



Société d'Histoire de Georgeville Georgeville Historical Society



~ Remembering Deane Moffat ~

This has been quite a time for the Georgeville Historical Society. We have lost several leading members in the last few years: Bernard Drew, John Boynton, Addie Atkin, and John Scott, all founding members. And now Deane Moffat.

Deane was loved and respected by the GHS membership, as well as by the larger Georgeville community and beyond. Many first came to know him at Robinson's Bakery in Magog, where he grew up. After a career running that popular establishment, along with his wife Doreen, he underwent what he often called an epiphany: in his mid-thirties he went back to school to eventually join the Ministry. He then served as a United Church Minister for many years both in Montreal and back in his much-loved Eastern Townships, where he eventually settled into a life of "retirement".

Deane remained active, volunteering at "Meals on Wheels", serving on the boards of the Musée Copp's Ferry, and with the GHS, serving as President for two years. He also remained a member of the Sherbrooke Snowshoe Club.

Wherever he went and whatever he did, he left his mark. On July 9th, the day after Deane's funeral, the headline in the Sherbrooke Record noted "Deane will be remembered for his compassion, thoughtfulness and sense of humour".

He sought consensus, looking to bring people together, not divide them. He was a pillar of wisdom, a person people turned to when important, difficult decisions had to be made, because you knew Deane would help to see a way forward when no one else could.

One Saturday afternoon at

the loft, the headquarters of the historical society, Deane was talking about his time at the United Church in Lachine. He was asked about the issue of the gay minister at the Presbyterian Church nearby and whether Deane had been in that community at the same time. He went on to tell us of the role he had played in providing a safe sanctuary for that minister and his congregation when the Presbyterians had turned him away. This was such a fine example of his Christian values in action.

Deane was also a great storyteller. At Men's Breakfast or Neighbour's Lunch Deane would often make announcements of some import, such as food drives at Christmas or upcoming community events, but which Deane lightened up with a story, reminding us of the way things once were and what we had lost.

Deane once told his congregation about a night course he was taking with the noted archeologist Robert Chadwick, dealing with Archeology and the Bible. According to Professor Chadwick, not everything in the Bible actually happened. Undeterred, Deane explained to his parishioners, maybe that is so, but "I've always pictured myself one day walking through the Pearly Gates, and at my age, I don't think it will hurt anyone if I keep on thinking that way."



As John Scott's son, Bob, noted, "not only was Deane the kindest, most wonderful person in the universe, his vocation allowed him to express it to the fullest, and he selflessly embraced his calling".

Quite a man! Quite a life! We are blessed to have known him and to have worked with him.

— Keith Wilcox, President, GHS

The Garden Volunteers bravely turned up on cool Monday mornings in early May to sort out and repair the havoc caused by our long, cold Winter (and non-existent Spring). Our much loved scarecrow, Hannah, surveyed us all, still wearing her winter tuque until it was warm enough for her to don her sun hat!

After the usual tidying of the beds, the first task in May was to order 60 bags of compost. We unloaded them and spread the compost over all the plants, providing them with much needed nutrients. As the soil warmed up, little shoots started to appear and before too long we were back in business.

In June a new soaking hose sprinkler system was installed which has improved the watering of the perimeter beds. We still use an overhead sprinkler for the central sections of the garden.

Beside our Donation Box, you will now find a box built by Vicky Vinters, which holds a Guest Book for comments. Here are a few comments:

**"Gorgeous plants
very well cared for.
Thank you!"**

*– visitors from
New Jersey, USA*



BIGELOW GARDEN GOSSIP

Toward the end of July, Jennifer Sudlow hosted the Bigelow Garden Volunteers for our Annual Bigelow Garden potluck lunch. Jennifer and her husband Michael have a beautiful garden and house overlooking Lake Memphremagog in Ogden where we all enjoyed ourselves.

In August, Suzanne Marcil hosted a tea in honour of Aileen Desbarats, one of the founding members of the Bigelow Garden. Many of the garden's past volunteers and current members enjoyed a delightful afternoon. Aileen was made an Honorary Member of the Bigelow Garden, and will continue to garden when time permits. As Aileen has stepped down as our representative on the GHS board, we are pleased that Judy Bachelder has agreed to be our new representative.

In September we repaired the front fence which had heaved substantially during last winter's frost. We hope that the fence will weather the upcoming winter without incident.

