

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS  
MINUTES OF THE 31th ANNUAL MEETING AND COMPACT LUNCHEON, 22 OCT 2011  
AT THE TORONTO CRICKET, CURLING AND SKATING CLUB

A Meet-and-Greet got the day's activities off to a good start. We had a fairly good turn-out. Those attending were as follows: Bob White, Marjorie White, Debbie Clarke, William Goss, Thelma Goss, Elizabeth Larrabee, Brendan Larrabee, Connie Bryce, Douglas Bryce, Keith Bain, Helen Bain, Joyce Cutler, Carole Cormier, Andrea Cormier, Ashley Cormier, Gary Bagley, Lynne Webb, Arden Bagley, Chris Armstrong, Marion Tait, Cyndee Case, Susan Roser, Myrna Geldart, Judith Mackay Kowalski, Bruce MacKay, Yvonne Mackay, Shirley Langford, Robert Langford, Kurt Kowalski, Ann Wright, Ann's sister, George McNeillie, Brent Rutherford, Arnold Nethercott, Barbara Nethercott.

Governor Joyce Cutler welcomed guests and members to the twenty-ninth Annual Meeting and Compact Luncheon. She congratulated Susan Roser on her election as Secretary General of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants. Everyone was very pleased and gave Susan a round of applause. Joyce introduced our Speaker Karen Raittinen-Desario. Karen is filling in for Jennifer D'Attolico. Jennifer was forced to withdraw at the last minute for personal reasons. Joyce said that there is a picture of the dedication of the brick our Canadian Society donated for the Walkway in the garden of the Mayflower House in Plymouth. In it Governor General (2007-2011) and Canadian member, Judy Swan can be seen cutting the ribbon.

The Minutes of our last meeting which were published in our Newsletter (volume 30, #1) were approved unanimously.

THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT was read by George McNeillie. George has been nominated for the position of Captain.

ANCESTRAL ROLL CALL. Read by Debbie Clarke.

This year Debbie included the names of all the men, women and children who left descendants. We had representatives from 31 Mayflower families present with us today. The descendants of William Brewster were in first place, having 6 members present. The families of John Billington, Henry Sampson, Mrs. Elinor Billington, and Mary Allerton followed close behind each having four members present

NECROLOGY. Bob White. The names of our deceased members were not available at this time. Bob paid tribute to all those we had lost over the past year

GOVERNOR'S REPORT Joyce Cutler

Joyce explained that we had changed the date of our Annual Meeting and Compact Luncheon to October 22 from November for two reasons. October 22 falls before the end of Daylight Savings, thus making it easier for people to get home before nightfall; and we felt the earlier date would mean less chance of bad weather. Joyce now asked if we thought the change of date was a good idea. The general consensus was good and on a motion by Keith Bain, seconded by Bob White it was decided unanimously that we would continue to hold our Annual Meeting and Compact Banquet in the month of October.

Joyce announced that she has decided that she will give up her position of Governor in the fall of 2012.

#### REPORT OF THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR/HISTORIAN. - Susan Roser.

As you have heard, Susan said she was elected Secretary General at Congress in September. Susan said she was very honoured to have been nominated, and very surprised to win the election against the nominee from the floor. She has already been busy conducting business with the Executive and learning the ropes, and there is much to learn.

The Canadian Society was well represented at Congress by a delegation of 6. Susan said she would again like to thank our delegates for attending: our Treasurer Lynne Webb, George Nye of Alberta, Gordon Wood of Nova Scotia and Sandy Fairbanks of Nova Scotia. Marion and Cyndee were also in Plymouth and joined us for the closing banquet. The next Triennial Congress is in September 2014. In addition to the two days of business meetings the Society plans many activities, including a church service at Plimoth Plantation; an opportunity to dress in Pilgrim costume and join the Pilgrim Progress thru town to the church where opening ceremonies are held; a garden reception at the Mayflower House; meetings of the various family societies and a banquet. In addition to all this, several day tours to historic areas are also offered. If you think you might like to join us as a delegate in 2014, please let Susan know. While in Plymouth they attended the brick laying ceremony in the gardens of the Mayflower Society House. She would encourage you to donate the \$150 for a brick inscribed with your name and ancestor. It is quite something to see your name and know it will grace a walkway on grounds where our ancestors walked.

