# NBGS MIRAMICHI BRANCH NEWS LETTER

## OCTOBER 2019

#### **Inside:**

- President's Message
- Summer Student Report
- Paul Harris Award
- Meeting by Meeting
- Volunteer Recognition Award
- Irish Festival
- Article Celtic Crystals



- From Our Family Tree
- Strays From Away
- Donations to NBGS Library
- Dolan Family Donation
- Article Genealogy Sources
- Genealogy Humour
- First Family Abrams

## Volume XIII, Issue No. 3

- Looking Back
- Miramichi Fire
- 2020 Membership Dues
- Newsletter
- Meeting Notice AGM
- Meeting/Contact Info

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It seems we wait so long for summer – blink and it's over.
Hope everyone enjoyed it while it lasted.

Fall is upon us once again and our Branch meetings have resumed after the summer break. While we held no regular meetings during the summer, we were busy – hosting the Provincial AGM the end of May, participating in the Irish Festival in July, and throughout the summer adding to our transcribed/researched materials, assisting visitors to the area and responding to e-mail inquiries.

We were fortunate to have the services of a student for twelve weeks, from mid-May to mid-August, and we thank Denver Matchett for the work he did with us this summer. It was a pleasure working with him and we wish him well as he returns to his studies in the Engineering Program at UNB, Fredericton Campus.

The revision of our First Families, Volume 1, book was completed in time for the Irish Festival and is now available for sale. We thank all who contributed to this publication as well as those who pulled it all together.

Our membership numbers for 2019 remain strong and as has been the case for a number of years now the majority of our members are "from away." Only 37 of our total membership are from the greater

Miramichi area. When you look at our membership list, it's amazing to see our reach. I've included a breakdown which I thought members would find interesting.

### Canada: 116

Alberta 2; British Columbia 11; New Brunswick 73; Newfoundland 1; Nova Scotia 4; Ontario 23; Quebec 1; and Saskatchewan 1.

## United States: 41

Arkansas 1; Alaska 1; Arizona 1; California 3; Colorado 2, Florida 4; Hawaii 1; Idaho 1; Illinois 2; Massachusetts 6; Maryland 3; Minnesota 3; New Hampshire 1; New Jersey 2; Nevada 1; Oregon 3; Virginia 1; Vermont 1; Washington State 3; Wisconsin 1.

## *International: 1 -* United Kingdom

What I found surprising in the above is that we have no members from the state of Maine.

Our next regular monthly meeting will be **October 22.** Please note that this meeting will be held at the **Newcastle Public Library at 6:15 p.m.** We are pleased that local teacher and historian, Brandon Savage, will be our guest speaker at that time. Brandon has been active in the North Shore Regiment's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day activities and accompanied a group of local students to Normandy for the celebrations. We hope you join us for this presentation.

Faye Baisley, Acting President

# S DRT

### SUMMER STUDENT REPORT

It is truly hard to believe that another summer has come and gone. By the time many of you are reading this, the leaves on the trees

will have changed colors, and a sweater or a jacket will be required to go outside.

Over a 12-week period from May through August, I had the honour of being the summer student for the Miramichi Branch of the New Brunswick Genealogical Society. This proved to be a very interesting summer that provided me with the opportunity to learn and explore a great deal about the past.

A vast majority of the summer involved typing up obituaries - hundreds of them in fact. Many of these dated in the mid 1920's, with some being from the mid 1900's. It amazed me from typing up these obituaries, just how far the range of people reached who have connections to the Miramichi. From the New England states, through the Midwest, even to California and all across Canada, there was an incredible amount of people who were connected to our small area. And to imagine that since then, just how that reach has continued to spread, it is truly incredible.

Another enjoyable part of the summer was updating the cemetery records which I was assigned to do. A break from typing, it was awesome to be able to drive to different cemeteries, and then enjoy the beautiful summer weather while updating the records. Seeing all the different families and graves which dated back to the 1800's was really intriguing. These small cemeteries in the various rural communities really provide a great insight into the past of each little place, all of which are part of the puzzle that makes up the Miramichi region.