The summer weather was very good for growing. The flowers and plants seemed to grow taller than in the past. With the help of many dedicated volunteers, the garden continues to flourish. In the early autumn, the process of putting the garden to bed took place - cutting back plants, rearranging and moving whatever needed a new home.

Once the Christmas tree is put up the volunteers will have a well deserved rest. We hope everyone enjoys their winter. We will see you in the spring!

— Jill Cobbett, a regular volunteer at the garden

**"Merci pour ce beau cadeau
de ce magnifique lieu."**

– visitors from Troyes, France

Erwin Camber's Log Cabin

Georgeville and the surrounding community has always been enriched by a variety of colourful characters, including the late, irrepressible Erwin Camber.

As a young man during the early 1900s, Erwin was often seen puttering along the local roadways on his sporty Indian model motorcycle. Because so few owned such a unique means of transportation, he was easily recognized, and his travels readily documented. Not that the dashing young Erwin always wished it so. Alas, there were times when he definitely sought anonymity. On these particular occasions, Erwin would ease up on the throttle as he crossed the flats south of the village, slipping the transmission out of gear and killing the engine altogether as he reached the crest of Bullock Hill. From there he would coast down the sharp incline leading into Georgeville and just before entering the village proper, veer into the Murray estate as far as the forces of gravity and wind would allow. These 'silent runnings' were contrived to conceal from the general public his activities at the Murray household. However, despite all the efforts to camouflage his comings and goings, everyone in the village was well aware of young Erwin's escapades, as well as the motivation for all the subterfuge, namely, the equally young and attractive Jesse Cameron, the newly arrived Scottish nanny to the Murray children.

Thus began the courtship that eventually led to marriage and a lifetime of shared memories. Having previously secured a position working for Miss Molson on the Fernhill estate, some three miles south of Georgeville, Erwin was ready to start a family. Following their marriage in 1921, Jessie left the employ of the Murrays to live with her husband in the farmhouse at Fernhill. Before long, Jessie too became a member of the estate staff, serving as a housekeeper for Miss Ella, while Erwin managed the farm and undertook the duties of a chauffeur.

As the years rolled by, Erwin and Jessie settled into a peaceful, though demanding lifestyle, working for Miss Molson and building a family of their own, with three rambunctious children – Richard, Percy and Edna. The assigned tasks at Fernhill, which at times included the



children, were hard and tedious and frequently never ending.

By the 1930s, the Cambers had become somewhat disillusioned with their state of affairs. By this point their working relationship with Miss Molson had begun to deteriorate. Not that Miss Molson was unkind or difficult to please, but as old age set in, she tended to rely more and more on the support of Erwin and Jesse to the extent of actually moving into the farmhouse with the young family during the colder months. While content in fulfilling their obligations, the Cambers were nevertheless distressed by the constant attention that their elderly employer demanded of them daily. This was especially brought to bear in the case of Jesse who was called upon to prepare and serve meals seven days a week, instead of being able to enjoy her entitled one day a week off. Instead, poor Jesse and to a certain degree Erwin as well, found themselves on call every day of the week, week after week.

Erwin, dismayed at the demands placed on his beloved wife, resolved to rectify the situation. What they needed, he concluded, was a retreat where the family could enjoy a little solitude and relaxation, where Jesse would be beyond Miss Molson's every beck and call.

Frustrated at not being able to secure any existing facilities, Erwin turned to longtime acquaintances, Harry and Mary Shephard. The Shephards owned the farm bordering the eastern recesses of MacPherson's Bay. Erwin and the Shephards, whom he had befriended some years earlier, were on good terms as Erwin often dropped off groceries and other miscellaneous items on his way

back from Magog or the village. Erwin, as a result, was not hesitant in asking the couple for a small parcel of land along the lakeshore. After a bit of haggling, a deal was struck, and Erwin purchased a lot between the lake and the Shephard's pasture. The year was 1937 and the negotiated price, \$200.

Although Erwin and his family owned land further along Magoon Point Road, beyond the crossroad, he wanted a more private retreat near the lake where he and Jesse could relax and recuperate from the chores at Fernhill.



Immediately following the acquisition of the Shephard lot, Erwin with the assistance of his two boys, began clearing a site for a small abode. The building was constructed of cedar logs from the nearby grove and possibly some hauled down from his woodlot described previously. The logs were readily available at no additional cost.

