

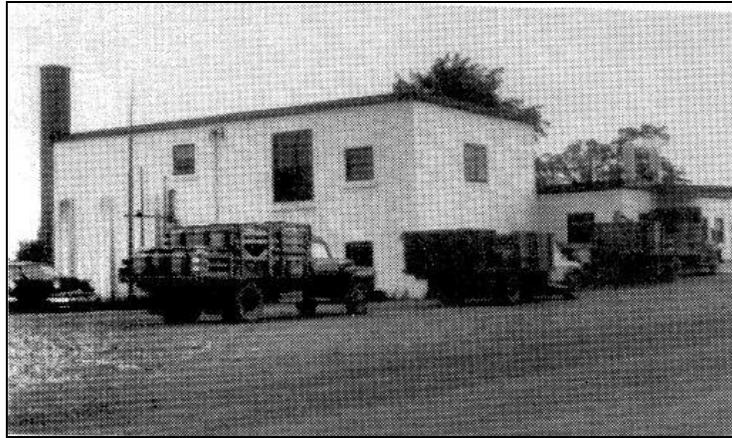
Cornwall Township Historical Society

Newsletter March 2013

www.cornwalltwphistorical.ca

Editor: Don McIntosh

Glenco Cheese Factory



Until the mid 20th century, small cheese factories in Eastern Ontario were scattered throughout the counties, generally with one recorded every five square miles. These small factories relied on the supply of fresh milk from local farmers. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the horse drawn wagon was the only means of transportation and with the lack of refrigeration for onsite storage, it was necessary that farmers had a short traveling distance to factories for the day's milk production in order to avoid spoilage. Many factories produced cheddar for export to overseas markets eager for this unique Canadian cheese. One such small factory was Glenco Cheese in Bonville. From 1900 onward, the small Glenco factory saw various owners including J.S. Myers, Herbert Cooper and Emile Sabourin (Emile Sabourin was the grandfather of Leon Sabourin, current owner of Cornwall Lighting and Laurier Electric on Brookdale Ave).



Glenco circa 1920

Glenco fell under the ownership of Ellias Trueax in the 1940s. Trueax operated North Branch and Island Road cheese factories along with other smaller factories. With an eye to greater efficiency he figured that by closing his smaller out of date factories and

transferring production to a modern facility in Bonville, he could benefit from economies of scale and achieve greater financial returns for himself and his farmer patrons who held a share interest. So Mr. Trueax razed the original Glenco building and built an up to date factory complete with modern refrigeration and high quality stainless steel production equipment.

The following article taken from *The Farmers' Advocate*, April 1948 submitted by member Ken McDonald gives an account the opening day ceremonies.

A Grand New Cheese Factory Opened at Bonville

Ellias Trueax amalgamated three factories into one modern plant costing close to \$75,000. Almost 300 people gathered on Monday April 5, 1948 to celebrate the opening of the grand new cheese factory which Elias Trueax has constructed and equipped at Bonville, north of Cornwall in Stormont County.

Built of cinder block construction and painted white with green trimmings, the building presents a pleasing appearance both inside and out. All the equipment is of the latest and best design and added to the conventional cheese factory installations is a clarifier which filters the milk on the way to the vats. The vat mixers are the most modern available and the cold storage chambers are serviced with mechanical refrigeration. Dairy experts have pronounced it to be the largest and

most modern equipped amalgamated plant in Eastern Ontario. Mr. Trueax places plant capacity at 75 cheese a day (1 cheese = 90bs) and says it could handle the milk from 250 farms. The cold storage room will accommodate 3,500 cheese or 15 tons.

This plant at Bonville is welcomed by dairy branches at Toronto and Ottawa as another step in the direction of amalgamation of small cheese factories. With this Glenco plant are amalgamated St. Andrews and White Rose (ed. Cornwall Centre). Mr. Trueax contemplates a further union of Island and Glen Donald with the North Branch factory.

