

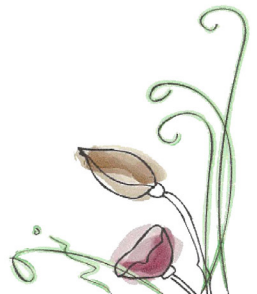
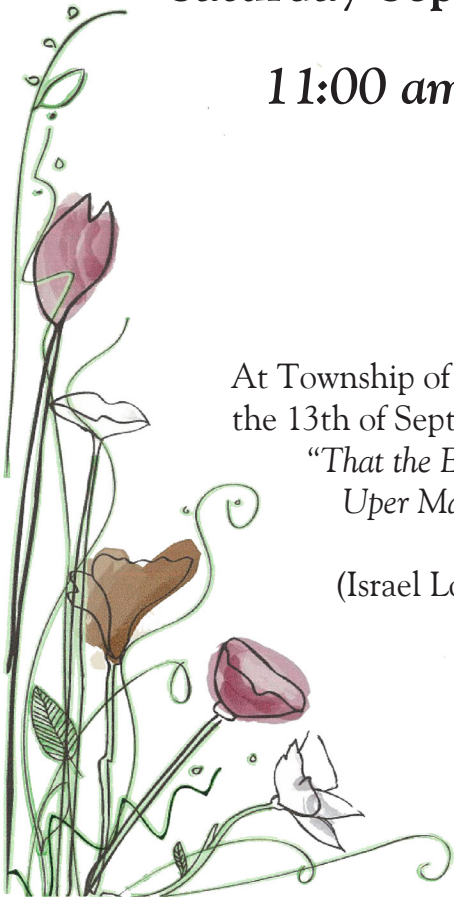
250th Anniversary
of the
Onslow Island Cemetery

Upper Onslow, Nova Scotia

Saturday September 7, 2013

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

At Township of Onslow Meeting held on
the 13th of September 1763 it was voted,
*“That the East side of the Island in the
Uper Mash be aloed and sequestred
for a buring place.”*
(Israel Longworth, Truro c. 1880)



Agenda

Welcome . . . Jim Lorraine
Master of Ceremonies

Opening Prayer . . . Rev. Gerry Kerr
Trinity United Church

Introduction of Dignitaries

Unveiling of Commemorative Monument
Allison E. Groves and Bruce Curry

Brief History of Onslow Island Cemetery
Bonnie Waddell, *Colchester Historical Society*
representative on Board of Trustees

Acknowledgements
Marie F. McCully Collier,
President, Onslow Cemetery Company

Refreshments
Cutting of Cake by . . . Jean King
Member, Onslow Cemetery Company

Walk-About and Explore Cemetery

Major Milestones 1763 to 2013

1763 At a public meeting of the Township of Onslow it was voted to set aside the east side of the Island in the Upper Marsh as a Burying Ground.

1765 Miss Mary McNutt, infant daughter of Wm. And Eliz. McNutt was the first to be buried in the Onslow Burying Ground. (Onslow Book of Records 9 June 1765)

1853 "Act Relating to the Onslow Burial Ground" describes who would have access, allowed for the appointment of Trustees, instructed them as to their duties and authorized the Township to collect an assessment for maintenance and improvements to the cemetery.

1874 A.F.C. Church completed a survey and map of Colchester County, the first to show the cemetery, in Queens Village, near the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches.

1876 Township of Onslow recorded payment to the Trustees for clearing, fencing (rails, lime and white wash), road repair and the first survey, "laying it off in blocks, sections, and making a plan of same."

1901 "Act to Incorporate the Trustees of the Onslow Cemetery Company". Charles Hill, James Lorraine and Silas C. Morrison, all farmers, all of Onslow were the first Trustees.

1924 The annual meeting voted "a space to be staked off to bury any person belonging to the District and dying in the County Asylum, same not having any relatives to claim the deceased."

1938 NS Dept of Natural Resources completed an aerial survey (photo) of marsh, incl. the old roads surrounding the island cemetery.