Erwin and the boys built a sizeable two-story log cabin with a gambrel roof, a feature the elder Camber found appealing and which he later replicated from time to time. Built only a few feet from the existing lakeside private roadway, the ground floor served two functions: that of a combination garage and woodshed, as well as a separate kitchen. Access to the second level sleeping quarters was via an external log staircase to a small, romantic log balcony overlooking the road and nearby brook.

Once completed, the structure took on the appearance of a small barn rather than that of a typical log cabin.

The setting, nevertheless, could not have been more ideal. Situated in the southeast corner of the property, the cabin was nestled alongside a babbling brook and some old growth oak and maple trees. In addition, the foreground and path leading to the lake was covered in a soft carpet of myrtle that flowered profusely in the springtime.

The cabin itself was rustic to a fault. With no electricity, the evening light was derived from kerosene lamps. A supply of fresh water was available from a tap just outside the door, piped down from a spring located on the Shephard's steep hillside across the road; a spring for which Erwin was wise enough to secure perpetual access. Other plumbing necessities were initially non-existent. The call of nature was at first satisfied with a short stroll deeper into the wooded lot where a crude facility was erected. With no sides and only a small roof, the structure satisfied Erwin's open-door policy of maximum ventilation. The lack of privacy was later addressed when small cedar trees were planted around the perimeter of the outhouse.

As time passed renovations were undertaken to enhance its livability. The garage and woodshed were dismantled and replaced by a spacious kitchen. The front portion of the lower level was converted into a living room with additional windows added along the front façade for improved views of the lake. An interior staircase separated the two rooms, providing convenient access to the upper floor. Use of the privy was discontinued when a washroom was added to the lower level.

Notwithstanding the cabin's limitations, it served for several years as the family's treasured retreat. It provided the sanctuary for which it was intended, allowing Erwin and Jesse respite from the responsibilities associated with the Molson estate. Only the onset of winter interrupted their use of the cabin.

The ever-increasing attachment to the log cabin in the woods, however, was short-lived. By the early 1940s, developments at Fernhill resulted in a reversal of the family's fortunes. In 1945, Miss Molson passed away, and her estate holdings subsequently divided. The Molson heirs retained ownership of the main residences and Molson Island. Erwin, however, was able to purchase the estate farm, farmhouse, and several lakeside lots. With their acquisition, the Cambers focused their attention on the operation of the farm. From this point on, it became their main preoccupation and principal source of income. With the constant demands of Ella Molson now eliminated, there was no longer a need for the log cabin at MacPherson's Bay. The necessity of a retreat from Fernhill evaporated almost overnight. The once beloved log cabin was soon forgotten, only to sit vacant save for the occasional tenant.

One early occupant was Allie Moore and his wife Rita. The couple rented the cabin one summer and were so enamoured with the location, that they bought a nearby cottage.

Everything went smoothly for a while until one tenant who had leased the log cabin, restricted the Moores from accessing the cabin's spring water supply for which Erwin had graciously given his permission.

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TELL US **YOUR** STORY.

WHAT BROUGHT **YOU** TO GEORGEVILLE?

MY STORY (Version française à suivre...)

Love brought me to Georgeville three years ago. By love, I mean "a" love. A kind, hard-working and deeply rooted local boy who probably had a lot to do with the way I was so warmly welcomed into the community.

I called North Hatley home for close to thirty years before that, maintaining that I would only leave my beloved stomping grounds for something better. Enter a new man. Enter Georgeville.

Life has a way to unsettle you in the most surprising ways. We were a mid-life match made possible through our respective and common family physician. Who could pass up such a solid reference. It's a good story but not now, not here.

Two years of commuting (long-distance relationships, you know...) convinced me that this was "it". This was "the better". You see, there is an indescribable sense of "oomph" about Georgeville. Something about the scenic landscape that blows your mind no matter which road you take when entering the village: the official gate doors welcoming you into the village, the sight of the General Store, the fork in the road with the iconic little red school house. Then there is Magoon Point road, which poses as an intrinsic dance with the lake, revealing Owl's Head in mystical angles, different from one curve, one hill to the next. The same optical revelations are felt when you drive on the East Road, when you come down Merrill road, Channel road. Oomph...