The highlight of the summer was taking part in Canada's Irish Festival on the Miramichi with the organization. This was the best part of the summer. First of all, setting up the conference room really displayed the mind-blowing number of books and information that is part of the society's collection. It is very impressive. Then, being able to meet the dozens of people who came to view the research room, and hear their stories and see their enthusiasm, it was certainly incredible to be a part of! It was also amazing that many of the visitors were from areas so far away - from Alabama, all over Canada, even one from Vietnam! And finally, being able to meet many of the members and volunteers who are a part of this group and work with them during the festival was a true honour and pleasure.

Before I wrap up, I have to send a special thank you to Anna and Faye for everything this summer! Anna and Faye were the 2 who I worked most closely with. These 2 ladies are absolutely incredible, and I appreciate the opportunities they provided me with throughout this summer.

This past summer has certainly been a journey I will never forget. For quite some time I expect I will be typing people's last names entirely in capital letters!

But overall the experience was great, and I hope that my contributions over my tenure will be looked back upon fondly!

Submitted by: Denver Matchett, 2019 Summer Student Employee



Thanks to Denver for all his hard work this summer – his contributions have certainly expanded our research materials. It was a pleasure working with him!! - Anna & Faye

#### PAUL HARRIS AWARD

Congratulations to member
MARSHALL GASTON
on being awarded a Paul
Harris Fellowship by the
Miramichi Rotary Club on



September 21, 2019. Well deserved!



### **MEETING BY MEETING**

NBGS Miramichi Branch would like to update members on the activities of the group. With this

in mind, we will let you know about programs/ speakers we have had recently and ones who are booked to speak at the branch meetings. If you are in the area, plan to drop in. Our meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month (with the exception of June, July, August and December) at the Chatham Public Library, King Street, Miramichi East at 6:15 pm.

## May

Our Branch did not hold a regular monthly meeting in May as we hosted the provincial AGM. meeting was held at the Goodie Shop Restaurant (Park Landing Conference Room) on Saturday, May 25. It was also Rotary Rib-Fest Weekend so the down-town area was a busy spot that day! We were honoured to host representatives from around the province and pleased that 10 members of Miramichi Branch attended. We were especially happy to have two members of the former Restigouche Branch, Suzanne Blacquiere and Carol Roberts-Doyle, who are now members Miramichi branch join us for the meeting. Our Guest Speaker, Dr. Shawn McCarthy, Executive Director of Beaubeaur's Island, informed and entertained us with his talk on the history of the Island and some of its original families.

## September

September we held our annual open house and were pleased to welcome five guests to our meeting. Our members showed them the research materials our Branch has available and one person joined at the close of the meeting with another expressing her interest in doing so. As we usually do at this meeting, we recognized two members with our Volunteer Recognition Award. This year's recipients were long time members Marilyn Creamer-Fowler and Carolyn Harris. Both recognitions well deserved – and long overdue!!



## VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARD

## **Marilyn Creamer Fowler**

Marilyn has been an active member of Miramichi Branch since 2000. Over the years she has been involved in many projects including being one of the first editors of our branch newsletter. A testament to the foundation they built is that we are still publishing some 19 years later. She has served on the Board for many years and is currently a Director. Her other contributions have included: the church history project for our website; volunteering at the Irish Festival; and working on other branch projects. Marilyn does a lot of research in response to inquiries — probably much more than we are aware of! We thank Marilyn for her many years of dedicated service to Miramichi Branch, and present her with a Volunteer Recognition Award for 2019.

## **Carolyn Harris**

Carolyn has been a member of Miramichi Branch since 1997. She served on the Board as both Vice President and President and has been a provincial representative for a number of years. Carolyn has volunteered at the Irish Festival and for many years gave presentations for those interested in conducting family history research. Using her wealth of experience she showed us how to start, where to find resources, and the importance of documentation and sourcing! These sessions were always well attended and provided many of us who

were beginning our research journey with the tools to do so. She has also worked tirelessly on our First Families publications — both in verifying material, making sure it was properly sourced and acting as editor and proof reader. She has also been a regular contributor to/proof reader of our Branch newsletter. Carolyn has been our go-to person for many genealogical inquiries especially those in the Kent County area. We thank Carolyn for her many years of dedicated service to Miramichi Branch, and present her with a Volunteer Recognition Award for 2019.

#### **IRISH FESTIVAL**

We had another great year at the Irish Festival. On Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, we were at the Rodd Miramichi. Our large collection of research materials along with over 250 family histories were on display for visitors use.



