

NEWSLETTER

Meet Our New Curator...



It is with great pleasure that we welcome our new Curator, Jennifer Leblanc, to the Old Sydney Society. Jennifer is a native of Sydney River and brings a diverse background as a visual artist, museum professional and Preservation Specialist to the role. She began her appointment in July 2011.

Jennifer holds an M.A. in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management from Ryerson University where she spent a year as a research scholar at the George Eastman House Museum in Rochester, NY. She holds a B.F.A in visual arts from Mount Allison University

and a diploma in Advanced French from Universite Marc Bloch in Strasbourg, France. She also holds a Certificate in Heritage Preservation from Cape Breton University.

Jennifer has an extensive background in arts, culture and heritage organizations in Canada and overseas. She was awarded a Canadian Museums Association Internship in New Zealand in 2002 where she worked on a museum re-development project and various collections management and curatorial projects at the Whanganui Museum. After spending 3 years in NZ, she moved back to North America, commenced graduate studies and now specializes in Photographic History and Preservation. Previously in her career she was a Project Archivist with the Beaton Institute of Cape Breton University, Research Assistant with the Mira Godard Study Centre, Toronto, ON, Lecturer at Cape Breton University and a collections management specialist at the Whanganui Regional Museum, NZ.

Feel free to stop by and welcome her to our society.



What happens when a Holy Roof becomes a Holey Roof?

As reported in the last newsletter, St. Patrick's church museum is in desperate need of a new roof. There are vines growing through the south wall and trees growing in the valleys!

The OSS has applied for funding from ECBC, received grants from the Provincial Conservation Assistance Program and Sydney Credit Union. Also a generous donation was made in memory of Bob Morgan for \$1000 by the lovely Nan More. However, there is still a significant portion of the cost to be covered!

Please keep an eye out for future fundraising campaigns for this essential project for the OSS.

IN MEMORY OF DR. ROBERT MORGAN

Dr. Robert Morgan passed away on June 4, 2001 after ten years of dealing with cancer. Bob's untimely death has taken us all by surprise and left a vast chasm in the hearts and minds of all who had the honour and privilege of knowing him and calling him friend. A founding member of the Old Sydney Society, Bob's passion and love of all things related to Cape Breton's history were legendary. For over forty-five years he devoted countless voluntary hours to the promotion of our historical past. Over the years he served in every capacity on the OSS Executive. The preservation of Cossit House, St. Patrick's Church and the Lyceum as historical landmarks were the most visible of his efforts but there were many other important projects which remained "behind the scenes". Bob's role as the "go to guy" and his mentorship on all Old Sydney Society projects will be greatly missed.

A true Renaissance man, Bob's interests and knowledge were immeasurable. He was willing to share this knowledge freely with others, teaching gave Bob his greatest pleasure. Bob's numerous writings on the history of Cape Breton have forever chronicled the story of the islands development. Bob's love and respect for nature were evident in his magnificent garden and conservatory. To Bob's sister Rosemarie, his brother Bert and sister-in-law Sandra, as well as all members of his

extended family we offer our deep and most heartfelt sympathy. His legacy will touch many generations to come. May he rest in peace!

Donald Ward, President, Old Sydney Society



Dr. Robert Morgan. Photo courtesy of the Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University, 98-264-29051

FIFTY YEARS ON: RECONSTRUCTING LOUISBOURG DURING THE EARLY YEARS



Reconstructing King's Bastion 1960s

Join us Thursday, October 27 for Bruce Fry's talk: Fifty Years On at 7:30 at the Lyceum.

In 1961, the Government of Canada embarked upon the largest and most ambitious

reconstruction in North America. Although the primary motivation was economic --- finding employment for laid-off coal miners --- other factors were also behind the undertaking as the country approached the centennial year of confederation.

Assigned to the Engineering division of the National Parks and Historic Sites Branch of the then Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, the project was initially handicapped by a failure to grasp the size and complexity of the task, and led to

serious disagreements as to approach, eventually resolved through a series of staff changes, revised goals and the introduction of multidisciplinary teams.

The resulting product has become the crown jewel of Parks Canada's historic sites, an internationally acclaimed heritage site, and a key component of regional tourism. The legacy of those early years is to be found in the policies and practices of Cultural Resource Management that underlie the Parks Canada mandate.



TEA CUPS

The OSS would like to thank the Glace Bay Garden Club via Joy Gates, Paws Mart via Joy Gates, The Glace Bay Town Hall Museum, Susan Burke, Cindy Anthony and Family for their generous donations of china tea cups. Your generosity has helped us continue to make Cape Breton a classy place to visit! Thank you for your support!!

SYDNEY ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY



Above: SACS Volunteer Board, 2011 House **Below:** Cape Breton Orchestra meeting held in the living room of Liscombe House, Photo by C.H. Woodill Studio, Beaton Institute 93-46-24020 Photo courtesy of Beaton Institute, CBU.