Elias Trueax is a lifelong resident of Bonville and thoroughly experienced in the cheese manufacturing business. At the opening ceremonies presided over by J.F. Robinson, Chief Dairy Instructor in Eastern Ontario, as master of ceremonies, Mr. Trueax was praised highly for his courage and for his confidence in the cheese industry. A considerable number of people from near and far brought greetings and when complimenting the owner of the factory on his progressiveness it was pointed out that the builder of the Glenco factory had earned the wholehearted support of the milk producers, for only with clean milk could the cheesemaker turn out a high grade product that would bring honour and the highest financial returns to the Glenco factory and its patrons.

The Glenco factory will make 10 pound cheese for the Belleville Cheddar Cheese Company from whence they will emerge finally as Black Diamonds.



L to R Elias Trueax, S.L. Joss Belleville Cheese Co. and J.F. Robinson Chief Dairy Instructor at opening day.

About this time, long time family operated McMillan's Corners Cheese Factory was being run by Duncan McDonald and his sons. Though not as big as the Glenco factory, McMillan's Corners cheese enjoyed the loyalty of local patrons. Misfortune struck this operation in May 1955 when the building and contents were completely destroyed by fire. Arrangements were hastily made by the McDonalds for their patrons' milk to be shipped to the newer

Glenco facility in Bonville where it was readily received in modern storage tanks. Rather than rebuild their small operation at McMillan's Corners, the McDonald family made a financial decision to acquire the Glenco operation in Bonville. By 1955, the Bonville operation run by Mr. Trueax was running into financial difficulty. Problems for small operations began in 1952 when the British government cut off cheese imports as a post war austerity measure. In Ontario, the heartland for cheddar production, 55 factories closed in one year alone as the result of this measure. In fact, in the post war period barely 50% of Canada's cheese was exported compared to 80% in the 1920s.¹

Under the McDonald ownership, the Glenco operation at Bonville continued to expand and prosper, collecting milk from several hundred area farmers. With the introduction of milk bulk tanks about 1965, Glenco was able to serve their patrons with a fleet of bulk trucks as well conventional trucks for farmers who chose to continue shipping milk in the 8 gallon milk cans. Glenco Cheese earned an impressive reputation for producing high quality cheddar. Jack McDonald won top honours for his cheese at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto in 1960. Out of six entries Mr. McDonald won five 1st prizes and one 2nd prize. In the same year he won two 1st prizes at the Royal Ottawa Winter Fair and at the British Dairy Farmers Show in London England he won two 1st prizes in the Dominion cheese exhibits section. All this was accomplished in the few short years that he had been in competition.

Glenco relied on a ground source well for water supply. Increased cheese production put a strain on this local water supply, so much so that an auxiliary supply was needed to furnish the factory. In the late '60s a deal was struck with landowner William Allen whose property to the south had a well with an abundant supply. The water pipeline from this offsite well to the factory ran nearly one kilometre in length.

In the early 1970s ownership of Glenco passed to the Saputo Cheese Company from Montreal and production ceased. A retail operation continued to sell cheese for several years; however, the main production area lay dormant until a fire destroyed the entire building. Since Glenco was one of the last independent cheese factories in this area, this unfortunate event brought an end to the era of small rural cheese factories. However, the legacy of Glenco and other rural factories lives on in the hearts and minds of many area residents.

1. *The Story of Ontario Cheddar Cheese* by Heather Menzies p. 115.

A Jolly Good Time



This past November, “Jessie Boyd”, aka Art Buckland, made an appearance at the Historical Society's monthly meeting to promote her new book, *Still Kicking But Not So High*. At 96 years of age Jessie recently published her memoirs and recounts her life as a widowed mother, business woman and the difficulties she faced. Feeling somewhat under the weather for the meeting, friend and confidant Art Buckland agreed to stand in for Jessie. In the photo, CTHS president Bill Costello shares a laugh with "Jessie".

A Wee Bit of Humour

A Scottish woman goes to the local newspaper office to see that the obituary for her recently deceased husband is published.

The obit editor informs her that there is a charge of 50 cents per word.

She pauses, reflects, and then she says, "Well, then, let it read, 'Angus MacPherson died'."

Amused at the woman's thrift, the editor tells her that there is a seven word minimum for all obituaries.

