

THE ROYAL YORKER

The Quarterly Newsletter of the 'United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (St. Lawrence Branch)

∞ Winter 2018 ∞



Who We Are

The association is dedicated to promoting the history of the United Empire Loyalists: North Americans who remained loyal to the Crown during the Revolutionary War (1775-1783), and who later settled in Canada. The St. Lawrence Branch serves the Ontario counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, comprising the former “Royal Townships” of Lancaster, Charlottenburgh, Cornwall, Osnabruck, Williamsburgh and Matilda.

Branch Executive: President: Lorraine Reoch; Vice President: Vacant; Past President: Vacant; Secretary: Carol Goddard; Treasurer: Michael Eamer; Genealogist: Lorraine Reoch; Social Conveners: Carol Goddard & Lorraine Reoch; Webmaster & Facebook Administrator: Jennifer DeBruin; Newsletter: Stuart Manson.

Acknowledgement: The Ontario Ministry of Culture provides a heritage grant to the branch for its outreach program.

Where to Find Us

🌐 Website: uelac.org/st-lawrence/

📘 Facebook: www.facebook.com/StLawrenceUELAC/

✉ Mailing address: P.O. Box 607, 3 Augusta Street, Morrisburg, Ontario, Canada, K0C 1X0

Upcoming Events

February 24, 2018: Cornwall Heritage Fair, Cornwall Square, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. We are attending this event with the following groups:

- Akwesasne Kahwatsi:re Genealogy & Historical Society
- Cornwall Community Museum
- Dalkeith Historical Society
- The Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield
- Généalogie et archives Saint-Laurent
- The Bishop's House of Glengarry
- Nor'Westers and Loyalist Museum
- Glengarry Pioneer Museum
- Heritage / Patrimoine Cornwall
- Loyal Orange Association of Canada
- Lost Villages Historical Society & Museum
- Ontario East British Home Child Family
- Railways of SD&G

President's Report



Happy New Year to all. We are embarking on a new year with new hopes and dreams. The winter has been long already, but we are navigating as careful as possible.

Our fall meeting and open house was successful with several of our members in attendance. We had a visit from Ann Reddish (UELAC Councillor for Eastern District) and her sister. The show and tell was enjoyed by all. It is always a hit.

Hope this newsletter finds all healthy.

-Lorraine Reoch

Genealogist's Report



This has been a very busy year for applications; I have completed twelve since last September. Many are coming from the United States and all have roots in Canada. I have a volunteer, Darlene Fawrett, who has experience in doing family histories and has proven to be a great help in finding answers needed to complete the applications.

There is no official word on a new home for our archives, but the councils of North and South Dundas are working on it. We are still scanning birth, marriage and death records for the website. When this is finished, thousands of names will be made available for anyone to research.

Thirteen applications have been processed since the annual dinner. One went to Thomas Raub and it was for a Loyalist woman.

-Lorraine Reoch fancylass@hotmail.ca



Treasurer's Report



Branch dues for 2018 are slow to come in. Please renew soon, so you don't miss out on the spring edition of *The Loyalist Gazette*.

Information on the payment of branch dues is provided below.

-Michael C. Eamer, CD, UE

Membership Dues for 2018

Membership dues can be paid by cheque, made out to "St. Lawrence Br. UELAC" and mailed to Michael Eamer, 667 Hamilton Cr., Cornwall, ON K6H 5N6, or to the St. Lawrence Branch UELAC, 3 Augusta St., Morrisburg, ON K0C 1X0.

- \$50 for individual regular, associate, and affiliate members.
- \$65 for families (up to two people). Additional family members (same address) are \$5 each.
- \$10 for branch members who pay their dues to another branch, but wish to belong to the St. Lawrence Branch (\$15 for family branch memberships).

The treasurer also accepts e-transfer directly to the branch bank account. Please correspond with the treasurer via eamermc@yahoo.com

Newsletter Submissions

Do you have an interesting story to relate about your Loyalist ancestor? Do you need some help with a particularly-tricky research issue? Send it to us! Don't worry if you feel nervous about preparing a written submission; we can help you with that too!

We're also interested in upcoming events, photos, and any feedback you have on the newsletter (either specific or general).

Please communicate with Stuart Manson, your friendly neighbourhood newsletter editor, at the following address: manson1763@gmail.com.

Support the Sir John Johnson Manor House Committee!

Members of the UELAC St. Lawrence Branch executive were treated recently to a presentation by Brent Lafave, President of the Sir John Johnson Manor House Committee.

Lafave and his colleagues have an ambitious plan to preserve the Sir John Johnson Manor House by converting it into a self-supporting inn. The house is located in Williamstown. One of the oldest structures in Ontario, it was built in 1784 for Sir John Johnson who was a prominent Loyalist leader and commander of the King's Royal Regiment of New York, although he never actually lived in the house. Parks Canada owns the building and its grounds.