1958 The dykes on the Onslow Marsh were rebuilt by the Dept. of Agriculture. Survey and work plan marked cemetery, its entrance road and remnants of Acadian or Planter dykes.

1986 Cemetery registered as a Charitable non-profit company by Revenue Canada, Charities Division, to issue income tax receipts.

2013 The 1901 "Act Incorporating the Onslow Cemetery Company" was amended so that lot holders, rather than the Governor in Council of the NS Legislative Assembly, approve changes to the by-laws.

Finances

From tax assessments of all inhabitants, to tax assessments of lot holders only, to requests for donations and income from investments, the Trustees always have struggled to raise the money required for the maintenance and improvement of the cemetery grounds.

With the 1901 Incorporation of the Onslow Cemetery Company, the responsibility for setting and collecting the assessment was passed to the Trustees. Collecting the assessments was a difficult problem for most of the cemetery's existence, such that the Trustees sometimes were forced to borrow money from their neighbors, for which they paid interest, in order to make important improvements such as road building and drainage.

Another strategy was to set a value on a day's work, which was \$1.00 per day for a man and an additional \$1.00 per day for a team [of horses]. A man could work for one day, and have \$1.00 credited toward his assessment or toward the price of a lot. Most were men, but occasionally women also contributed labour.

Starting around 1927, the Trustees began, in a limited way, to invest donated money in bonds. In 1947 the Trustees started reporting bond holdings at the annual meeting. During the 1960s, assessments were set less frequently as the Trustees began to rely more on donations, volunteer labour, and gradually on investment income. The concept of "perpetual care" was adopted in the 1980s, and by 1986 there were 65 lots in that program. Proceeds from lot sales are now routinely invested.

Roads

The cemetery roads have changed over the years. Originally, the road bisecting the cemetery was used by farmers to access their fields beyond. In 1853 the Onslow Island Cemetery was authorized to build an alternate road around the cemetery for the farmer's use, and to fence the cemetery so that cattle couldn't enter and damage the monuments. Another road led to the edge of the cemetery to the south, which was where the deceased brought by boat on the flood tides were landed. The older entrance road would have had a gradual rise, much more considerate of the horses and wagons which brought gravel and other materials to the cemetery, than the entrance road as it is today.

Customs

Our study of funeral customs and rituals has only just begun.

Here are several examples. One trustee tells of a custom within his family of keeping a headstone handy in case of an unexpected death in the family. In the meantime, it was used as a door step.

Another custom was attaching to the coffin a metal plaque engraved with the name of the deceased and his/her date of birth and date of death. After the funeral, but before closing the grave, the "coffin plate" was removed and given to the family as a memento. We know of five that have survived in the Onslow Township.

"Mourning (clothes) for widow" was listed as a funeral expense in the inventory of the estate submitted to probate court on behalf of John Crow in 1878.

We welcome your comments and suggestions as we build our knowledge of Onslow Island Cemetery history.

Outstanding Service

Serving as Chairman/Secretary

Silas C. Morrison
*Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer,
Trustee*
1903 – 1933 (13 years service)

George Marshall
Chairman and Trustee
1944 – 1978 (28 years service)

Kenneth G. Crowe
Chairman and Trustee
1922 – 1937 (28 years service)

Hector Lorraine
*Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer,
Trustee*
1947 – 1978 (29 years service)

Mrs. D.H. Crowe (Laura F.)
*Secretary/ Treasurer, Acting
Secretary 1922; Elected 1923 –
1926*
(5 years service)

Brent Nelson
*Secretary, Chairman, Treasurer
and Property Manager*
1985 – 2010 (40+ years service)

Arthur G. Groves
*Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer,
Trustee*
1928 – 1973 (42 years service)

Carol Blois
Secretary and Trustee
1989 – 2012 (29 years service)

Henry Hislop
Secretary/Treasurer and Trustee
1928 – 1947 (21 years service)

Also:

Allison E. Groves (*Allie*)
Open/closing graves and Trustee
1945-2009 (64 years service)

