

Manitoba Living History Society

La société pour l'histoire vivante du Manitoba



The Baggage Train

Spring 2007

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Contemplations from the Chair..



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On the Road.....

I must be the only person I know who doesn't look forward to returning home after a road trip. I am frequently asked if I am glad to be back home. The answer invariably, is no, I love traveling. Barry and I took a 3-1/2 week trip east – by truck with no trailer in tow. This meant motels instead of campgrounds. Okay – I have no trouble taking my overnight bag into the motel – AND my laptop AND my several sewing projects AND my sewing machine (which has a wheelie bag and handle). Most of you know that for me – on the road means lots of uninterrupted sewing time each evening. I did that. I made a Selkirk Settler work dress with a new Country Wives pattern; and an 1895 leg-o-mutton sleeve blouse.

But the purpose of the trip was twofold: 1. – to deliver a Powerpoint lecture on “The Evolution of Costume, 1740 – 1820” at the Living History Conference in Toronto; and 2. – to visit kith and kin in Montreal. We did this. The conference was excellent – we met up with many really good Canadian re-enactors (from Roman to WW II, as it happened). Many ideas were discussed and shared. And, our two-hour seminar/lecture was well attended and well received. We didn't manage to get through all our material!! Oh well, next time.

Our trip became so much more. Without the trailer behind us, and with no reason to hurry home, we

dawdled. We stopped on a dime when something was of interest. We changed our plans. We visited with the Twists of Orangeville to examine their costume library and textile collection (and good company of course). In Montreal, we took in Le Musée des Beaux Arts for the first time.

In Williamstown, we stopped at the Bethune-Thompson House to see where David Thompson, his wife Charlotte Small, and their family lived. We stopped at a small museum in Bowmanville that had a wonderful interactive display of medieval items. Next, we went to the small Joseph Brant Museum where we struck gold – that museum houses the late Eileen Collard's large costume collection!! The curators did pull out three dresses, but with only an hour of their time – SIGH – another appointment another time.

On to Michigan where we took in the Kalamazoo Living History Trade Show. [The emphasis might have been on “zoo”.] 170 sutlers. Most were marketing guns and animal skins, but in amongst that were several wonderful Regency era vendors – and new people we had not met before. More new ideas; more networking.

Ever in the past.....
Judy McPherson
Chairperson
Manitoba Living History Society



Upcoming events

- May 6, Sunday Movie Night Fundraiser – Dalnavert – to be held at the renovated Park Theater on Osborne – Cost is \$20.00 which includes the movie, soft drinks, popcorn and (we hope) some ice cream. We are waiting for final word, but the movie is likely to be an oldie classic - ARSENIC AND OLD LACE. Look for an email with more information.
- May 12 Manitoba Day celebrations featuring David Thompson – see David Thompson article for more details
- May 23 VISIT WITH THE PEOPLE OF RED RIVER – St. Boniface Museum – coordinated by Cindy Desrochers and Judy McPherson
- June 2 Formal Regency Dinner – details to come, contact Jo-Anne for info or if you want to lend a hand
- June 10 –13 Canadian Heritage Rivers Committee annual meeting – Winnipeg Still waiting for further information on this but you can see it's pretty close to the Fort Union Rendezvous!!!
- June 14 – 17 FORT UNION RENDEZVOUS – 25th Anniversary year.
- June 29, Friday Pre-Canada Day activities at the University of Winnipeg

The Tool Kit

During our trip east, we spent a half day with David Anderson, who is the resident historian for the Northwesters and Loyalists Museum in Williamstown, and also the keeper of the Bethune-Thompson house. There are many unique features about this building, but we have always been fascinated by the door hinges which are so cunningly engineered that when one opens the door and passes into the next room, the door automatically closes. As it opens, the door rises about an inch on its unusual hinges, (think of a winding staircase) – and then when you walk away from it – the door slides down the hinge – and is closed.

Barry and Judy



Knit, Stitch & Fix

The Cleaning of Leather Goods

Always thoroughly wash and clean leather that is old and greasy before applying any preparation. Do this by washing with ammonia and soft water, or rub the leather with a weak solution of potash & water.

