

Pugwash Shipbuilding Era Provides Hours of Discovery

Pugwash (Staff) — Sarah Chapman and Kathy Maddison, two university students, are spending a summer of discovery at the North Cumberland Historical Society, Pugwash.

The pair are busy uncovering and cataloging thousands of bits of information stored at the Society's headquarters upstairs in the old train station.

Sarah has also been on the internet tracking down information on ships built by Pugwash and area shipbuilders. She's received information from Memorial University in Newfoundland, Dalhousie and Mount Allison.

One such ship, the "City of Halifax", proved to be a difficult one to find information on.

She was reported to have been the fastest windjammer ever built in Pugwash. This 856 ton vessel was built by the DeWolf Shipyard of Pugwash and launched in 1873, under Captain McIlhinney, R.N.R. from Londonderry.

Information received from Dalhousie University shows she was sold and later appeared in 1886 as the Alagna under Norwegian ownership.

A calendar picture of the City of Halifax was given to the Society by Floyd Brown of Bridgewater whose grandfather helped build the vessel.

By 1851, shipbuilding was at its peak in the Pugwash area.

Often, when one was launched, its crew would be men from the Pugwash area who, along with their families, sailed off, looking for a fresh future.

One such account, mentioned in James Smith's "The History of Pugwash", tells of Levi Woodward Eaton, Esq., a merchant and shipbuilder from Pugwash.

In late 1859, he, a Pugwash area crew and their families set sail for Auckland New Zealand aboard the brigantine, "The George Henderson."

She was captained by Eaton's son-in-law Captain John James with Eaton's son George as chief mate.

She arrived in Sydney Australia in May 1860 with all passengers aboard.

A short time later she was cast off in New Plymouth, New Zealand. She was driven ashore by gale winds and never sailed again.

Levi Eaton left Pugwash because he felt, "The day of shipbuilding in Nova Scotia had passed."

Many people visit the Society's headquarters searching their genealogy.

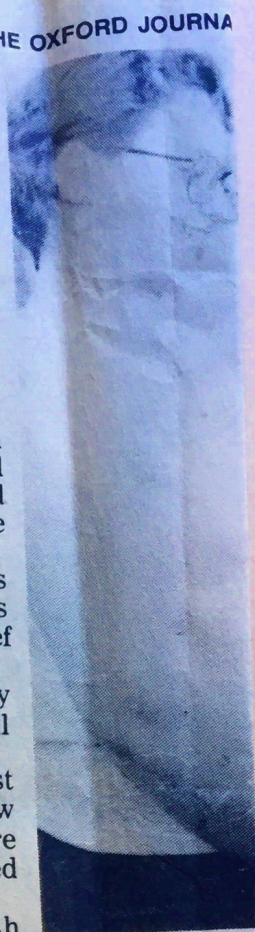
The Society has historical books and records in its inventory from which people can get a lot of information. The Society has about 25 titles it has published.

One, Cemeteries of North Cumberland, is a popular one. Another, found recently, is a foot-thick 1871 directory for the Dominion of Canada.

It contains family names of Canadians, including small places like Wentworth and Oxford. Also included are government offices and businesses. The directory covers prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

The Society presently has an age of sail display and a room dedicated to Cyrus Eaton.

The headquarters is open Monday to Friday from 10:00-12:00 a.m., and from 1:00-5:00 p.m.



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