This true love for the whole package - the man, the place, the people - got me interested in the many activities going on. Freshly retired from the education world, I had time to explore the place I now called home through the historical tours, the bird observation walks, the informal garden club, the local theatre troupe, the Studio, the municipal offerings. So much going on in this little community!

My participation also put a neon sign over my head: "Available newcomer". Tapped on the shoulder... I was... and found myself writing, translating, planning promotional tools, acting in a play, sewing decorative articles, and sitting on a municipal committee. Retirement life stuff, I was warned. Someone even told me, "You really got into everything, didn't you?" I'm still trying to figure out if it was meant as a compliment...

The history of Georgeville is fascinating. It is rich, it is entertaining and it is well-preserved. I have met kind, dedicated and talented people who have taken the time to write about this history: John Boyden, John Scott, Deane Moffat - all of whom have unfortunately recently passed away but two of whom I was privileged to meet in my short time here. More currently, through my work on the Board of Directors of the Georgeville Historical Society, I have gotten to know Stephen Moore, John Atkin, Judy Bachelder, Keith Wilcox and Maureen Cameron and more.

Each of these people have enlightened me with local stories that complete the tales I have heard from My Love and his siblings from their deep, long-standing roots in Georgeville. There's a road bearing his family name, a toponymy statement in itself. His Georgeville roots are as deep as his convictions to honour them. He drives a Ford, like his father and grandfather. Always will. Probably green for as long as they make them. He comes from and lives in Georgeville. Always will. I now I live in Georgeville and I have a feeling that I too... always will.

We are inviting you, the reader, to tell us your story. Our spring issue comes out in mid May. To meet that deadline, you would have to submit something to Keith Wilcox at the following, jkmacwil@gmail.com, by mid April of 2020.

— SuzAnne G. Tremblay

MON HISTOIRE

C'est l'amour qui m'a mené à Georgeville il y a trois ans. Par amour, je veux dire "un" amour. Un né-natif doux et fort travaillant de Georgeville, ce qui a probablement contribué à mon accueil si chaleureux dans cette communauté.

J'avais élu domicile à North Hatley pour près de trente ans auparavant en exprimant à tour de bras que je ne quitterais ce village que s'il se présentait quelque chose de meilleur. Arrive nouvel homme. Arrive Georgeville. La vie a souvent cette façon de venir déranger vos plans de façon très surprenante. Nous sommes un couple formé en mi-vie, une rencontre orchestrée par notre médecin respectif... et commun. Une référence plus solide que celle-ci, tu meurs... C'est une belle histoire, mais pas maintenant... pas ici.

Deux années d'aller-retours (les relations à distance, voyez-vous) m'ont convaincu que je l'avais trouvé, ce "meilleur". Georgeville procure ce sentiment indescriptible de "oumph". Que ce soit le paysage scénique renversant peu importe le chemin que vous empruntez pour entrer au village, les petites portes qui vous annoncent l'entrée au village, la vue du Magasin Général, la fourche des chemins avec sa petite école rouge iconique. Et puis vous voilà sur le chemin de la Pointe Magoon qui vous propose une danse intrinsèque avec le lac, vous révélant le mont Owl's Head sous des angles mystiques, différents d'une courbe, d'une montée à l'autre. Le même phénomène optique fait son oeuvre sur le chemin de l'Est, lorsque vous descendez le chemin Merrill, le chemin Channel. Oumph...

Cet amour complet pour tout le package - l'homme, la place, les gens - m'a intéressé aux différentes activités proposées. Fraîchement à la retraite du monde de l'éducation, je disposais de temps pour explorer mon nouveau patelin par le biais de tours historiques, de randonnées d'observation d'oiseaux, du petit groupe informel de jardinage, de la troupe de théâtre locale. du Studio, des activités municipales. Tellement de choses se passent dans cette petite communauté!

Cette participation a eu tôt fait de mettre une enseigne néon au-dessus de ma tête: "Nouvelle personne... disponible". Approchée... je fus et maintenant impliquée... je suis: Écriture, traduction, conception de plateformes de publicité et de promotion, rôle dans la troupe de théâtre, couture d'objets de décoration, siège sur un comité municipal. La vie de retraite, m'avait-on prévenue. Quelqu'un m'a même dit "Tu es vraiment rentré dans tout, n'est-ce pas?". J'hésite encore à savoir si c'était un compliment...