We had members from away visit us; it was nice to put a face with the name as some of us had not met before. We had over fifty visitors over the two days we were there. I hope everyone found the information they were looking for.

This year we presented a workshop on *Researching Your Family Roots*. This workshop, while primarily for beginners, also reinforced for those more seasoned researchers the need to be focused, source findings, keep backups and hang in despite

sometimes little or no progress. Faye Baisley & Dianne Mullin organized and hosted it. They did an awesome job. Thanks girls.

I also want to thank our member volunteers, who were with us this year: Faye Baisley, Dianne Mullin, Judy Vautour, Terry Savage, Bill Donald, Roger Savoy and John Fogan. They worked very hard and it was busy at times. **Thank you** again! What we do every year can't be done without volunteers.

Thanks also go out to Veronique Arseneau and the Irish Festival Committee for the invitation to be a part of the festival again this year.

I also want to mention our student this year, **Denver Matchett** who was working with us for the summer. He was also with us at the Irish Festival and he did an awesome job. He helped with the set up and dismantling, worked with us the full two days helping with everything from meeting with the public to setting up computer equipment and did a lot of running for us!. **Thank You, Denver.** 

We hope to see everyone again next year at the Irish Festival.

Submitted by: Anna MacDonald

*Editor's Note:* We especially want to thank Anna who has coordinated our participation in this event for many years and does a fantastic job in doing so. She always has things well in hand and it is a pleasure working with her!

# "CELTIC CRYSTALS" SHINE AT IRISH FESTIVAL

As part of the NBGS - Miramichi Research room hosted at the Rodd Miramichi River Hotel during Canada's Irish Festival on the Miramichi, dedicated member and quilting enthusiast Judy Vautour had on display one of her beautiful quilts!



Quilting has been a part of Judy's life for a great many years. Judy made her first quilt in 1972 for her son and since then she has made, and helped make, countless quilts over the years. The particular quilt which was put on display at Irish fest was titled "Celtic Crystals" - a quilt which features a

stunning array of patterns, with each block being of a different style. The middle depicts Celtic crosses, which are all woven together in the front.

The quilt was made about 5 years ago by Judy, but it actually took more than a year to make. Judy said getting everything to line up perfectly was one of the most challenging parts which took a lot of time and a lot of skill. An interesting note about this quilt, was that Judy received the various pieces in the mail, but they would come in a monthly shipment. This led to lots of anticipation, as at times Judy had to wait multiple weeks for the next piece to arrive in the mail! The quilt was quilted by Beverley Hackett of Edge Squared Quilting and has also been featured in multiple quilt shows across the province.

Submitted by: Denver Matchett, 2019 Summer Student Employee

#### FROM OUR FAMILY TREE



On behalf of the Branch, we extend condolences to family and friends of the following:

 $\begin{array}{lll} \textbf{Barbrara} & \textbf{Morrison} - a \text{ former} \\ \textbf{member} & \textbf{of} & \textbf{our} & \textbf{branch} & \textbf{who} \end{array}$ 

passed away September 19, 2019;

Father Stephen Douglas McCarthy – brother-inlaw of member Michaleen McCarthy who passed away on August 24 2019;

**David Morrison** –Branch Member, husband of member Maureen English, who passed away on July 23, 2019;

**Louise Hubbard** – sister-in-law of member Charles Hubbard who passed away in Moncton on July 8, 2019.

## STRAYS FROM AWAY

## **HUBBARD**, Louise Margaret

(March 28, 1925 – July 08, 2019)

HUBBARD, Louise Margaret passed peacefully on Monday, July 08, 2019 at the Moncton Hospital. Louise is the wife of Daniel Hubbard originally from Miramichi; sister-in-law of member, Charles Hubbard. Full obituary can be found in the Moncton-Times Transcript on July 13, 2019)



# DONATIONS TO OUR RESOURCE LIBRARY

We extend thanks to member Susan Cox from California for her donation of her family history research on STUART / LOGGIE and related families. Thank you also to one of our dual members, Andrew Gunter from Fredericton, for his donation of the PRICE family history. Both of these have been added to the family history section of our resource materials. It is through the generosity of people like Susan and Andrew that our collection continues to grow and benefit not only branch members but members of the public who are conducting research in Miramichi.