This dedicated group of volunteers is working hard to rejuvenate this important Loyalist residence, and they need your help! Visit their Go Fund Me page here:

<https://www.gofundme.com/the-manor-house-restoration-project>

Signposts

“Signposts” is a recurring feature in *The Royal Yorker* that points to a current place name in our region that has Loyalist origins.

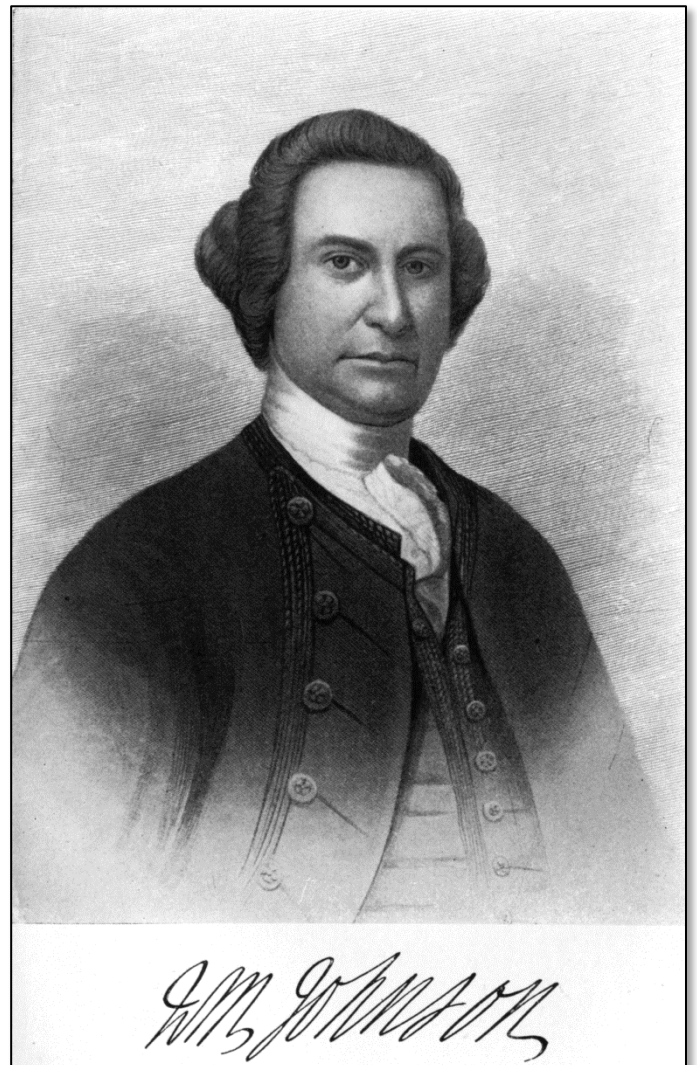
In this issue we examine Williamstown, the quaint and historical village in the heart of Glengarry County.

Technically speaking, the name of the village is only indirectly connected to a Loyalist, but its significance is weighty.

When disbanded Loyalist soldiers came flooding into this part of the country in 1784, they were led

by Sir John Johnson, the former commanding officer of the King's Royal Regiment of New York. Surveyors working for Johnson identified a useful waterfall for a mill, at the spot where Williamstown would be founded. Johnson himself acquired land at that location, and promptly named the settlement after his famous father, Sir William Johnson (pictured below).

The elder Johnson came to North America, as a young man, to manage lands owned by his Royal Navy uncle, Admiral Sir Peter Warren. Residing in the Mohawk Valley of the colony of New York, Johnson also befriended the local Iroquois. He also established his own vast estate in that region.



Sir William gained prominence during the French & Indian War (more properly known as the Seven Years War in North America, 1754-1763). He was

the victor of the Battle a Lake George in 1755, and was a long-time “Superintendent of Indian Affairs” in the region.

He died in the summer of 1774, months before the continent was set aflame by the American Revolutionary War. Historians speculate that, had he lived, the elder Johnson would have certainly supported the Crown during the war. Sir John Johnson honoured his late father by naming the village Williamstown.

It’s also the location of several historical sites and buildings of importance to Loyalist history:

- The Sir John Johnson Manor House, which is mentioned elsewhere in this issue.
- The Bethune-Thompson House, probably the earliest Loyalist structure in Ontario, also built in 1784 but prior to the manor house.
- The Loyalist and Nor’Westers Museum.

-Stuart Manson

Local Content Abounds in the Latest Issue of *The Loyalist Gazette*

Our region of the country is particularly blessed with Loyalist history. After all, we live in one of the regions where disbanded Loyalist soldiers first settled, following their exile from their homes in the Thirteen Colonies.