A New Preparation for Cleaning & Oiling

1. After all pieces are separated, so that every strap will be single, wash thoroughly.
2. Then use this following solution:
 - a. 15 grains of bichromate of potash
 - b. 1 ounce extract of logwood
 - c. 1 quart, boiling soft waterStir until dissolved. This will give a beautiful black color to the leather.
3. Now oil thoroughly with neatsfoot oil with one-fourth part castor oil.

4. After oiling all leathers, wipe clean with a woolen cloth and it will give the leather a beautiful glossy appearance.
5. This is the best known preparation for the preservation and pliability of leather.

Everyone should try it, and they will never use another.

Anon.

Opening the Cassette



Barry MacPherson

TEXTILE GLOSSARY

The following textile terms represent a short list of fabrics that were popular in the 18th and 19th centuries. Some of the terms are commonly used today, but the textile being described in 2007 frequently does not resemble the original. In other words, the term has survived – the fabric has not. Having said that, there are agents and dealers scattered throughout North America who have done their research and who can provide limited quantities of historic textiles, albeit for a price. In the next edition, we will try to address in some organized manner, the questions which are asked by our membership. Please submit your queries to the editor.

CALLICO

(also calico – callicoe) – As used in the period 1746 – 1816, it was a plain cotton which could be and often was printed. Early inventories show calico as white or two colored. Originally woven in India, it wasn't produced in Europe until the late 17th century. To protect the linen manufacturers, cotton goods were prohibited in England from 1721 to 1774. (Also Indiennes)

CAMBLET

[Camlet] Striped, checked, spotted and flowered; glazed and unglazed, plain weave fabric. Fibre content varied from goat's hair to wool, and could have silk or linen woven in. Also called harrateen, moreen, grosgram, chenys.

CAMBRIC/CAMBRICK

A fine white, plain weave linen cloth. Linen was eventually replaced with cotton. In French, referred to as batiste.

CANVAS

A coarse, strong close weave cloth, made in a variety of weights, originally of hemp.

CALICO

The name of a cotton cloth, originally that from Calicut on the west coast of India but modernly a strong, tabby-woven cotton cloth. In the United States it has tended to be regarded as a cheap cotton cloth with small printed patterns as in quilting calico. Used for both shirts & trousers. (N.W.Co. inventories in 1820 but mentioned by Chas. Mackenzie in 1805) – As early as 1660 the term was used to describe “Linnen Cloth-Calicoes, fine or course & Cambricks fine or course” (page 277, Montgomery) The price of cotton/calico started to drop in the 1780s.

CAMLET/CAMBLET

The meaning of this term seems to change over the years. See Montgomery. Alexander Mackenzie wore a “camblet cloak” and in this context could support a “superfine” worsted wool.

CHECK

A fabric made in plain weave with colored warp and weft stripes intersecting at right angles to form squares. – used in both military & “fur trade” shirts from the 1770s onward into the first quarter of the 19th. century.

CHINTZ

[Chints] A glazed cotton painted or printed in many colors. Originally imported from India. Huge variety used for petticoats, waistcoats, etc. “Chint” (hindoo word) means spotted cloth. Chitta = spotted cloth from India.

CORDUROY

a coarse durable cotton fabric having a piled surface raised in cords, ridges or ribs (often described as “coarse”, “durable”, “stout”, etc.). Popular 1815 colors were olive, drab, slate, fawn, white & red. Popular fabric used in both H.B.Co. & N.W.Co. service for trousers & jackets from as early as 1805. (Chas. Mackenzie)

COTTON

This textile rapidly replaced linen as the fabric of choice for shirts, gowns, trousers, etc.

DENIM

A heavy cotton twill from the late 18th century onwards.

DIAPER

A kind of dimity; a linen fabric (sometimes with cotton) woven to form diamonds with the spaces variously filled with liness, a dot, or a leaf. Derived from Ypres in Flanders. A twill weave.

DIMITY

Cotton, slightly corded in pattern, nearly always white, with a variety of weights from fine for light-weight dresses too heavy for bed covers. North West Company waistcoats – 1816. Mid 18th – mid 20th c. “raised stripes or checks common”

DORNICK

Table linen and towels used in Scotland

DOULAS

[Dowlas] Heavy or coarse, strong linen or hard-spun cotton, first made in Brittany. White or checks. Eventually made to resemble a strong calico. Same as or similar to ravensduck. Worn by workers. (also Irish Doulas)

DRAB

Thick stout/strong closely woven fabric of linen or wool – undyed yellow or grey-beige color. Heavy and costly as overcoating. It also could be dull light brown or yellowish-brown. The term is frequently used in trade inventories as a color rather than as a textile.