When we were setting up for the Irish Festival and had all our materials out of the cabinets we were all amazed by the volume of material we have. This includes 250+ family histories donated to the Branch by both members and the general public.

With the number people interested in genealogy, there may be people researching the same families as you. Please help us in our efforts to make information more accessible to all by sharing what you have. We welcome your family histories, obituaries of those with connections to Northumberland County, articles for the newsletter, and any other information you come across which might be of interest to our members. Sharing is what we are all about!



Grandma says that she has so many skeletons in her closet that she can only do her family history work at Halloween

#### **DOLAN FAMILY DONATION**

"The Dolan family donated the Dolan Woodlands Nature Preserve for permanent protection in 2018. John (Doolan) Dolan, at age 15, arrived in the Miramichi from Ireland with his father, mother and younger brother, Thomas, in 1830. The family lived on Beaubears Island for the first 20 years of their new life, originally working in the shipbuilding industry.

John purchased this woodlot in 1845. The deed reads in part, "From Jane Beckwith (wife of late James Beckwith) and children to John Doolan for 13 pounds" and being "part of original lot granted by letters patent 1 September 1819". Five years later, in 1850, John proposed to and married Julia Bohan.

As was typical at the time, the woodlot would have been purchased for the purpose of harvesting lumber and firewood. Throughout the years, the Dolans have been wise stewards of this land by harvesting only what was needed and enjoying the surrounding nature. Over the years, it would become a touchstone for the many members of this family, most of who have relocated, because "a visit home would not be considered complete without at least one trip to the woodlot". In making this donation, the intentions of John's descendants' are threefold: to honour their ancestors' courageous decision made in 1830 and acknowledge the hard work and hardships that followed, to ensure the lands will be conserved and to give back to the community a gift, that will be enjoyed for generations to come."

Submitted by: Harold Dolan



## **GENEALOGY SOURCES**

In our last newsletter (Spring 2019) we featured an article on Genealogy without Sources. Member, Sandy Wilbur from Oregon, sent along the article below which is an excellent follow up to our original story.

I'm currently wrestling with one of those family stories that get passed from generation to generation by word of mouth, often with absolutely no supporting evidence - at least, none that lasts as long as the stories. I'm 99 per cent sure (maybe even surer) that this particular story is untrue. Still, if

even a small part of it is accurate, it could open up some new avenues of research for me. So, I wrestle.

Every family has such tales. I grew up thinking that I descended from President Grover Cleveland. I didn't. I am *related*, in the sense that my great grandmother was a Massachusetts Cleveland, but she and Grover's lines diverged pretty early. Any gene pool I share with the former President is a pretty small one.

I also grew up thinking that my Gordon ancestors in Scotland left me a castle that I could claim if I would just pay the Scottish Government the back taxes owed on the place. The oft-repeated story was that, every so often, family members would get letters from Scotland concerning ownership of the castle, and the Government's desire for someone to take it off their hands. I never saw a letter, and I occasionally wondered how anyone in our family had been tracked down. We only had one Gordon family that reached America - John Gordon reportedly came to the United States after his father disowned him for joining the Mormons - and only part of that family came because John's sons were not enthusiastic about their father's new religion, stayed behind in Scotland with their grandparents. In any event, by my time the Gordon name had been absent from the family tree for six or seven generations. The little I've since learned about our Gordons makes me doubt they were of the castle-owning branch of the clan.

If you're not serious about your genealogy, these family tales are harmless and fun - and sometimes more exciting than real life. But if you really want to identify the branches and twigs on your family tree, they can be confusing and frustrating. Maybe the worst aspect of them is that it's often impossible to completely discount them. There must be *something* behind them, you think, even if the story has become muddled since its inception. My Grover Cleveland story is probably easily explained, and discarded: Grover was a Cleveland; my great grandmother was a Cleveland - *ergo.....* Somebody just speculated, and it became

family lore. Similarly, I imagine a large proportion of the Lincolns in the country (and it is a very big clan!) think they are descended from President Abe. But what about the Gordon castle? It doesn't seem like a story that would have developed out of thin air, does it? And that's why I keep wrestling with an almost certainly wrong story about Nova Scotia in the 1700s.

