



# Fidelity

*United Empire Loyalists' Association of  
Canada  
Toronto Branch*



Volume 29 Issue 5

October/November 2007

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## **Black Loyalists: Arrival, Experience and Hope**

Our fall speaker series kicked off with an address by **Rosemary Sadlier**, President of the Ontario Black History Society (OBHS). Rosemary outlined for those present the history of blacks in the New World from their earliest arrival through their participation in the Revolutionary War to their struggle after the war to live free and prosper. It was illuminating to hear that however challenging were the lives of the white Loyalists, black Loyalists had that much more difficult a time surviving after the war. We thank Rosemary for shedding some light on an aspect of the Loyalist experience with which some of us were not very familiar.

Rosemary Sadlier is the author of numerous books, including her most recent work [The Kids Book of Black Canadian History](#). Rosemary has also written biographies of Harriet Tubman and Mary Ann Shadd. For more information on the Ontario Black History Society, visit [www.blackhistorysociety.ca](http://www.blackhistorysociety.ca).

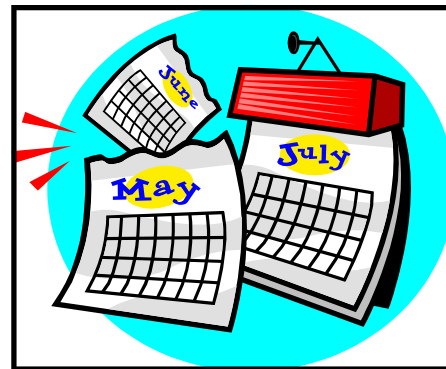


*Rosemary Sadlier*

## Fall 2007 Branch Meetings

Our fall speaker programme continues on **Wednesday, October 17th**. Toronto branch member **Randy Saylor, UE**, will speak about the **Quakers of West Lake** (near Adolphustown) and their opposition to the granting of land for military service. This should generate some interesting discussion! Randy has done a lot of work on old records of the Bay of Quinte region. He has a team of transcribers who are working on these records and they recently completed some West Lake Quaker minute books that are on Randy's website:

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~saylormowbray/>



In place of our regular November meeting and speaker, we will be holding a special genealogy workshop. See page five for more details.

The monthly meetings are held at the branch office at **40 Scollard Street, Suite 300**. Scollard Street is three short blocks north of Yonge Street from Bloor. The **#6 Bay Street bus** stops at Bay and Yorkville, which is only one short block from Scollard Street. Members are welcome to come early for refreshments and to peruse the library and to meet fellow members before the formal meeting starts. There is metered parking on the street and several parking lots in the neighbourhood. Once in the lobby, **buzz #1500** for access.

We are always looking for suggestions for speakers or topics. If you have any ideas for upcoming meetings, please email them to our programme chair, **Linda Young** at ([linda\\_fawcett\\_young@hotmail.com](mailto:linda_fawcett_young@hotmail.com)) or leave a message at the branch office.

## Ancestors in the Attic—Toronto Branch Broadcast



In the last issue of *Fidelity*, we told you all about the July 7th filming of an episode of History Television's "Ancestors in the Attic" at the Toronto Branch office. The episode centred around Toronto branch member **Laura Lenson** and her quest to discover where her Loyalist ancestor William Foster came from and which of the dozens of William Fosters was the Loyalist who joined the King's American Regiment. Numerous Toronto branch members participated in the filming.

At this point, the episode is scheduled to air on **Saturday, December 1st** at 6:30 p.m. and then again on **Wednesday, December 5th** at 8:00 p.m. This is subject to change so best to check the History Television listings around that time, to be sure you don't miss it.

For further information on "Ancestors in the Attic" visit:

[www.history.ca/AncestorsintheAttic/story.aspx](http://www.history.ca/AncestorsintheAttic/story.aspx)

## Certificate Presented

Congratulations go to Toronto branch member **Bob Jarvis** who has proven his descent from Loyalist **Stephen Jarvis**.

Bob was presented with his certificate by branch president Karen Windover at the September 19th meeting.

Congratulations, Bob!



## New in the Branch Library

The Toronto Branch is fortunate to have an excellent library. Members are encouraged to peruse the contents before branch meetings or to make alternative arrangements to come in and do research.

Branch librarian **Martha Hemphill** advises us of some of the latest acquisitions:

The settlers of the Beekman Patent by Frank J Doherty.

Vol. VII Hunter to Leavens; Vol. VIII Lee to Millington

Family histories of 18C residents of the Patent and adjacent oblong. To be included in this series the surname had to appear on a Beekman or Pauling Tax list or served in local military unit or bought or sold or leased real property or was recorded in a church or legal record as living in Beekman. They cover the years 1790-1810 and frequently beyond.

Call number F127 D8 D53

Index to the Upper Canada Land Books. We now have the full set and disk.

Call number FC 3071.1.A1154

Planter Links: community and culture in Colonial Nova Scotia.

Call number FC2321.25 P53

Hope restored. The American Revolution and founding of New Brunswick by Robert L. Dallison.. Call number FC 2471.S3

## Ontario Volunteer Service Award

Ontario Volunteer Service Awards are presented to individuals who contribute consecutive years of service to an organization within Ontario, and whose work is characterized by the following:

- Volunteer time given to the same group on an ongoing and active basis. (Membership alone is not a qualification for recognition).
- Volunteer services are performed outside the normal course of professional or business duties.

We are pleased to announce that Toronto branch member **Ray Lewis** has received the five-year award for his contributions to our organization.

Ray was presented with his award by branch president Karen Windover at the September 19th meeting. Congratulations, Ray!



