

*KTHS, the second year and beyond*

After such an energetic start, the young King Township Historical Society plunged into its second year with equal vigour. Discontent about the text of the Lloydtown cairn plaque continued until KTHS' request for revision of the plaque wording went to the Historic Sites Board, with a warning that the Society would use its own text unless corrections were made. Meanwhile installation of the time-capsule awaited plaque approval. Offers of donations to the Society of antique farming equipment and documents relating to Lloydtown began to surface. Where to store them?

Interest in collecting historical data and questions about the Immanuel\* Church and its cemetery grew. The neglected grounds surrounding the aging building were in bad condition; thus in April '73 the property was graded and seeded. KTHS wrote to the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec (BCOQ) about the future of the church. The question of what to do about the monuments lingered unresolved although options for repairs to the memorial stones had been explored. (\*The name *Emmanuel* was commonly used, but the Baptist Convention confirmed *Immanuel* as the correct title; earlier it had been called *The King Christian Church*)

In January 1973 Bill Poulis was elected President of KTHS, with Frank Beatty as VP. The new Directors included Penny Raniowski, Ruth Cooke, Margaret Britnell, Bill Foran, Jean Jennings, J.N. Couse, Doris Willoughby and Alex von Svoboda; Alden Winter remained as Past President.

The acquisition by KTHS of Eversley Church, once property of the Eaton family and then managed by the York Pioneer and Historical Society (YPHS), was discussed and set aside for further deliberation.

Signage for the Lloydtown Cemetery was discussed, and an answer to the KTHS letter inquiring about township policy on abandoned cemeteries confirmed that the township had a budget for maintenance and could assist in cemetery restoration. A committee was formed to pursue the signage project to mark the 'Toronto Carrying Place Trail'

with an invitation to the Vaughan Historical Society to join in this. A further proposal came forward to involve three levels of government as well.

Uppermost in the minds of many of the KTHS members was preservation of King's built heritage and pioneer documentation. Elizabeth Gillham reported that the York County Board of Education was microfilming all former school records. Again the idea of a "book on King Township" was raised, with further suggestion that hamlets be marked with signs lest they be forgotten, and old buildings photographed before vanishing from the landscape.<sup>1</sup>

Interest in erecting plaques recognizing both Lloydtown and Kettleby as historic villages gained momentum. Len Osin chaired a committee to plan an annual Lloydtown Rebellion Day. When glowing reports came in about the Holland Landing plaque to the memory of 1837 rebel Samuel Lount, research on rebel Anthony Anderson was suggested as he was assumed to have lived at one time in Kettleby.

### *Eversley Church*

In September, 1974, "in a setting of flickering lights produced by the many lamps and candles placed in the church windows" the Society met to hear Elizabeth Gillham talk of early Eversley history, including the tale about the anxious bride waiting outside the log school-cum-church for the missing groom. As the story goes, one of the older boys watching the embarrassing situation from the classroom stepped up and volunteered to marry the bride, who accepted the offer! "They were happy ever after."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Gillham wrote "Early Settlements of King Township Ontario" published in 1984 by the Township of King. She also assembled photographs published privately as her "Album of Oldies." KTHS re-published this volume in 2009.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Op cit: Elizabeth McClure Gillham, p. 116

In 1848 the graceful stone church was built just north of the log building and remains today as “a monument to the fine workmanship of the artisans of those pioneer days...”<sup>2</sup> KTHS had joined the YPHS in May 1974 in order to assume custodianship of Eversley Church, thus by-passing the requirement of a lease. Funds from the Eaton endowment would be used for necessary repairs; installation of heating and electricity was recommended for all season-use. One hundred and ten years later the church was formally closed but is still owned by the YPHS.

### *The Toronto Carrying Place*

Throughout 1973 and into the new year, January 1974, KTHS debated the feasibility of marking roadsides near the supposed route of the portage trail beginning at Lake Ontario and ending at the Holland River on the way to Lake Simcoe. .

John Smithyès agreed to head the Toronto Carrying Place\*\* Committee which immediately began checking information on the true route of the portage, finding verification difficult. Plans for engraved wood signs were discussed and a sample ordered by the Chairman, who was working with the Vaughan Historical Society to coordinate signage and route. The first sample was presented for display at the AGM in February 1975. Designed with an arrowhead border, it showed an upturned canoe over the words “Toronto Carrying Place” and dates 1615 – 1793. The public introduction was scheduled for July 1, Dominion Day at the King-Vaughan road allowance between Pine Valley Drive and Kipling Avenue. More signs were made and installed at key sites on roads adjacent to the probable route of the Carrying Place portage.

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\*\* (Contemporary readers may learn the entire story of the portage in the book by KTHS member, Heather Robertson, titled “Walking Into Wilderness: The Toronto Carrying Place and Nine Mile Portage. This book won the OHS’ Fred Landon award for the best regional history in the past three years in 2011. )

From here on the story of the commemorative marker at the terminus on Highway 9 becomes almost incredible with a succession of chairmen, differences over the wording of the text for the plaque and debate as to the placement ; finally the site owned by King Township immediately west of Holancin Road on the north side of #9, was agreed and prepared for installation of a large boulder donated by Mr and Mrs Cyril Henderson of Bradford. Sod was provided by the Brouwer Company, assistance by Frank Horlings and flags erected by Bill Poulis. The plaque duly affixed to the stone was unveiled by Mr. Alden Winter and John Smithyes, with celebratory remarks by Mayor Margaret Britnell. This ceremony took place September 9, 1979, six years after the first steps were taken! Today you can read the plaque:

***“Toronto Carrying Place 1615- 1793,***

***This plaque marks the northern terminus of the Toronto Carrying Place which was a portage from the mouth of the Humber River to the Holland River connecting Lake Ontario with Lake Simcoe. This vital link of early native communication was used for several thousand years between Lakes Ontario, Huron and Superior, when water was the chief means of access to a vast and hostile continent.***

***The first recorded use was by Champlain’s Huron allies, who , in 1615, moved south against the Iroquois. The Carrying Place had great significance in Canadian history and was used by Brule, La Salle and Duluth in the battle for control of the fur trade between the French and English.***

***This route continued in use until Governor Simcoe built Yonge Street in 1793.***

***Erected by King Township Historical Society.”***