DRUGGET

[Droquet] Linsey-woolsey; coarse wool with linen or hemp warp. This fabric was popular among the working poor in Scotland.

DUCK

Strong, thick linen cloth, glazed so that it sheds water. Heavy weights near to canvas, lighter weights for trousers, cook’s jackets, etc. This textile lighter and finer than canvas and, when glazed, sheds water. (see “ravensduck” & “Russia duck”)

Also in the Cassette: *Basketry*

Jo-Anne Desanges



In an attempt to collect baskets for my daughter’s friends who would be joining the fray for the Fall Gathering I was amazed at how difficult it became to acquire baskets that matched the many images in primary sources. Not one to pass up a challenge I put my nose, my digital camera, and my scanner to the grindstone.

First I was surprised at the variety of baskets in the artwork. Mind you they were mostly from the other side of the ocean but nonetheless is it possible that settlers with the ability might have made their way to the Red River?

(cont.)

These basket shapes and their potential users seemed to have generally been the same. The market basket for ladies of the genteel class, the tray shaped baskets for vendors, and the creel style – for the hard working lower classes.

The baskets that show up in the Red River area seem to have mostly the same categorization with the exception of the addition of the pack basket made and used by native women. Surprisingly it isn't a large piece of basketry.

The most important detail for us as interpreters is the material we would have used to make the baskets. Red willow comes to mind first, Burr Oak and Poplar could also have been options because they could be split. Finding such baskets has proven to be quite difficult, many such basketry artisans being overseas.

More information, images, and discussion are sure to be shared at the April 15th Baggage.



Pack basket



Wool Basket

The following are baskets available locally at Michael's Arts and Craft Supplies. The shapes are all acceptable but the material would not have been used here.



Ponderings...

February 9th

Dear Judy,

Thank you for your kind words and the beautiful card. It was a pleasure to present to the Manitoba Living History Society, and I would certainly like to do so in the future. Besides Aboriginal archery, I could present on the manufacture of Plains shirts, moccasins and containers.

I gladly accept your offer of a membership in MLHS. Looking forward to working with you and MLHS and thanking you and everyone who attended my presentation.

Sincerely,

“Roland Bohr”.

Dear members of our Manitoba Living History family,

Thank you – all of you for being such a big part of our special day! You really helped to create a wonderful ambiance at our dream wedding! Thank you so much for your thoughtful gift of the quilt (it's gorgeous! We'll cherish it always!) and the credit at Bill Fernie's trading post (we have some ideas!). You have created incredible memories we'll remember forever. It was an honour to have you be a part of our celebration.

Jérôme and Angela

Still with Jerome – he kindly prepared a 35 page document listing the artifacts in the Manitoba Museum of Scottish and/or Métis origin. These are listed and described, quite completely. If you wish to have a look at the book, call Barry to make arrangements.

There are still a few people who can collect small or medium sums of money resulting from their attendance at paid events in 2006. There are also several people who have not yet renewed their membership. If you are one of THOSE, please do let us know if you wish to let your membership drop, and we'll take your name off all the lists. You will get one last private email reminding you of membership dues.

Published Author Writes the Everyman's Cookbook with a Pinch of Quirk

Contact Information: Lorina Stephens

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DUMB HOUSEWIFE UTILIZES REVOLUTIONARY
PRINT ON DEMAND PUBLISHER.

Published Author Writes the Everyman's Cookbook with a Pinch of Quirk.

Neustadt, ON, (March 20, 2007) – Author of *Recipes of a Dumb Housewife*, Lorina Stephens, has not only made a foray into the sphere of cookbooks, but into the world of self-publishing via a new and innovative Print on Demand publisher, Lulu.com. Lulu, unlike most POD (Print on Demand) publishers, offers, for a fee, a distribution service to its authors which opens the door to potentially enormous global markets. Lulu data feeds cascade to international bibliographic databases as well as leading wholesalers and retailers including Chapters, Indigo, Coles, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and For Borders. What this means for the author is that as Lulu continues to expand on an international scale, markets such as the Netherlands, Japan and Germany, as well as the already existing markets in North America and the European Union, are open for business. In essence, Lulu has created a revolution in print media in the manner of other online services for downloadable music. For the consumer the revolution means greater selection, in that what is available in the marketplace is no longer juried and vetted by a few. For the producers of print and music, it means a fair shot at the marketplace. Despite nay-sayers this is a burgeoning phenomenon and a savvy business decision on the part of Lorina Stephens.