## Remembrance Day Ceremony

*Sunday, November 11th at 10:45 a.m.*

Fort York and the Toronto Chapter of the IODE are proud to present the annual Remembrance Day Service at the Strachan Avenue Military Cemetery, just west of Historic Fort York. The service will feature military costumed staff from Historic Fort York and standard bearers from the IODE. A processional parade, led by fife and drum, will gather at Fort York's parking lot at 10:45 a.m. and make its way to the cemetery a short distance away. This unique and solemn service honours soldiers from the Toronto Garrison who fell in the War of 1812, the Rebellion Crises, the Crimean War, the Northwest Rebellion, the South African War, the two World Wars, the Korean War and recent conflicts.



*From the website [www.toronto.ca/museums](http://www.toronto.ca/museums). Visit this site for more information about upcoming events in and around Toronto.*

## Anne Rahamut

Anne Rahamut recently resigned from the Toronto branch executive where she had most recently been in charge of the archives. On behalf of the branch membership, the executive thanks Anne for her years of service and acknowledges her contributions to our organization.

# Genealogy Workshop

The Toronto Branch will be holding a special genealogy workshop on **Saturday, November 17th** from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The afternoon will include two sessions:

## **1:00 pm *Documenting Your Loyalist Ancestry***

Proving your Loyalist ancestry requires you to supply documented proof of your direct ascend to the original Loyalist for each and every generation. This search requires you to find original primary documents that state the relationship between two individuals. Many find this a daunting task. They are unsure of what records are required – what are “acceptable proofs”, where they might find them and how to evaluate what they do find. Starting with an applicant approximately 50 years of age and using Ontario examples the process and documents will be presented and explained generation by generation. Also covered in the discussion is how to locate and access these records. A handout detailing the steps, sources, websites and a selection of secondary Loyalists sources will be supplied to those registered.

## **2:45 pm *Elizabeth Johnston UE – A Case Study in Pre & Post Patent Land Records***

Have you had problems following your ancestor’s paper trail from the petition to the land that your ancestor received or vice versa? You have found a reference to an Order-in-Council but you can't go on from there. Using the example of Elizabeth Johnston, a woman twice widowed with children from both marriages, who was granted land in her own right, the presentation will show you how to navigate through the Crown Land Records to the land patent and into Land Registry Office records. Covering records such as petitions, orders-in-council, fiats, warrants, land board minutes and records, patents, Heir & Devisee Commission, abstract indexes and instruments.

Everyone is welcome to attend but we do ask that you **register in advance**. If you received a registration form in the mail, you can register using that. Or you may leave a message at the branch office for more information or a registration form.

This workshop replaces the regular November speaker meeting.

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## **Fidelity in Glorious Technicolour!**

You may be one of the members who received this newsletter electronically. Doesn't it look better in colour? We sent this issue electronically to any member whose e-mail address we have. The file arrives in pdf format and can be read by Adobe Acrobat, which is available for free at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).

Sending Fidelity electronically allows the branch to save time and money associated with printing and mailing a paper copy. And the end product looks much better on your computer screen.

If you have gotten a paper copy but would prefer to receive an electronic version, please e-mail the branch office or call and let us know your e-mail address.

# Birchtown, Nova Scotia: Worth the Detour

## By Susan Ellsworth

This summer my husband and I vacationed in Nova Scotia and spent the better part of one day in Shelburne, visiting the historic sites and displays. By the end of the afternoon time was running short and we had to be on our way but I couldn't leave the area without paying a visit to Birchtown. I was very glad that I did.

Birchtown is the site of what was once the largest settlement of free blacks in North America. By 1784, as many as 2500 black Loyalists settled here, just outside Shelburne. Over the next eight years, they endured the same hardships as did the white Loyalists, but made worse by inadequate or non-existent land grants, unfair treatment by the authorities and exploitation by the locals.

In 1791 the Sierra Leone company invited free blacks to have their own land and the chance to establish their own governing policies in West Africa. Many of the colonists took advantage of the opportunity and left. While life eventually did improve for the remaining inhabitants of Birchtown, the population slowly dwindled and disappeared over time.

*(article concludes on next page)*

*Above: The Black Loyalist Heritage Museum, located in a former school.*

*Below: reconstruction of a dwelling in which local black Loyalists would have lived when first in Birchtown.*



## Birchtown (continued from previous page)

The Black Loyalist Heritage Society was incorporated in 1991 when local citizens united to preserve Birchtown's historic significance, which was threatened by a land fill.

The premier attraction at the site is the Black Loyalist Heritage Museum, but there is also a burial ground, a church, a heritage walking trail and a heritage museum and gift shop. We found the museum exhibits to be very interesting and very impressive. It was well worth the visit and I encourage anyone else who finds himself along Nova Scotia's South Shore to make time to visit Birchtown (and of course Shelburne).



At left and below: interior of Black Loyalist Heritage Museum



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**Publications:** Ed Cass UE  
**Social:** Diane Reid UE  
**Treasurer:** Karen Windover UE  
**Office Administrator:** Richard Atkinson UE

## Special Sale – Loyalist Lineages II

Not sure what to get that Loyalist on your Christmas list? Toronto Branch offers you the opportunity to obtain this high quality, hard cover bound two-volume set at an exceptional price.

**One Set** \$ 62.50 per set  
**3 or more sets** \$ 31.25 per set

Terms: set orders only

Taxes as applicable and postage / shipping charges are extra and not included.

These make a great Christmas great gift. Don't delay! Contact the branch office today for more details.



## The Next Issue



Fidelity is published bimonthly. Submissions are most welcome; articles may be edited for length or content.

The next issue of Fidelity will be the December/January issue. The deadline for submissions is **Tuesday, November 27th**.

Submissions can be emailed to [susan.ellsworth@omd.com](mailto:susan.ellsworth@omd.com) or mailed to her attention at the branch office.

Thanks for technical assistance go to **Richard Atkinson UE**.