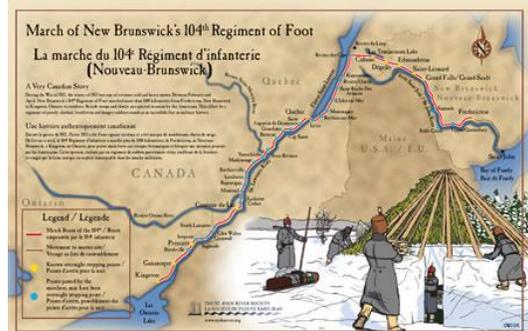
She thinks it over and in a few seconds says, "In that case, let it read..... 'Angus MacPherson died. Golf clubs for sale'."

The next regular meeting of the Cornwall Township Historical Society will take place on Tuesday March 26 at 7:30 pm. Guest speaker is Mr. Thom Racine author of the book *Constable Davey- A Future Lost*.

As this is the first regular meeting since last November, there will be lots of business to take care of so please attend if you are able.

2013 marks the bicentennial of a number of events which occurred in Eastern Ontario during the War of 1812-14. Following are some of the local upcoming events:

Hand Off of March from Quebec to Ontario April 6 Lancaster



Between February and April 1813, New Brunswick's 104th Regiment of Foot marched more than 1100 kilometres from Fredericton, New Brunswick to Kingston, Ontario to reinforce British troops and thwart an expected invasion by the Americans. This re-enactment will re-trace the steps the soldiers of the 104th Regiment marched on their way to the theatre of war. On April 6 the troops will arrive at the Travel Centre off the 401 east of Lancaster for a Hand Off ceremonial event at 12:00 noon. You can access the Travel Centre via old Hwy 2 travelling east of Lancaster. If you are interested in car pooling to this event call me at 613-534-2075.

Heritage Fair June 21-23

The Grenville Militia invites you to bring Upper Canadian military and civilian history alive in Spencerville Ont. Experience period food, medicine, fashion, dancing, an election re-enactment, musters and more. The events take place at the Spencerville Mill. For more info go to www.spencervillemill.ca.

Tattoo at Two

The Lost Villages Historical Society is pleased to commemorate the Skirmish at Hoople's Creek, Battle of Crysler's Farm and the movement of government stores from Cornwall to Coteau du Lac. The event will be held on Sunday June 30 at the Lost Villages Museum with displays, artists and enthusiasts culminating the day with a



“Tattoo at Two”. Bring your lawn chairs. For

further information contact Carol Goddard at 613-938-2455 or carol.goddard@sympatico.ca.

St. Andrews has always had a rich history in the sport of lacrosse. The following photo of some of the junior players who played the sport was taken in 1962.



Front Row L to R Donny McIntosh, Terry Fobert, Richard Giroux, Allan Fobert, Clark MacDonell, Robert Wheeler
 Second Row L to R Garret Quail Allen MacDonell, Dave MacDonald, Steve McCosham, Michael Taillon, Danny Spence, Gary Lalonde, Norman McDonald
 Back Row Tony Wheeler and Jim MacDonell coaches

An Interesting Website

A Canadian Virtual War Memorial has been created by Veterans Affairs. You can find it at www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/collections/virtualmem. This is a registry of information about war graves and memorials of more than 118,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who died in battle. As well there is a daily honour roll with the records of all those who died on the particular day from the Boer War to Afghanistan. The site also contains digital images of photographs and personal memorabilia about individual Canadians who were killed in the line of duty. If you knew someone lost in the line of duty it's a site well worth exploring!

Book Launch

CTHS members are invited to the launch of the Cornwall Community Museum's latest book *CORNWALL AND THE WAR OF 1812* (St. Andrews is included), on Thursday March 28th at 7 pm at the museum on Water St. Please feel free to bring others along. The book will cost \$15. To have it mailed add another \$5.00. Cheques should be made out to the SD & G Historical Soc., PO Box 773, Cornwall, ON., K6H 5T5

For further details contact Ian Bowering at: sdg_historicalsociety@bellnet.ca or tel. 613-936-0280.