It is perhaps no surprise that the UELAC’s magazine, *The Loyalist Gazette*, often contains content that is local to our region. However, the latest edition of the publication (Vol. LV, No. 2, Fall 2017), contains even more than usual.

First and foremost, our very own Carol Goddard is the author of a special article that appears on pages 18-19. Her article highlights the important preservation efforts taking place in Williamstown, Ontario, on the Sir John Johnson Manor House.

The magazine also contains an article written by Kathleen Lynch of the Victoria (BC) Branch of the UELAC. Lynch was born in Cornwall and grew up in the Lost Village of Moulinette. Her article discusses her family history, including her local Loyalist ancestors (Millross and Moss). It also delves into one

of her non-Loyalist ancestors, Alsaints Chesley, who founded Chesley’s Hotel in Cornwall. That structure is now a beautiful bed and breakfast. Although it should be noted, as Lynch remarks in her article, that Alsaints Chesley’s older brothers were Rebels who fought against the Crown during the American Revolutionary War.

-Stuart Manson

The Bookshelf

“The Bookshelf” is a recurring feature in *The Royal Yorker*. Here we examine books of interest - old or new - whose subject matter is dear to our hearts: The early history of our region, genealogy, the American Revolutionary War, and related topics.

A great way to learn about history is through reading historical biographies. Dates, facts and events become more meaningful and pertinent when connected to the life story of an individual.

The best source for concise, yet detailed biographies of personalities connected with the history of Canada is the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (DCB). The volumes that comprise its print edition are arranged by the death date of the individual. Thus, its low-numbered volumes are chock-full of entries associated with Loyalists and the American Revolutionary War. For example: John Butler, Joseph Brant, Molly Brant, Frederick Haldimand, Guy Carleton, and Sir John Johnson (a fellow of particular importance to our region, and this issue of *The Royal Yorker*), to name but a few.



For many years, the DCB was available in the print edition only. Pricy, but well worth the cost. About 15 years ago, they released a CD-ROM version. Now, the entire collection is available free on their website. The interface is easy to use, the biographies are tagged with all sorts of subject-matter categories, and the text of the biographies are fully searchable.

The search function permits readers to quickly identify biographies of interest. It also allows users to find references to people not quite prominent enough to have their own entry, but who appear (in passing) in the biographies of others. The authors of DCB entries are generally the leading authorities on the people profiled, or the subject matter, or events in which they figured. Furthermore, the end of each biography provides a list of primary sources consulted, including published and archival sources. This can be a great springboard for additional research.

Hardcopies of the DCB can be found in most, if not all, public libraries. As noted above, however, the best way to access this treasure trove of information is through the DCB website:

<http://www.biographi.ca/en/index.php>

-Stuart Manson

Bits & Bobs

The last issue of *The Royal Yorker* featured photos, taken at our annual dinner last autumn, of our members who received their Loyalist certificates. St. Lawrence Branch member (and newsletter editor) Stuart Manson missed that meeting, so at a recent visit to our resource centre in Morrisburg, Branch President Lorraine Reoch presented him with his certificate (photo below).



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Photo credits in this issue (order of appearance):

Page 2: Hulton Archive;

Page 3: Parks Canada; William Stone, The Life and Times of Sir William Johnson, 1865;

Page 4: Dictionary of Canadian Biography;

Page 5: Carolyn Thompson Goddard, UE.

The Last Word

“Those Loyalists who have adhered to the unity of the Empire, and joined the Royal Standard before the Treaty of Separation in the year 1783, and all their children and their descendants by either sex, are to be distinguished by the following capitals, affixed to their names: U.E. alluding to their great principle the Unity of the Empire.”

-Guy Carleton (Dorchester),
November 9, 1789

∞ The next issue of *The Royal Yorker* will be published in May 2018 ∞

Ut inceptit Fidelis sic permanet

RECRUITS WANTED !

By the

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K St. Lawrence Branch

Join the ranks of an organization promoting the history of the UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS : North Americans who remained loyal to the Crown in the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), who later settled in Canada. The St. Lawrence Branch serves the Ontario counties of STORMONT, DUNDAS AND GLENGARRY , comprising the original Loyalist 3 5 R \ D O 7 R \ Z 1 0 8 4 K L S V

JOIN OUR RANKS

Such spirited lads and lassies will receive, as a bounty, branch quarterly newsletter 4 7 K H 5 R \ 5 0 W R H N D H U V R S T L A D W A G A Z I N E 1 4 7 K H Loyalist Gazette twice a year. You will also receive notice of our three yearly meetings and glorious annual feast, and genealogical help to prove your Loyalist ancestors!

Contact us uselac.org/stlawrence/

GOD SAVE THE KING !

(Posted by Stuart Manson, modelled after recruiting posters from the Revolutionary War era.)