

# SPRING 2009



## Black Loyalist Heritage Society

98 Birchtown Road  
PO Box 1194  
Shelburne Nova Scotia  
B0T 1W0  
Phone: 902-875-1310  
Fax: 902-875-1352  
Museum: 902-875-1293  
Toll Free: 1-888-354-0772

Email:  
blackloyalist@blackloyalist.com  
www.blackloyalist.com

### BLHS BOARD

*Elizabeth Cromwell - President*

*Barb Valk - Vice President*

*Sharon Oliver - Second Vice*

*Hank Valk - Treasurer / Secretary*

*Terry Bauer - Director*

*Dolores Atwood - Director*

*Everett Cromwell - Director*

*Lawrence Bruce - Director*

*Julie-Anne Bruce - Director*

*Sheila Hartley Gallion - Director*

*Corrine Sparks - Director*

### BLHS STAFF

*Beverly Cox - Site Manager*

*Stephen Workman - Project Manager*

*Shari Shortliffe - Office Administrator*

*Arlene Butler - Special Project*

*Coordinator*

*Patricia Reid - Student Museum*

*Supervisor*

**" While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about."**

**Angela Schwindt**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2009 ELIZABETH CROMWELL



Greetings to all of our supporters! After a long, cold winter, we are now preparing

for the upcoming tourist season with some exciting new programs and initiatives, as well as some old favorites. The Old School House Museum will officially open on May 25<sup>th</sup> - hours of operation for 2009 will be Tuesday through Sunday, 11am to 5pm, closed on Mondays. We do welcome you to drop by the historical site anytime!

The winter proved to be a very busy time for our project manager, Stephen Workman and our site manager, Beverly Cox. Both have been engaged with proposal writing and furthering the plans for construction of the BLHS Interpretive Centre. In mid-December, the Steering Committee chose the winning conceptual design - completed by architects Peter Henry of Peter Henry Architects Ltd & Christine Macy of Filum. We are now trying to secure funds to produce blueprints for the centre in order to move forward with an application to ACOA for infrastructure money.

Site manager, Beverly Cox continues to plan and develop relevant programming and fund-raisers for our heritage site and museum.

January 24 and February 7, in partnership with Shelburne County Women's Fishnet, we hosted a Personal Mastery Workshop which was facilitated by Pat Watson. All in attendance thoroughly enjoyed Pat's techniques & guidance. On February 15, we held our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Chocolate Festival with delectable chocolate desserts for the biggest chocolate lover. Over March break, we held a March Break Day Camp for children ages 5-12 which included one day of drumming instruction with Dr. Henry Bishop. The children learned the history of the African drum - the djembe and several different drum beats.

On April 17, a presentation on the history of the Black Loyalist was given to grades 4-6 at the Evelyn Richardson Memorial Elementary School in Shag Harbour. The children enjoyed a slide show and then completed a craft. On April 25<sup>th</sup>, we participated in the annual community event - *Something for Everyone* where volunteer organizations showcase what they have to offer. On May 7<sup>th</sup>, we held a Mother's Day Cheesecake Bake Sale and sold out in ½ hour! Thank you to all who made cheesecakes & other baked goods for the event!

On December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008 we welcomed Arlene Butler to our staff - Arlene is our Special Project Coordinator and is working on file restoration, brochure development, fund-raising initiatives and assisting with museum preparations. She has brought a fresh approach and new ideas to the heritage site and her vibrant personality is evident in everything she does. Our office administrator, Shari Shortliffe, continues to manage the office, assisting wherever she is needed. She is working closely with Arlene and providing training & support wherever possible. I would like to thank the staff for their dedication and hard work over the winter as they continue to develop creative, relevant programming for the community of Shelburne and Birchtown.

Our annual general meeting is scheduled for July 5<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm in the Birchtown Community Centre. We encourage members to actively consider running for office - please contact the office to submit your nomination. We will also have special guest speaker Allison Kouzovnikov - Executive Director of the Community Foundations of Nova Scotia. Her topic of

*Continued on page 2...*

address will pertain to establishing endowment funds.