Harold E. Vincent (*Harry*)
Chairman and Trustee
1938 – 1965 (7 years service)

Elected Trustees with date of first appointment

20+ Years of Service

Arthur G. Groves 1928 (20 years)
George Marshall 1944 (20 years)
Nelson Smith 1955 (23 years)
Brent Nelson 1985 (40+ years)

10-19 Years of Service

Walter Barrett 1928 (14 years)
Walter Dickie 1931 (14 years)
Hector Lorraine 1947 (11 years)
Arnold Brown 1961 (12 years)

5-9 Years of Service

Silas M. Morrison 1903 (6 years)
George Phillips 1922 (5 years)
David Crowe 1922 (5 years)
Henry Hislop 1928 (8 years)
Frank Baird 1944 (9 years)
Gordon Crowe 1985 (6 years)
Carol E. Blois 1989 (8 years)*
George Norrie 1998 (6 years)
Art Pratt 2000 (9 years)
Allison E. (*Allie*) Groves 2000 (6 yrs)
Donald S. Groves 2007 (6 yrs)
Eleanor E. Norrie 2008 (6 yrs)*

1-4 Years of Service

David McCurdy 1854
Silas Clark 1854
John King 1854

1-4 Years of Service (Cont.)

Alti McNutt 1875
Samuel Hamilton 1876
Wm. King 1876
John A. McCurdy 1878
William M. Blair 1878
Charles Hill 1903
C.E. Lewis 1903
G.F. Crowe 1904
Ralph Groves 1940
Harry Vincent (*H.E.*) 1941
Maurice Woods 1948
Ross Hill 1951
Alan Baird 1985
Irene McNutt 1985
Wesley Blair 1989
Ted Curry 1989
Wayne S. Blois 2009
Marie F. McCully Collier 2009*
Sharron D. (*Sherry*) Groves 2010*
Ronald W. Hoyt 2010*
Angus Hill 2011
Wade M. Dickie 2011*
Rod A. Nelson 2011*
Kirby J. Smith 2011*
Clark S. Woods 2011*
Bruce Curry 2012*
Gloria Smith 2013*

Trustees in 2013*

Many Distinguished Residents of Onslow are Buried in the Onslow Island Cemetery *Including:*

Margaret Rosamond Norrie (1905-1983) B.A., Politician, Farmer. Born in Upper Sackville, N.B. She earned a B.A. in Biology (with honours) at Mount Allison. She remained on the teaching staff and served as Dean of Women until 1933. She married James Paul Norrie, a geologist, and had four children: Margaret, Judith, George and Roderick. The family lived in Northern Quebec until his untimely death, when she moved the family back to the family dairy farm in Onslow. She joined the IODE and University Women's Club and by the 1950s became president of the Provincial Liberal Women's Association. She was the first woman from Nova Scotia to be appointed to the Senate of Canada. She retired at age 75, died five years later, and is buried in the Onslow Island Cemetery. Source: Colchester Women (1994 edition).

Ephraim Hayward (1697-1770), a grantee of the Township of Onslow, was born July 26th 1697 in Concord, MA. He married Joanna Wheeler the 28th June 1726 and had ten children. By profession and heritage, Ephraim was a miller. As a leader in his community, he successfully campaigned to establish the town of Western (now Warren MA) in 1740. At age 62 he signed a petition requesting land in Cobequid. Ephraim Hayward, David Hoar and others from Western were part of a group of some 121, most related to Ephraim, who were granted land in Onslow. He was elected moderator of the first town meeting in Onslow. When the cemetery was established in 1763, he was proprietors' clerk, with many appointments to the committees which provided leadership for the development and prosperity of the Township. Ephraim received a grant of land to build a grist mill, near David Hoar and Jeams Wilson who received a grant of land for a sawmill. He died in 1770 at age 73. He and his wife are assumed buried in the Onslow Island Cemetery. Source: Planter and Grantees of Cobequid, Nova Scotia 1761-1780 (2011).



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Onslow Cemetery Company
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