

# Atlantic Anchor



Volume: 18

The Shelburne Historical Society Newsletter

Summer 2011

## Finn and Gloria.

We cannot begin our Atlantic Anchor without acknowledging the retirement of two key people in our organization.

After 31 years as curator for the Shelburne County Museum during its 35-years of operation, Finn Bower has retired. Over the past three decades, Finn has managed to compile a huge mass of valuable research material and memorabilia, unique and fragile artifacts, art treasures and intriguing trinkets, into an organized, documented collection representing Shelburne County's history. While doing this, she has always kept her eye on the importance of why she was there – to help people access what was important to them in that huge body of information. The Shelburne Historical Society and the Shelburne County Museum owes Finn Bower a huge debt for Finn's tireless use of her talents and skills.

While Gloria's years of service may not equal Finn's, her enthusiasm for her job, first as guide, then senior guide, followed by complex manager and finally, president of the Shelburne Historical Society, was as boundless. Anyone who visited the complex during Gloria's reign as manager cannot help but envision her in her apron and cap running – from the

Coyle House to Dory Shop to Ross-Thomson House – calling to visitors and staff as she went in the most friendly and welcoming way. Throughout her tenure, Gloria managed staff, garden parties, school visits and visits from Nova Scotia

Museum administration, all with humour and helpfulness. Gloria's planned move to Bridgewater is a great loss to our community.

While the retirement of these two workhorses will create a huge void in our society, the board has been working hard to plan how to move ahead. Armed with our vision and mission statement, code of conduct and terms of reference, we have completed a naval-gazing exercise that leaves us with a clear vision and a way to that vision. Increased profile and increased membership are two directions we need to head in order to keep up the work this society began six decades ago. 



## Vision

*The Shelburne Historical Society is an essential and integral part of life in Shelburne County, serving community members and visitors of all ages. Through collaborations and partnerships, we make our heritage vital, relevant, and widely accessible. We are financially and environmentally sustainable, and support our community in its social, economic and cultural development.*

## Mission

*The Shelburne Historical Society is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the rich and continually evolving heritage of Shelburne County. We operate and sustain the Shelburne Museum Complex to serve the local community, our province and visitors from around the world. We work to promote an interest in our past, facilitate research, and provide programs that stimulate interest, satisfy curiosity and encourage public participation. We are an integral part of our community and a focal point and gathering place where we celebrate our heritage and special community events.*

*We play an important role in the economic, cultural and social life of our community, working with business, cultural and tourism groups to promote our area and establish our complex as a vibrant local attraction.*

**Finn Bower retires after  
31 years as curator  
Shelburne County Museum.**

A curator's job is to look after artifacts, right? Wrong. Well, partly right.

To Finn Bower, retiring curator of the Shelburne County Museum, the job is about people. It's about helping people access information about their families, their communities, places and events of Shelburne County, information housed within the collection of the Museum. This has been Finn's passion for the past 31 years.

Finn says the artifacts themselves are about the people who used them, rather than about time periods, as some archivists claim.

Finn attributes her "passion" for history to her father, the late Fred Redden, an avid historian who enjoyed passing on oral history to his daughters. It was that passion that enabled her, in her early days at the Shelburne County Museum, to research artifacts, photographs and documents and compile them into a polished, attractive display, complete with Finn's own calligraphy on labels. A singer by profession ( she sang at Expo '67, travelled and sang with Helen Creighton on lectures and studied at McGill University with the same voice instructor who taught Maureen Forrester ) Finn came with no formal training in museum work.

Her artistic eye and vast talent supported her well in those early years she calls "trial by fire."

And, she had an "insightful and knowledgeable mentor" in Mary Archibald. Although "We had our differences," says Finn, Mary reinforced Finn's belief that people were the *raison d'être* of the museum. She admired Mary's premise that applied especially to young people, "If you don't know where you came from, you don't know where you are going."

Finn is particularly proud of helping several authors with their research, one of which is award-winning Lawrence Hill, author of *The Book of Negroes*. "I was absolutely elated when Lawrence Hill won the Commonwealth Prize," says Finn.

Harold Simms, grandson of Shelburne shipbuilder Amos Pentz, came to the museum looking for photographs of some of his father's vessels. Finn encouraged him to compile them into a book, which was published some years later. (Cont. on pg. 3)

*Finn Bower (Left) chats with site manager Kim Truchan at a celebration marking Finn's 30<sup>th</sup> year at the museum.*



**President's Message**

~Many may wonder why, after having been president of the Society for so many years, I would agree to return. Well.....several years ago, the Board developed a new organizational chart for the Shelburne Museum Complex which was meant to make the President's job much easier and allow the Complex to flourish. The key to this transition was the hiring of a Site Manager which we accomplished two years ago. In 2009, our new Site Manager, Kim Truchan, applied for a grant to assist us with board development and the revision of our governance. The consultant who led the workshops, Ms. Barbara Richmond, was excellent. It was a huge time commitment for the Board and Senior Staff (three weekends through the winter and early spring), but I feel what we accomplished was excellent! We now have a great *Vision and Mandate* for the Society, we modernized and streamlined our governance documents, and we developed a focused, three year strategic plan. Last year, Kim applied for another grant for a fund raising workshop for the Board. This was approved and again Barbara Richmond was our consultant.