L'histoire de Georgeville est fascinante. C'est une histoire à la fois riche, amusante et bien préservée. J'ai fait la rencontre de personnes avenantes, dédiées et talentueuses qui ont pris le temps d'écrire sur cette histoire: John Boyden, John Scott, Deane Moffat - qui sont tous malheureusement décédés mais dont j'ai eu le privilège d'en rencontrer deux depuis ma courte histoire ici. De manière plus courante, par le biais de mon siège sur le comité de direction de la Société d'Histoire de Georgeville, j'ai fait la connaissance des Stephen Moore, John Atkin, Judy Bachelder, Keith Wilcox et Maureen Cameron.

Chacune de ces personnes m'ont partagé des moments d'histoire locale qui complètent ceux entendus par MyLove et sa famille par leurs racines profondes et de longue date à Georgeville. Un chemin porte son nom de famille, un toponyme historique en lui-même. Ses racines sont aussi profondes que ses convictions de les honorer. Il conduit un véhicule Ford, tout comme son père et son grand-père avant lui. Pour toujours. Probablement en vert tant et aussi longtemps que cette couleur sera disponible. Il vient de Georgeville et y habite. Pour toujours. J'habite maintenant à Georgeville et j'ai le sentiment que moi aussi j'y serai...

— SuzAnne G. Tremblay

GHS RECENT AND NOT SO RECENT HAPPENINGS

The GHS Great Historical Challenge: A Winning Team!

This past summer GHS members and guests were invited to participate in the Society's 2nd historical challenge. Like the first challenge some years previous, curious individuals travelled the local countryside in search of answers to various questions posed relating to the history of Georgeville and the surrounding hinterland.

This second challenge took participants farther afield and required the use of different sources of investigation besides casual observations at various sites. As well, this time participants were divided up into groups, each aspiring to discover the maximum number of proper responses to the different questions presented.

And... the winning team for the 2nd challenge included Judy Bachelder, Christian Hurlow, and Maureen Cameron. All three are current Board members of the Society, not that their role constituted any advantage over other participants.

Given the fact that many interested individuals were unable to join in the challenge due to conflicts and/or the uncertain weather, requests have been received to repeat the event next summer. Details as to the date and time will be announced in the spring newsletter.

— Stephen Moore

MacPherson Cemetery Tour. A month following the Historical Challenge, Steve Moore led us on a tour of the MacPherson Cemetery. No one does this better than Steve. He knows all the stories; in fact, he is even related to some who are buried there. Maybe not all the skeletons are out of the closet, but certainly some are. Enough to make for an informative and entertaining visit.

It was a perfect summer day, comfortably warm, and sunny. Steve highlighted some of the founding families: the Packard's, the Beach's, the Evans' and Camber's, with a little story about each. There was even a little controversy over some of the details of the history of one of the families. Nothing too serious mind you.

The event was very well attended, between thirty and forty people. Everyone was engaged; lots of interesting questions and some good back and forth. All and all, a great day.

— Keith Wilcox

The Georgeville Historical Society is on Twitter!

Not wanting to be left behind, the Georgeville Historical Society has joined the world of Social Media. We have a Twitter account.

Among our archives is a binder of Georgeville related news items, compiled by John Boynton, a founding member of the

GHS, and now deceased, that were printed in the Stanstead Journal from 1902-1961. There are anecdotes of people going about their daily lives in the Village in the early 1900's.

This reminder of an earlier Georgeville needs to be shared again. We thought we might reach a wider audience by using Twitter. The account can be found at GeorgevilleHis1. Check us out.

— Maureen Cameron

The Canada Day Parade. First of all, congratulations are in order. Our cousins at the Musée Copp's Ferry took first prize for their float this year. Bravo Copp's Ferry! Well done.

The GHS Float paid homage to the hard work and dedication of Georgeville's men, and perhaps women as well, who had the foresight to understand the value of a medicinal drink at the end of a hard-working day.

We also must congratulate another hard working, inspired individual, who had the idea, and the time to carry out the idea, to design and build the float for us. John Atkin. Thank you so much John. Your idea and its conception were brilliant.

In addition, we should thank our other cousins, the Bigelow Garden volunteers, who had some good time fun playing temperance protesters, chanting anti alcohol slogans at the float as it passed by.