Recipes of a Dumb Housewife (RoADH) is now available. What makes this recipe book different, aside from its savvy publication and distribution method, is that it's the Everyman's cookbook with a pinch of quirk. Lorina Stephens, author of *RoADH* declares herself a simple domestic cook. But don't mistake simple for dull or even dumb. Her cooking philosophy is simple ingredients treated simply, working in harmony with the demands of flavour, quality, nutrition and the demands of time and budget. While treating her readers to such wonderful recipes as: Green Goo Pasta, Eggs Lorina, and I Capezzolo di Venere (Nipples of Venus), she offers a light-hearted window into her world through delightful, and often insightful anecdotes about her journey not only to the recipe, but raising a family, juggling career and domestic responsibilities as well as health issues.

This is Lorina's third book publication, the previous being *Touring the Giant's Rib: A Guide to the Niagara Escarpment*, and *Credit River Valley*, both published by Boston Mills Press.

Recipes of a Dumb Housewife is available through Lulu.com (<http://stores.lulu.com/fiverivers>) and www.5rivers.org, \$22.95CDN, \$19.95US.

An Invitation from the Centre for Rupert's Land Studies

Susan Elaine Gray and McNally Robinson Booksellers invite you to the launch of two books, *I Will Fear No Evil*, published by the University of Calgary Press, and *The Spirit Lives in the Mind*, published by McGill-Queen's University Press.

The event will take place at 8:00 p.m. at the Grant Park location in the Prairie Ink Restaurant on Thursday, April 19th.

Please print this invitation and present it to your server for one complimentary glass of wine or tea or coffee for you and a companion.

For further information on *I Will Fear No Evil* or *The Spirit Lives in the Mind*, click this link: <http://www.mcnallyrobinson.com/event.php?txtEventID=6392>

We look forward to seeing you on the 19th.

Barb King
McNally Robinson Booksellers
barbk@grant.mcnallyrobinson.ca
voice (204) 453-0424 ext 250

Quilt and Stichey Show
Place: East St. Paul Senior Centre
262 Hoddinott Road
Date: Saturday, April 21st
Sunday, April 22nd
Time: Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Admission: \$2.00
Your admission includes entry in a draw
Tea and cakes are available for \$1.50
An East St. Paul Senior's Centre Event
Phone Rita for more information:
661-2734
The Material Girls Quilters and Stitchers



In the Wardrobe *Michelle Desourdy*

REGENCY UNDERGARMENTS

With the radical change of costume in the early 19th century, young ladies of the Regency did not have to suffer the stiff and binding, multiple undergarments their mothers wore in the Georgian period. This new age of clothing celebrated the “natural female form”, and emulated, to some degree, classical Grecian and Roman styles of antiquity.

Paintings of the wealthy create misconceptions as to how overexposed, immodest, and impractical the Regency woman was attired. We read tales of young fashionable girls in France wearing pink stockings to simulate bare flesh, with dampened chemises for a sheer effect under their light muslin gowns.

In reality, when the new Empire style travelled across the channel to the modesty of England, we encounter a more practical state of “undress”. After the chemise, or “shift” and a corset, women donned a petticoat of cotton, linen, or lightweight flannel for the winter months.

Corsets became “short stays”, containing only a few bones for support and ended a short distance below the breasts. “Long stays” were used to create a slimmer shape for the more voluptuous figure, to provide support for the bust, and not to constrict the waist. They were essential for evening wear.

The long corsets, spiral laced up the back, ending at the hip, provided shaping with cording, stitching, and a wood or bone busk (shaped like a ruler) inserted down the front of the corset. This created an erect posture. In warmer climates, busks were made of silver. A young lady’s sweetheart might carve her wooden busk with intricate designs, draw scrimshaw on bone, and present it as a very personal gift. To further enhance a woman’s assets, later corsets divided the breast as two separate entities. They were called “divorce corsets”.