The Board and the Senior Staff have worked hard the last two years to improve and develop the skills and tools to assist the Society and the Complex to become the best. We are in the middle of a process that will make the museums more vibrant and sustainable. This year several longstanding Board members have retired and; consequently, I felt it would be helpful to come back as president so that there would be some continuity as we complete this process.

I would like to thank all the Board members and staff for their hard work during the past two years. I would especially like to thank the retiring Board members: Dave Alexander, Gloria Beuree, Elizabeth Cromwell, Sharon Johnson, Paul Richardson and Howard Roszel. They have dedicated years of hard work to the Society for which, I am sure, you all join me in a big THANK YOU!

I am very excited about the coming year. We have some excellent returning and new Board members. There are new and exciting things happening at the museums, so please, come down to the Complex soon and see what's happening.



**Did you know?** That the Computer Tabulation and Recording Co. of New York named its Canadian Subsidiary International Business Machines (IBM) in 1917? CTR later adopted the Canadian name and became known worldwide as IBM in 1924. In 1918 Cox's Department store bought an IBM punch card clock computer. This computer currently resides at the Shelburne County Museum.

**(Do you recognize this logo? IBM's original logo from 1917. Created for the Canadian subsidiary of CTR.)**



Donald C. Bower

The Shelburne Historical Society is grateful for the volunteer hours that Mr. Bower has once again dedicated to the society. Weather has always been there but as things change it is very reassuring to have an expert to call upon to assist with emergency planning and preparedness and any number of related matters. Donald Bower donates a great deal of his time keeping the people and the places we love safe with expertise, elbow grease and generosity.

Wayne Butler

Wayne Butler is a gardener extraordinaire with an active interest in living history. For the Shelburne Historical Society that is hard to beat, especially when Mr. Butler has been regularly spotted in costume in the garden at the Ross-Thomson House & Store Museum. Mr. Butler shares his extensive knowledge of Loyalist plants with dirty hands and infectious enthusiasm with staff, residents and visitors alike. 

**Launch of *The African American Odyssey of John Kizell* at Shelburne Historic Garden Party.**

Kevin Lowther, Springfield, Virginia, will launch his book *The African American Odyssey of John Kizell* at the Shelburne Historic Garden Party on July 24.

Written over a period of four decades, Lowther's work promises to inform the reader, through the eyes of an African man, about the slave trade, community life in South Carolina and in Birchtown, Nova Scotia and about the colonization movement of free American blacks in West Africa. Lowther spent a day researching at the Shelburne County Museum for the book, using a letter written by a "prominent white loyalist" as a source to determine in whose company Kizell travelled from New York to Shelburne, in 1784.

John Kizell was born about 1760 near the southeast coast of present-day Sierre Leone. At the age of 13, he was captured as a slave and carried to Charleston, South Carolina, just before the outbreak of the American Revolution. Of particular significance to the story, Kizell was literate and a prolific writer, providing Lowther with a primary source for his extensive research.

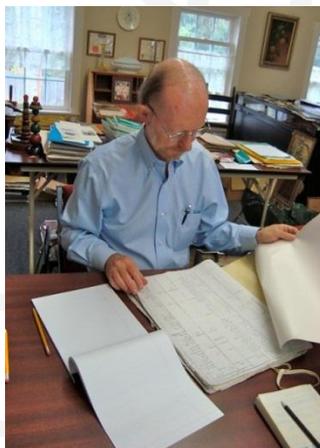
Lowther writes about Kizell in the preface of his book: "The so-called "black loyalists" found life in Nova Scotia harsh and not far removed from slavery. Kizell and his young family were among nearly

twelve hundred people who emigrated in 1792 to Sierra Leone, where British philanthropists hoped to establish a settlement for free blacks. Kizell and his fellow "Nova Scotians" were among the first Africans and African-Americans to return to their motherland. He would become a trader, peacemaker and crusader against the slave trade. He would also play a seminal role in the colonization movement, which led to the creation of Liberia in 1822."

Kevin Lowther will speak shortly after 2 p.m. at the Shelburne Historical Garden Party and will be available after to sell and sign his books. The book is published by the University of South Carolina Press.

This is the 35<sup>th</sup> year for the Shelburne Historic Garden Party, held on the Ross-Thomson House and Store grounds. With a backdrop of eighteenth-century flower beds, attendees in elegant and plain Loyalist garb will enjoy refreshments, a relaxing but colourful culmination to the festivities of Shelburne's Founders' Days. Everyone is welcome. 