Thanks, as well, to Robert Coallier for the flat bed wagon that transported our float, and to Craig Markwell for driving the wagon over to Board Member Martin Bosch's property the morning of the parade. Finally, thanks to all the GHS volunteers who helped mount the float that morning.

The 2019-2020 GHS Board of Directors.

OFFICERS: President, Keith Wilcox; Vice President, Judy Bachelder; Secretary, Christian Hurlow; Treasurer, Diane Partington; Webmaster, Lorne Waid, Jr. DIRECTORS: John Atkin, Martin Bosch, Maureen Cameron, Tara Cope, Aileen Desbarats, Stephen Moore, SuzAnne G Tremblay, Jacques Valiquette.

This past year we had two new members join our Board: Tara Cope and SuzAnne Tremblay. Each has brought a new and different energy and perspective to our Board. They are part of a younger generation that has decided to get involved. We wish to thank them for joining our team. Already they are making important contributions.

And we wish to invite others to consider joining in the future. The GHS belongs to its members. The more diverse our leadership is, the better it reflects our membership, thus sustaining our work into the foreseeable future.

Erwin Camber's Log Cabin, cont. from page 4

To add insult to injury, the tenant intimated that he was considering acquiring the property after which no one would be allowed access to the water supply.

Allie Moore, seizing the opportunity, immediately sought out Erwin along with Rita who just happened to be a member of the Atkin family and a lifelong friend of the Cambers. (Rita's mother had delivered one or more of Erwin's and Jesse's children.) Allie promptly requested a first option on the log cabin, when and if, the property was ever put up for sale. Erwin, given the close relationship between the two families, was only too glad to oblige.

Though Allie Moore passed away before the family was able to acquire the property, the log cabin and the lot beside the brook was eventually transferred in 1948, as Erwin had promised.

In the years that ensued, hydro and telephone service were added as these utilities became generally available. During the 1950s, Harry Atkin, Rita's younger brother, built a sizeable screened-in porch on the south side of the cabin. The porch which overlooked the brook, added significantly to the lower level floor space.

Although the log cabin remained a favourite among some family members, the Moores tended to congregate in the originally owned cottage just up the hill, more out of practicality than any other consideration, as the latter was somewhat more spacious for an ever-increasing large family unit. Consequently, except for the spring and fall seasons, when everyone was able to enjoy the cabin, the building was usually rented out during the summer to offset the expense associated with the family's lakeshore properties.

During the 1980s, ownership of the old log cabin drifted out of the Moore family, to the dismay of some members. New owners relocated the building, placed it on a concrete foundation and concealed the cedar log exterior with modern siding. Gone are the hardwood trees that provided shade, the myrtle that was so cool to bare feet on a hot summer's day and the babbling brook that was so cold and vibrant.

Sadly, if Erwin Camber was still with us, he would not recognize his cabin nor its surroundings.

— Stephen Moore

PLEASE TAKE NOTE: THERE IS A NEW DATE FOR OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) IN 2020

As is the case with the Community Association of Georgeville, we must change the date of our AGM. According to the Québec Government, as a non-profit corporation, we must hold our AGM within three months of the end of our fiscal year, which is a calendar year.

Therefore, this year's AGM will be held on **Saturday, March 21, 2020, at 1 pm at the Murray Memorial Hall in Georgeville.**

NEW DATE FOR GHS SPEAKER IN 2020

A more informal meeting, with a speaker, will take place at 1 pm on Sunday, July 5, 2020. This year we plan to have Martin Bosch, a member of our Board, speak about the Merton Center. We will have more details in our spring issue of the Newsletter.

 *And finally... a very* 
Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year to all! 

GHS Newsletter Contributors: Stephen Moore, SuzAnne Tremblay, Jill Cobbett, Keith Wilcox, and Maureen Cameron

Photos: Judy Bachelder, Doreen Moffat, GHS Archives

Editor: Keith Wilcox

Proof Reader: John Atkin

Editor-At-Large: Sylvia Miller

Layout&Design: Linda Bachelder

Keep in touch. Visit the GHS web site for information on the Society, for stories, photographs, postcards, featured artefacts, past newsletters, and more! Always changing, always improving: Georgevillehistoricalsociety.website

Visit our headquarters at the loft, behind 4665 Georgeville Road - most Saturday's you can find Judy Bachelder there between 1 and 4 pm. If you wish to drop off an artefact, do some research or just chat, Judy is usually around.