In 2010 the OSS tried to save one of the oldest homes in Sydney, located at 96/98 Charlotte St., but was unsuccessful when the home was purchased by another party.

The Society persisted in its efforts to establish Nova Scotia's first heritage conservation revolving fund to rescue threatened landmarks.

The Society has been concerned with the fate of the Liscombe House (c. 1870), one of the few Italianate buildings in Sydney. It has been vacant for almost seven years.

The Society did a thorough inspection of the home and negotiated with the California-based owner to acquire the home. Thanks to donated funds -- including sizable contributions from two founding benefactors,

long-time members, who will be honoured more formally in the coming months -- the project was able to go ahead.

The OSS set up the Sydney Architectural Conservation Society to manage the project. The roof has been done, and some of the interior renovations will be completed before a heritage covenant is registered, to ensure that no future owner can demolish it. The funds from the eventual sale of the home will be used to save another landmark.

In a recent reading of the OSS minute books, it was discovered that the Board considered purchasing Liscombe in 1972, but the society decided to direct their attentions to Cossit House and Jost House instead. As a result, the property was given to the Children's Aid Society of Cape Breton and it was used for several years as a residence and later as a small options home.

THE BUSY DAYS OF COSSIT HOUSE

There was an early start to the cruise ship season with 7 ships in April and May!! Later, the museum officially opened on June 15th and was visited by the Honourable David Wilson, the Minister of Tourism and Culture!!!

In July Cossit House and its staff were featured on Live at Five during the visit of the Carribean Princess. We hope you caught it!

During Action week this year Cossit House hosted a butter

making workshop and the ever popular Fairy Tales in the Garden. The ladies wrote three new plays including Stone Soup, and they wrote a song: The Gingerbread Rap!! Not only did they write all of the plays, but the ladies made all of the costumes and props and hosted a series of rehearsals. All of these activities were very popular and heavily attended. There were over 140 children and their parents who attended and shared Lemonade and cookies at the end.



The ladies of Cossit House have been creating traditional rag rugs overs the summer. They are \$30 for a small rug and \$35 for larger rugs. There are also green, purple, and blue. Why don't you drop by for a look?



MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION NIGHT

The OSS would like to invite all members and volunteers to a night of camaraderie and laughs at their annual members and volunteer appreciation night. To thank you for your support and hard work we will be offering a wine and cheese cocktail reception at 7 PM on October 25th at the Lyceum. We would love to see you there!



Jost House has been doing excellent work this year organizing the walking tours for our cruise ship visitors. Their efforts to welcome guests into our community, while having a good time, are greatly appreciated. They are, however, looking for more volunteers. If you are interested you can call 539-0366, email josthouse1786@gmail.com or you can check out their new website at:

www.jostheritagehouse.yolasite.com! They are also pleased to say that their YouTube video is being featured in classrooms as far away as California!!! Keep up the good work!



Mnohai'ia lita!

The CBCHS is excited to announce the coming of an exhibit that will celebrate 100 years of the Holy Ghost Parish in Whitney Pier. The exhibit on Ukrainian culture in Sydney will open in February and feature a multitude of workshops. We will keep you posted!



Cossit House was visited by several schools groups this summer. During the month of July the ladies of Cossit hosted the CBCCD children's day camp scavenger hunt with great success.

The ladies also had a successful year with their heritage vegetable and herb garden, despite the wet and cold weather. They hope to repeat their success again next year.



Ghost Walks

Once again, the Ghost walks were a massive success this summer. During Action Week the OSS had nights where there were 85 guests enjoying the tour!!!

The tour has been revamped and plenty of new stories have been gathered. If you have any ghost stories, we are always looking for more stories.

Also, tell your friends that we will continue the tours every Wednesday night until the week before Halloween, when we will be giving tours on the 21 and 22!

Calendar

October 27, 7:30 PM: Lyceum

Bruce Fry's talk Fifty Years On: Reconstructing Louisbourg during the Early Years

October 25, 7PM: Lyceum

Members and Volunteer Appreciation Night

October 29, 1-4PM: Lyceum

Children's Halloween Party. Prizes for best costume will be awarded. \$5 entrance fee for non-members and \$3 for members.

November 24, 7:30 PM: Lyceum

Vanessa Childs Rolls' talk Forging the Future: The Industrialization of Sydney through steel.

February, 2012

Opening of Mnohai'ia lita! Celebrating 100 of Ukrainian faith in Cape Breton

Cape Breton Naturalists

The Cape Breton Naturalists will begin their regularly scheduled meetings on October 12 at 7:30 PM in the Lyceum. The speaker will be Bob Bancroft, A personal Story of 36 years of Stewardship to restore ecosystems on 56 acres of run-out farmland in Pomquet Nova Scotia.

On November 9th, the guest speaker will be Robin Stuart from Ocean Stuarts Consulting talking about Aquaculture in Cape Breton.

On December 14 the guest speaker will be Bruce Hatcher from the Bras D'Or Institute at CBU talking about Biodiversity and Productivity of Sydney Harbour.