\* \* \*

I think my favorite story of "family history" run amok has its beginning in Philadelphia just before the Revolutionary War. These are the details as published in a Trenton, New Jersey newspaper in 1933. The narrator's grandfather, Kollock McCully, was from a Philadelphia Quaker family. As Quakers, they would not actively fight for either side in the war, but their sympathies were with the Loyalists who opposed war with Britain. Rebels broke into the McCully home in Philadelphia, and killed Kollock's father. Kollock reportedly barely escaped the mob by jumping out a window, wearing only his night clothes. He made his way to British headquarters, and enlisted to fight for the King. For his services, he was granted land in New Brunswick, Canada. Later, during the War of 1812, he commanded the Kent County militia against the Americans. After the Revolution, two of Kollock's sisters came to Saint John, New Brunswick, and settled there.

Pretty good tale, right? Lots of good, concrete details, right? Best of all, the story is only two generations old, not some tale out of deep family obscurity. If not completely true, it must be pretty close.

Well, there are a few problems with it:

- 1. The Philadelphia family were not Quakers; in fact, at least two from the Revolutionary period were Presbyterian clergy.
- 2. Family sympathies were not with the Loyalists. Probably a dozen or more served in the rebel army.

- 3. Kollock's father was not killed by a mob. He died a traditional death *before the Revolution*.
- 4. Kollock did not flee to the British before an angry mob. He very purposefully went over to the British camp, taking his family with him. In fact, he enlisted two of his sons in the Army with him, even though one of them was too young to actually serve.
- 5. He did serve with the British through the Revolutionary War, and was granted land in New Brunswick. He didn't command the Kent County militia that was his son. I don't think the Kent County militia saw any real service during the War of 1812.
- 6. His sisters did not move to Saint John, after the Revolution; it was his daughters.

So, maybe the story isn't quite as accurate as it first looked. It's still a good story.

\* \* \*

Oh, there is one other thing I should mention: there was no "Kollock McCully." There were two grandfathers - William McCully, a farmer in Kent County, New Brunswick, who apparently had nothing to do with any war; and Simon Kollock, who did fight in the British Army, and whose "crimes" (by rebel standards) were so great that he was one of the few Loyalists not granted repatriation after the war.

Submitted by: Sandy Wilbur



# GENEALOGY HUMOUR

A little girl asked her mother, "How did the human race appear?' The

mother answered, 'God made Adam and Eve and they had children and then all mankind was made.' Two days later the girl asked her father the same question. The father answered, 'Many years ago there were monkeys from which the human race

evolved.' The confused girl returned to her mother and said, 'Mom, how is it possible that you told me the human race was created by God, and Dad said they developed from monkeys?' The mother answered, 'well, dear, it is very simple. I told you about my side of the family and your father told you about his.'

(Editor's Note: the above first appeared in our June 2008 newsletter – I thought it was worth repeating!)

#### **FIRST FAMILY**

This summer we published a revision of First Families Vol. 1. Below is one of the first families contained in this edition,

#### **William Abrams**

William Abrams was born c1785 in Plymouth, England. He died aged 59, on February 6, 1844 in Newcastle, N.B. William and Sarah arrived on the Miramichi from England in 1820. William was in business in Greenock, Scotland before settling on the Miramichi. A year prior to his arrival, William Abrams & Co. purchased two properties at Rosebank on which to locate shipbuilding and merchandising business. This company suffered huge losses in the Miramichi Fire of 1825, but trans-Atlantic trade was expanding, and they soon recovered.

William was:

- (1) the first vestryman of St Paul's Anglican Church 1823;
- (2) captain of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of militia;
- (3) treasurer of the 1<sup>st</sup> county agricultural society 1824;
- (4) organized the first Miramichi Chamber of Commerce 1826;
- (5) school trustee for Newcastle parish;
- (6) a commissioner of the Seaman's Hospital, Douglastown;
- (7) member of the Northumberland County Board of Health:
- (8) harbormaster of the Miramichi Port 1832-1835;
- (9) instrumental in the establishment of a branch of the Bank of British North American at Newcastle 1839; and

(10) keeper of a postal way office at his store at Rosebank in 1843.