“Drawers”, (underpants with short legs) were not invented until 1806. Essentially, they were tubes of fabric, stitched to a band that tied around the waist. They were of little warmth, and all personal places of a woman were still exposed. It would take Victorian prudery before they became a feature of average wardrobe of a woman. Few wore them,

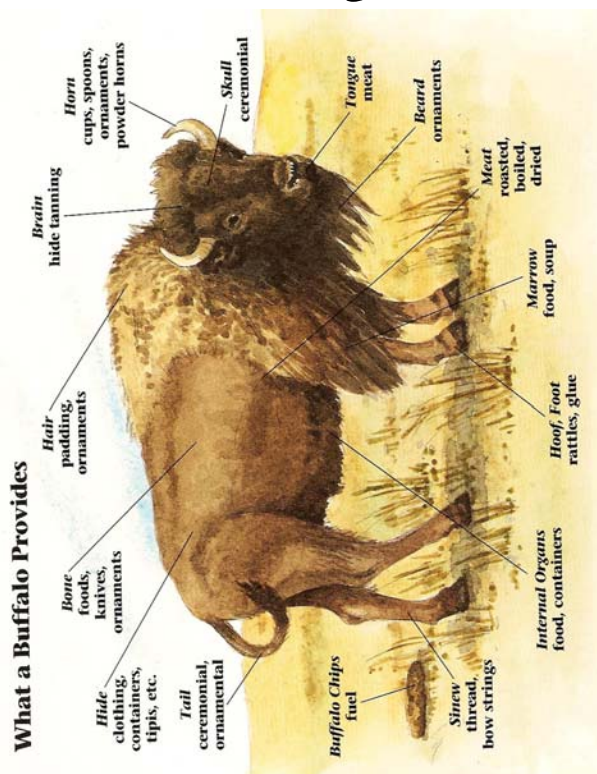
although they were popular with young girls. Princess Charlotte is said to have enjoyed wearing them, contrary to most. Upon an initial wearing one exasperated individual exclaimed:

“They are the ugliest things I ever saw: I will never put them on again. I dragged my dress in the dirt for fear someone would spy them. My finest dimity pair with real Swiss lace is quite useless to me, for I lost one leg and did not deem it proper to pick it up, and so walked off leaving it in the street behind me, and the lace had cost six shillings a yard...”

With the upcoming Regency Assembly, members do not need to sew all of the period undergarments to achieve the look for evening wear. A “balcony” style, padded and wired brassiere (the kind worn mostly with strapless dresses) can be used in replacement of a corset. Many styles are available, for all shapes and sizes. Try as many on that you can, as comfort becomes important for all the dancing you plan to do after the dinner. May we see all of our ladies at the Assembly, as we don our finest, and step back in time for an evening of dining, dancing, primping and flirting...but do remember, cover up, as some aspects of our figures are best left for our husbands to view and the imagination of others.



Childhood Ramblings





Just how does a pattern company such as ours ever get started? I think this can best be explained in our case as creative juices bubbling over in many directions and being captured and channeled into a specific outlet. Certainly we had the one with the light bulb – that would be Judy, who saw such potential for us. No, we had no hard and fast agenda. We formed our ideal plans and then life took over and we went with the flow.

We decided to begin with cap patterns for a number of reasons. First there was a need in the historical community for patterns covering a variety of styles for different time periods, different social status, and especially, caps that actually existed historically. Secondly, we noticed that the women of MLHS tended to wear a limited number of styles, and as soon as someone wore a new style, there was a great demand for the new pattern. We tended to look all too similar. Thirdly, the pieces for a cap pattern could be reproduced easily by the three of us, without incurring high costs that would have to be passed on to our customers.

How the tasks were distributed is interesting. It wasn't really discussed, it just evolved. With the odd exception, Judy would present three historical proofs of a cap. (...the rule of threes) That cap was then grouped with others of the same period, same style and class, and we would begin. Olivia took the photos and created the mock-ups to resemble the photos and sewing practices of the time period. These would then be examined by the group and adjusted until we felt they were as true to the original as possible. A pattern and bare instructions would be created from this sample and passed onto Fran. Following the instructions, she would then create a completed cap, recording necessary changes. Fran then drafted the final pattern pieces with instructions and passed her work to Judy. Judy is in charge of all historical research and creating the story of each Country Wife included in our patterns. She proof-reads all written material, then creates all illustrations needed, makes copies, and packages the materials for retail. Then, of course Judy does all our marketing and banking.

