous council of D/D.

"We could have turned a



John McDougall by one of the large headstones of concern at Black's Cemetery.

blind-eye and said (cemeteries) have nothing to do with us, but they do," says Loveland.

Although McDougall sees safety concerns as the most important issue of restoration he also sees

the historical side that must be upheld.

Some of the monuments are very impressive with their stature, style and have many years ahead of them, according to McDougall.