Abrams was one of the most successful businessmen on the Miramichi in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and one of the province's leading shipbuilders. William married Sarah Triglohon, b. c1783, died February 12, 1850, aged 67. A tombstone was located at St. Paul's Anglican Cemetery for William and Sarah and children Ann and William Harvey who perished in the Miramichi Fire. William and Sarah had the following children:

- (1) Jane Born c1810; died March 21, 1849, aged 39; listed as the eldest daughter. On January 10, 1827 Jane married **Christopher Clarke**, merchant. Christopher was born c1797 and died February 1, 1834, aged 37. His tombstone was located at St. Luke's Methodist Cemetery, Chatham.
- (2) Mary Ann Born c1815; died May 13, 1889 in her 75<sup>th</sup> year at Truro, N.S. She married **Dr.**John Thomson (doctor & druggist) on February 17, 1835 at St. John's Presbyterian Church, Chatham; John was born c1809 in Perthshire, Scotland and died February 13, 1884, aged 75. They had nine sons and one daughter. John and Mary Ann were buried at St James & St John's Cemetery, Newcastle.
- (3) Eliza Ann Born c1806; listed as the third daughter. On May 23, 1834 Eliza married George Kerr, Esq., the son of William Kerr and Isabella Little. Eliza died on January 2, 1845, aged 29. George remarried, and on February 4, 1872 in his 67<sup>th</sup> year, he passed away in Aitken, South Carolina, USA. George and Eliza were buried at St Luke's Methodist Cemetery, Chatham, along with several children.
- (4) Sarah Born c1819. On July 30, 1839 in Newcastle Sarah married Henry Burbridge Allison and died July 19, 1893 in Sackville, N.B. at the age of 75. Henry was born in 1801 in Cornwallis, N.S. and died December 1, 1890 in his 90<sup>th</sup> year. Sarah and Henry moved to Sackville, N.B. in 1854. They had four children.

- (5) Susan Born c1820; died Jul. 11, 1902, aged 82, in Saint John. She was listed as the fifth daughter. In Newcastle on January 5, 1842 Susan married William James Berton of Fredericton. Susan and William resided in Saint John and raised three children. William was born c1811 in Fredericton and died Aug. 12, 1893, aged 84, in Saint John.
- **(6) Williamena** Born July 16, 1821; baptized February 1, 1822; died July 18, 1878 at the home of her sister, Susan, in Saint John. She was listed as the youngest daughter.
- (7) William Harvey Born 1823; died, aged 2 years and 5 mo., November 22, 1825 in the Miramichi Fire
- (7) Ann Born 1824; baptized January 1, 1825; died, aged 11 mo., November 17, 1825 in the Miramichi Fire.

#### **References:**

Anglican Church Marriage and Baptism Register: Chatham Parish

Dictionary of Miramichi Biography
Early Marriages of Northumberland County
Northumberland County Cemetery Transcriptions:
Newcastle and Chatham Protestant
Saint John Burial Permits Index, 1889-1919, PANB
RS315A

*Union Advocate*: December 17, 1890 Vital Statistics from N.B. Newspapers

This First Family Profile was originally submitted by the Late George Kingston, former NBGS Miramichi Member, and was updated in 2019 by branch members.



#### LOOKING BACK

RED BANK – The Roman Catholic Church committee held a ball here on

Wednesday night. An enjoyable time was spent by all but unfortunately some people who seem to have no better occupation, attempted to raise trouble. In doing this they were only re-enacting their old tricks. Heretofore this tribe of worthless humanity had attended public gatherings for the express

purpose of getting drunk and raising trouble. On Wednesday night they came to break up the dance. They were speedily thrown out for the night and legal proceedings have been instituted against them. Such vile instances of unprovoked ingratitude are often met with in these parts and the perpetrators are nearing the close of a disgraceful career. The full measure of the law will be dealt out to them. *North Shore Leader, June 22, 1906*.

POLICE COURT – Wednesday, the six Red Bank youths who disturbed the dance there a few weeks ago figured in the Police Court on Wednesday and paid the penalty of their conduct.

North Shore Leader, July 13, 1906.

## THE GREAT MIRAMICHI FIRE – Oct. 7, 1825

Have you ever wondered why so many of your ancestors left the Miramichi in the early 1820's and moved on to various parts of Canada and the United States? One early event which undoubtedly contributed to this was the Great Miramichi Fire which occurred on October 7, 1825. The fire consumed almost 16,000 km² or about 1/5 of New Brunswick's forests. Wiping out many communities on the Miramichi, some of the survivors chose to move on rather than try to rebuild from the devastation that remained in the fire's wake. It still ranks as one of the largest forest fires ever recorded in North America.