By the time we each had 2 dozen new caps in our wardrobes from which to choose, we felt the need to explore new horizons. Over time, each of us has created patterns for personal use and we agreed we wished to share these with the historical community. This has required time to discover an accurate way to size our patterns, and an inexpensive way to reproduce the larger pattern

pieces without a major capital expense. We have found that hours of grunt work and fine graph paper produces the various sizes, and we found a local printer who can reproduce our larger patterns economically.

Our men's cap pattern is complete and available for purchase, and the Country Woman's jacket will be available by the end of the month. Our Selkirk Settler Series is well under way, with the first of those patterns requiring sizing before completion. With life getting in the way, it may not be on the market until early summer.



Under the Umbrella

La Compagnie de La Vérendrye

has not been idle during the winter months! After equipping two new recruits over the winter, the post-Festival period has been fertile with ideas and projects.



As many know, Québec City is the last fortified city in North America and it will celebrate its 400th anniversary in 2008. Support from successive Governor Generals of New France, such as Beauharnois and La Galissonnière, was critical to La Vérendrye's exploration to find the Western Sea. La Compagnie wishes to celebrate this anniversary and plans to attend. We are already planning an exchange with *La Compagnie des Canonniers-Bombardiers de Québec*, our sister company in Québec City. We wish to bring our brothers in arms from Québec to Saint-Boniface during Festival 2008. We then hope to join them in Québec City for the big party in August 2008. We are planning other events...but that will be the subject of another article!

Over the longer term, we are studying a few tourism related projects, such as the development of a La Vérendrye self-guided circuit, as well as evaluating the Compagnie's products and services to insert in proposed tourism packages.

Over the shorter term, our projects are just as ambitious:

- three members of La Compagnie are learning to play their freshly acquired *vielle-à-roue baroque* or baroque hurdy-gurdy;
- the annual School of the Soldier in Roseau (MB) will take place on May 25-27, 2007
- stewardship of *Parc La Vérendrye* (Taché Avenue) is being discussed with the City's Adopt-a-Park Program
- you will find us at The Forks National Historic Site on July 1st, 2007

- we have submitted a proposal to bring the *Batterie royale* of Old Québec City to life during *Les Fêtes de la Nouvelle France* in August 2007
- we hope to meet our *Détachement* at Grand Portage in August 2007
- a few soldiers might take in the 250th anniversary of the siege of Fort William Henry (*Lac du St-Sacrement* or Lake George, NY) in September 2007.

Other events will pop up invariably, but in short, the soldiers of La Compagnie are excited about the upcoming season!

We wish you all a great summer!

Vive le Roy!
Per mare et terras!

Michel Loiseau
Capitaine
Compagnie de La Vérendrye
info@laverendrye.ca



La Compagnie on the Boulevard



(left to right) Claude Villeneuve, Denis Dragon and Michel Loiseau with their *vielle-à-roue baroque* by Daniel Thonon.

The Forces of Lord Selkirk are currently planning to hold their Seringapatam Dinner on 05 May 2007 at the St Regis Hotel. Dress is regimental uniform for military members and Regency costume for civilians. The cost is \$50 per person. Interested members of the MLHS should contact myself (254-7533) or Marie Zorniak (668-9895) to arrange tickets.



Our annual Spring Muster will be held on the weekend of 8-10 June 2007 at Seven Oaks House. Military drill and musketry displays will be given during the day as well as camp life.



Trader' Page

NEW TEXTILES – just arrived from Ontario, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Lovely dress cottons for your Regency dress. Also great choices for bedgowns.

You MUST see these new offerings!! From \$7 to \$11 a yard.

Also still a good selection of melton cloths and duffles. Prices vary.

Ready-made clothes include narrow fall trousers – canvas mostly; waistcoats in a variety of sizes and colors;

and a new shipment of shirts just arrived – including half a dozen white ruffled shirts – at \$65.00 each.

Contact Barry or Judy – 256-6869

Fran has seen in her travels – lovely white Swiss dot cotton at Fabricland in Transcona. Just right for delicate young women's gowns.