Kevin Lowther ( Pictured at left) in the Goodwin Research Room, Shelburne County Museum.



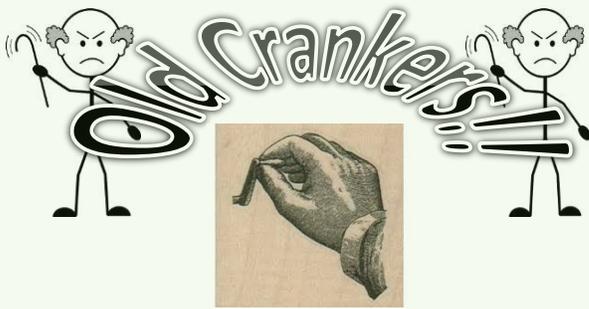
**QR CODE QONTEST!**

*The Shelburne County Museum has begun introducing "QR" Codes to some of the exhibits. QR Codes are computer generated images which, when scanned, open a link to the internet on your smartphone explaining more about the exhibit! If you have a smartphone (BlackBerry, iPhone, Android etc), come in and enter our contest! All you have to do is find all 10 QR Code presentations, describe which one was your favourite and enter your name into our ballot. The winner receives three framed photographs Depicting various aspects of Shelburne history! Come in have fun, learn and enter!*



**Come in and check this out!**





.....is an exhibit that can currently be seen in the entrance to the Shelburne County Museum. The display features several artifacts which were powered by cranks. Your mission...if you choose to accept it... is to come to the museum and see if you can guess what each one is! If you are able to guess them all you'll win the pride in realizing you know your history!



***"Today most of the energy that powers many of our machines comes from fossil fuels and electricity. However before those forms of energy were common many machines were powered by us! Cranks were used to help store energy in springs or to directly power a machine. Look in the display case. Can you guess what each machine does? Can you guess its name? See if you can get them all!"***

***Finn (cont. from pg. 2)*** In the Foreword of his book, *One Hundred Forty-One Wooden Ships, 1872-1922*, Simms acknowledged Finn Bower first and foremost for her encouragement and help. In 1998, a group of Nunavut men visited the museum. They were retracing their fathers' steps when they, in 1925, brought the sailing ship *Jean Reveillon* to Shelburne for repairs. "That was a thrill for me and for Lewis." Shelburne historian Lewis Jackson and Bill Cox were on hand to show the visitors the waterfront and talk to them about the shipyards of Shelburne when their fathers had visited in 1925. The ensuing book, *Roundtrip, The Inuit Crew of the Jean Revillon*, by Michelle Daveluy, is part of the Shelburne County Museum's impressive library, upstairs in the Goodwin Research Room.

Downstairs in the Shelburne County Museum, intricately-carved ivory fans make up part of the White display currently on the main floor of the Shelburne County Museum. These fans, although works of art in their own right, help to tell a story about Deborah Whitford White, wife of Gideon. And, part of that story is about her descendant, Evelyn White Aulenback, from Liverpool, who donated those fans to the Shelburne County Museum.

So, you see, the job is about the people, like Finn says.

Finn, being the conscientious and caring person that she is, is anxious that she has left work undone at the Shelburne County Museum.

But, as well, she is justifiably proud of the work that she has accomplished, and the works that she, through her knowledge of the Shelburne County Museum collection, has helped to create. 

## ***The African American Odyssey of John Kizell***

**Book Launching at the 35<sup>th</sup> annual Garden Party!**

On Sunday July 24<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-4:00pm in the yard of the Ross Thomson House Store and Museum.

### **Gideon White Exhibit**

***Gideon White*** was one of Shelburne's founding fathers. A Loyalist, Captain White decided upon Port Roseway (Shelburne) as the best place to build a new, grand city. The Shelburne County Museum features a display which includes many items from Captain White's baby rattle, to his wife Deborah's intricately carved ivory fan. Come explore this fascinating display! See you soon!



#### **Credits:**

**Newsletter Editor /  
Columnist:**

Cathy Holmes

**Creative Editor/  
Columnist:**

Kim Truchan

**Design Editor/  
Columnist:**

D. Seth Renaud

#### **Shelburne Historical Society Board of Directors**

Louise Lindsay  
Elizabeth Rhuland  
Cathy Holmes  
Sue Deschene  
Alison Stanton  
Lisa Buchanan  
Karen Harris  
Wayne Butler  
Allan Nelson

**Honourary Lifetime  
Member:**

William Cox

#### **Senior Museum Staff**

**Site Manager:**

Kim Truchan

**Office Manager/  
Bookkeeper:**

Betty Stoddard

**Senior Guides:**

Leona Ringer  
Laurie Renaud  
Milford Buchannan  
Tamitha Dolliver