This month we recognize the 194<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fire which marked one of the most tragic events in our local history. Below are articles taken from the Daily Gleaner and The North Shore Leader on anniversaries of the event:

# The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Great Miramichi Fire - The Daily Gleaner, October 8, 1925

The Great Miramichi fire, which reached its culmination one hundred years ago today, following a season marked by extreme drought and the appearance of many fires, was the most outstanding disaster which has occurred in the history of the province.



the Great Miramichi Fire Of October 1825

(Note: above photo taken from the internet on notice of talk given to the Miramichi Historical Society by Dr. Stephen Patterson in November 2017.)

The property loss in this conflagration, the greatest in the history of the province, was estimated to be £204,232, of which £12,050 was insured.

There were 160 casualties consisting of persons who were burned alive or drowned in their attempts to escape from the pursuing flames. A total of 595 buildings were burned and 875 head of cattle were destroyed.

Anniversary of Miramichi Fire
On October 7<sup>th</sup> – Catastrophe Outstanding
Event of History - The North Shore Leader,
October 14, 1938

The seventh of October, the 113<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Miramichi Fire, found this province undergoing a particularly sharp white frost and conditions which generally were in contract to those of the eventful seventh of October, 1825. In that year the whole province had been parched by a nearly summer-long drought while the present year has brought with it a large proportion of rainy weather and no forest fire menace of any moment after the first of July.

In 1825, according to the account of Robert Cooney, who lived within a mile of Newcastle, which was totally destroyed, six thousand square

miles of virgin forest was swept by the scourge of fire. One hundred and sixty people perished, 600 buildings were destroyed, property loss to the settlers was \$930,000 not to mention the immeasurable loss of timber and death of wild animals by the hundreds of thousands.

The extent of the Miramichi Fire in 1825 as estimated by Cooney is thought to be somewhat exaggerated but it is known that the fire burning most of the summer with no consistent effort to stop it spread to the Nashwaak River. An offshoot of it burned about 30 buildings in Fredericton including the Government House on the same day that the destruction among the settlements of the Miramichi took place the seventh.

Cooney describes the fire on the Miramichi graphically:

"The tremendous bellowing became more and more terrific. The earth seemed to stagger as if it had reeled upon its ancient foundation. Earth, air, sun and sky, all visible creation seemed to conspire against man, and to totter under the weight of some dreadful commission they were charged to execute."

"This is the truth, that I now tell you For mine eyes in part did see What did happen to the people On the banks of the Miramichi"

- Taken from the song The Miramichi Fire by John Jardine



#### 2020 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Just an early reminder that membership dues for 2020 are due by February 15, 2020 but can be

paid at any time before that. Paying dues on time ensures there is no interruption in receiving *Generations* and Branch Newsletters. Dues for 2020:

Individual Membership - \$40.00

Family Membership - \$45.00 Institutional Membership - \$45.00

Membership form is available in *Generations* or can be downloaded from the NBGS website.



## **NEWSLETTER**

Our newsletter needs an editor. This is the Branch's primary source of communication with our members. If you are

interested in the position, or would like information about it, please contact me.

We also need submissions for the next newsletter which will be published in February: articles, tidbits, obituaries, quotes, queries, etc.

We appreciate your feedback – comments and/or suggestions for improving this publication. Did you see something you liked in this or recent editions? Something you didn't like? Let us know.

Submissions and/or feedback can be e-mailed to me at: fayebaisley@hotmail.com



## MIRAMICHI BRANCH ANNUAL MEETING

**NOVEMBER 26, 2019** 

The Annual General Meeting for Miramichi Branch will be held on Tuesday, November 26, 2019, at 6:15 p.m. at the Chatham Public Library.

Several positions are vacant and we open to nominations. Please consider letting you name stand. We cannot continue to operate without volunteers stepping forward to serve.

## MEETING/CONTACT INFORMATION

NBGS Miramichi Branch meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at the Chatham Public Library at 6:15 PM.

Meetings are held 8 times per year – January to May and September to November. The Branch does not hold regular meetings in June, July, August or December.

Visitors are always welcome.



## Contact Information:

On the web at: www.nbgsmiramichi.org

By mail at:

NBGS Miramichi P. O. Box 403 Miramichi, NB E1N 3A8