Marks on History

Sharon Menheer

If some Sunday (or any other day of the week) you happen to want to go for an interesting drive, might I suggest the neat museum in Chatfield, MB. From the Perimeter and Hwy 7 it is approx. one hour. North on Hwy 7 to Teulon and then west on Hwy 17 approx. 55 km. There are many local restaurants along the way that would welcome your business and give you a good down to earth home cooked meal.



The Chatfield Museum is very unique in that it is privately owned and operated by Al & Gerry Johnson who live in the museum, an old pool hall, year round. Unique because old and new are put together into a functioning home. Al & Gerry have been working on their vision for 12 years (both encountering cancer, which put their plans on hold & behind for two years).

The history of the museum goes along... Hymen Posen (General Merchant) had a farm east of Chatfield. On it there was a stand of spruce trees. Nick Shushkewich bought the timber rights and he and his son, John, cut the trees into logs in 1934. John Blahey, owned a portable saw mill, and cut the

logs into boards. Nick's daughter, Ann married William Slobodian from Rembrandt, MB. They decided to go into the Pool Hall business. In 1936, Nick & John Shushkewich along with William Slobodian started to build the Pool Hall, mixing the concrete for the foundation by hand. The building when completed served in many capacities, including living quarters for Ann & William. Their son being born in the attached living quarters in 1938. The building was also a Barbershop, a meeting place for dances, movies and other town activities. In 1939, the Pool Hall was sold to Dmytro Kempa who lived in it until he passed away. It was then, in 1993 Al & Gerry purchased the building and decided to turn it into a museum.

Since then, with time and their efforts & own funds, Al & Gerry have lovingly added to their many buildings on the property. They purchased a turn of the century church built in 1924. Originally a Ukrainian Catholic Church it had been converted into Peace Lutheran Church and has now been totally renovated and refurbished. They have a Handkerchief Hut with over 3000 "hankies" from all over the world. One can stay at the guesthouse for a donation. On the property there is also a creamery, tool shed and nature walking trails. They host many scientists from both Canada and the USA when they are doing studies of the near by Snake Pits at Narcisse.



PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



THE CHATFIELD CREAMERY

In the main residence, every available spare has, from floor to ceiling and then some, been covered with donated items. The understanding with donators is "you will always own your own item(s) and you can always take them back".

Their current project is the renovation of a one-room schoolhouse, which will represent 17 such long gone schools from the area. The school they purchased and are working on was Sandridge Public School Grades 1 to 8.

Should you choose to make the well worth day trip to Chatfield, you pass by the Snake Pits just north of Narcisse. The snakes usually start their migration during the first week of May to around Mother's day. However it is believe that this year they will begin a week early and because of this the scientists are coming to Chatfield in late April. When one is traveling along Hwy 17 near the snake pits one can see many foot high "fences". This is to encourage the snakes to take the near by culverts and not the dangerous (at least to them) highway.

Coffee/tea and a sweet are always available with the cost being a donation and some conversation. I would however suggest one call before one makes the drive. Al & Gerry do try to stay home while the museum is open 7 days a week from May 1st. Their phone # is (204) 664-2157. If you decide to go look for the building with a blue roof on the right hand side of the road after you pass through an "s" turn in the road.

Curmudgeon's Corner

Barry MacPherson



As was the case in my recent contribution to this outstanding newsletter, I have not been able to find anything to be curmudgeon-y about. Judy will undoubtedly have a great deal to say about the Toronto Living History Convention, and the outstanding Kalamazoo, Michigan re-enactors' trade fair. My feelings on both of these events are of extreme nostalgia, given that I was able to meet many elderly gentlemen who remembered such bygone events as The Attack on Hull – The Defense of the Bay of Quinte – The Gin and Cherry Wine event at Mackinac – and of course Waterloo 175 – The U. S. Civil War 125 events and that classic - President Reagan's inaugural parade in Philadelphia. I certainly enjoyed meeting all these guys, and am totally bemused by the fact that they are still soldiering on – the halt, the maimed and the crippled. We used to say "get a life!" Now I have to concede that we've been having a life all along – and are grateful for it.

With the greatest sorrow, I pass on the sad news that Barry and Michelle Webb's young son, Michael, passed away on the 10th of April. I am sure you join me in extending our sincere condolences to Barry and Michele, and their two daughters Stephanie and Allison. There is no loss greater than the loss of one's child.



Judy McPherson
on behalf of the
membership of MLHS