#### HISTORIAN'S REPORT

Susan was elected Historian in 1993 and has enjoyed the work immensely these past 18 years. But, she thinks the time has come to pass the job on to another. When her term expires next fall, Susan would like to step down as Historian. However, she would consider staying on as Co-Historian if we could find someone to take on half the workload. We will begin advertising in the spring newsletter, however if anyone here thinks they may be interested and would like more information, please contact her.

Susan said she would like to thank her Assistant, Connie Bryce who helps her with applicants' worksheets. The Historian General's office requires the information on applications to be formatted in a specific concise way, using certain abbreviations in a consistent manner. What she receives from applicants, however, is sometimes anything but. Susan emails the worksheet to Connie and she performs the time consuming job of transforming the data into the proper format. This is a big help to her as it frees up her time to work with applicants.

We had a new member with us, Anne Wright. Susan called Anne up to the podium, presented her with her membership certificate and welcomed her into the Society.

SECRETARY'S REPORT. Debbie Clarke. No report.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT.

We have a total of 264 members; 114 of whom are regular members; and 60 are life members. Of the regular members, 64 have already paid their dues for 2012. \$40,000 worth of GIC's purchased in 2008 have now matured. Last year they earned 8% interest. Lynne explained that

she has invested our money in the following manner. Since there is no way we can possibly ever hope to get 8% interest again, Lynne decided to put \$10,000 in a 5 year GIC tied to the market. This new type of GIC has the potential to give us 20% interest, depending on what the market does. If the market goes up we will make money. However, if in the worst case scenario the market goes down, we are guaranteed that we will not lose any of our principle. Lynne put another \$10,000 in a 5 year GIC tied to utilities under the same type of arrangement.

LIBRARIAN REPORT. Myrna Geldart. Myrna thanked Joyce for introducing her to the staff at the North York Public Library where our collection is held. She reminded us that the Librarians will do a limited search for people. Myrna then indicated a table where some Old Quarterlies were piled and invited people to take any one of them they wanted.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE. Susan Roser (chairman), Mary Nichols and Elizabeth Larrabee.

Rec. Secretary- Debbie Clarke; Correspondence Secretary- Brent Rutherford. (Brent has volunteered to assume the duties of membership chair. He will also send letters to nudge the memories of people who have contacted us but who have not proceeded any farther.); Surgeon-Dr. George Nye; Captain- George McNeillie; and Elder- Bob White.

There were no nominations from the floor.

The above report of the Nominating Committee was accepted, and passed unanimously on a motion by Susan Roser seconded by Connie Bryce.

The business part of the meeting now concluded, Joyce asked Bob White to lead us in saying Grace.

Joyce then asked Keith Bain to start off our luncheon with a toast to the Queen.

We enjoyed an excellent meal.

At the conclusion of our meal we held a Raffle.

Elizabeth Larrabee introduced our guest speaker Karen Raittinen-Desario. Karen is on the Education Staff of Black Creek Pioneer Village.

### Leisure in the 1800's

Queen Victoria ruled from 1837-1901. During the first part of her reign there were many social and economic changes. The signs of technology were suddenly everywhere. Railways were built opening up the country. It was now easier to get about than it ever had been before. The Railways brought more people. Factories sprang up producing an abundant supply of goods. By 1860 the world was a different place than what it had been in 1837.

Queen Victoria was much admired. Women wanted to emulate her. Women in the 1860's strived to be thought of as genteel, docile, educated, and refined. We can see examples of women

reading books, arranging flowers, and taking walks in the photographs of the times. A woman was called the angel of the home. She was the moral compass, responsible for maintaining a proper influence on her husband and children. According to the books of the time, an unhappy household was an untidy one, with poorly cooked meals. To help women improve themselves, How-to books such as those by Mrs. Beeton were published. They featured articles on etiquette, needlework, fashion, recipes, the use of proper cutlery and moral advice.

In the early days of the nineteenth century a man's social status had been based on who his family was. However, by the 1860's hard work now became the measure of the man. Men often found themselves straddling two spheres: home where they were expected to be kind and gentle and work where they had to be ambitious and aggressive to succeed.

The position of children in the family also began to change in the 1860's. In the early 1800's children were more or less treated as little adults. But by the 1860's, childhood started to be looked on as a separate stage. Although the children of the poor could be sent out to work at an earlier age, they were often given more freedom to do things while they were growing up than their more wealthy counterparts who were restricted to the nurseries for a longer period of time. By 1860's factories had started to produce toys for children making toys more readily available. Nevertheless toys were not just considered play things. They were training tools for the future. Dolls and tea sets taught the girls to be good mothers. Boys were given hobby horses, toy soldiers and trains to prepare them for their future

A woman's life was geared to domesticity. It was expected that she would go from her home to her husband's home. Courting was strictly chaperoned. One was expected to marry within one's own class. Couples met at dances and church gatherings. Freedom was restricted. The dances had strict dance managers who made sure people danced with someone of their own class. A couple might be permitted to walk together but basically time a couple spent alone was supposed to happen after the engagement. The 1860's saw a new fashion trend arise. Brides began to wear white at their weddings. Up to then any colour would do but now because Queen Victoria had worn a white wedding gown, wearing white at one's marriage was all the rage.

Women generally got married in their early mid 20's; men in their late 20's. Divorce was rare. Between the years 1839-1867, there were 7 petitions for divorce. Only five were granted.

The people at this time loved their food. It was heavy, rich in eggs and sugar. Since walks were the only type of exercise that was advised for women, it is not surprising that they tended to gain weight as they got older.

Funerals were big events. There were very strict rules for the stages of mourning. During the first six months one could only wear black. After six months to a year, one could add at a little white lace around one's neckline. Even after a year a person was still restricted to wearing dark colours.

Since child death was a grim reality, children were cherished. Parents often had photographs taken of their deceased child dressed as if they were still alive.

Although women didn't have any political power they did a lot of charity work. They helped the poor. Temperance was another cause women worked for.

Leisure was not considered good just for the sake of leisure. Play was often combined with work. Barn raisings and working bees were made into occasions. After a working bee or farm raising people would eat. Women prepared the meals. Men played games. Baseball was a popular sport. Amateur play acting was considered okay. However, professional actresses were frowned upon. They had a questionable reputation since they went about unchaperoned. Circuses were good entertainment for the lower classes.

There were parades; Victoria Day was a big occasion.

Games of chance which had been acceptable before the 1860's were suddenly considered no longer appropriate. Games that demonstrated skill replaced them. The way a game was played became almost more important than the results- just as one strived for excellence in work, one should strive also for excellence in sport. The concept of fair play was very important. Baseball teams were set up by factories and various factories would compete against each other. This was good because the game had to finish in time to go back to work. Soon individual cities had teams which played against each other. In 1867, there were 17 baseball clubs in Hamilton alone. However, baseball's social standing began to decline when people started to expect money for playing. It was replaced by Lacrosse. Croquet was also popular at this time but there was some controversy as to whether women should be allowed to play. There was always the possibility that a woman might cheat by hiding the ball under her skirts and kicking it.

In Canada sledding and snow shoeing became popular sports as well. Clubs were set up. Hockey was played in the first covered rink in 1848. It was popularly played on a pond in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Rowing clubs were established. Curling also became popular in English Canada but not in French Canada who could not fathom why anyone would ever want to do that.

Women and girls were allowed to skate, walk or swim, provided they were suitably dressed and their skirts did not fly about and reveal too much leg. Swim suits were made of wool for both men and women.

Lynne Webb thanked Karen for her most interesting speech and presented her with a cheque.

After leading us in the Mayflower Song, Joyce said she hoped to see us all next year and closed the meeting.

#### Note

Deceased members since our last meeting. Dale **LAHEY** died 22 September 2011. Michael Haskins died in 2010; Vernon Vickery died 30 Aug 2011.