For the upcoming summer season, we have an exciting schedule planned. On June 6<sup>th</sup>, we will have a table of treasures for sale at the Shelburne Town Wide Yard Sale. On Father's Day, June 21<sup>st</sup>, we are partnering with the Birchtown Community Centre to host a Roast Turkey Supper with all the trimmings. Supper will be held at the centre (23 Old Birchtown Rd) from 4pm to 6pm and cost is \$12/plate. Bring Dad out for some great food and good company! We have 2 Summer Day Camps scheduled - July 13-17 and August 17-21. The camps are designed for children ages 5-12 and provide the children with an opportunity to learn about and experience different cultures through food, crafts, sports and music.

The annual Founder's Weekend Celebrations are scheduled for July 16-19 and once again, we will have our famous hot-dog booth on the historic waterfront of Shelburne. Something new and delicious for the menu this year will be lobster salad burgers! Drop by our booth for a taste of Nova Scotia! We are also co-hosting the Annual Garden Party on July 19<sup>th</sup> with the Shelburne Historical Society from 2pm to 4pm in the gardens of the Ross Thomson House. Special guest speaker this year will be The Honourable Mayann E Francis, ONS, DhumL, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia. There will

be a variety of local musical entertainment as well as renowned florist Neville MacKay who always dazzles the crowd with his amazing and beautiful floral designs. The Amistad Freedom Schooner will be visiting Shelburne again this summer. Tentative dates for the ship's docking is August 12-15. There will be an opportunity for youth to participate in sailing on the ship, as well as a gala reception and gospel festival for the adults. We will keep you posted as things progress!

We're also organizing a series of drumming workshops over the summer for the youth of our community, instructed by Master Drummer Dr. Henry Bishop. Dr. Bishop is well known for his skills as an African Drummer and has traveled the country performing at many events. We would like to form a youth drumming troupe as a means to encourage the youth to become more involved in cultural activities that help celebrate and promote our community's cultural identity.

I would like to thank our members, supporters and volunteers - who have continued to support our cause over the last 20 years. With each passing year, we are that much closer to reaching our goal - to become a national resource for information pertaining to the history and heritage of the Black Loyalists. The construction of the Black Loy-

alist Interpretive Centre here in Birchtown will provide a venue so the world can learn about this determined, resilient people who were one of the founding peoples of this nation and to recognize and celebrate their contributions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Cromwell, President

*Images of Conceptual Design  
for the  
Birchtown Interpretive Centre*



## FEATURE OF THE MONTH - THE PIT HOUSE



When the Black Loyalists first arrived in September 1783, they did not have land and supplies to build a permanent structure, but needed a way to survive the winter, henceforth pit houses were built. While these pit houses would have been meant as an emergency shelter, the archaeology suggested that it may have been occupied for more than one season.

While these pit houses would have been meant as an emergency shelter, the archaeology suggested that it may have been occupied for more than one season.

In 1993, during the first archaeological survey conducted in Birchtown, a site was found now interpreted as being such a structure, the first of its kind in Nova Scotia.



## PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT—STEPHEN WORKMAN



First of all I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Black Loyalist Heritage Society for allowing me the privilege of working here for the year. I can't believe the year is gone already.

We obviously have a lot more work to do, but I feel it is very important to look at the society's accomplishments during the past 18 years.

During the past year we have completed straightening out our land, and we now have our property surveyed and a clear title to all our property. In doing this there is one small piece of property we found out we didn't own. We also held a competition between interested architectural firms, picked one and had a concept completed.

Since we had the concept completed we have been presenting it to all levels of government, with very favourable comments and

positive feedback, however we have not been able to secure any funding to proceed further. In December and January we made proposals to both the provincial and federal governments hoping to secure enough funding to have blueprints produced, Approx. \$160,000.00. This did not happen, so we are now applying to Cultural Spaces Canada and Nova Scotia Economic Development for this funding. I feel we will receive this funding but like most government programs it takes a while to get the applications processed.

I had hoped to help advance this project a little further during my year here, however I worked as hard as I could and would like to once again thank the Society for giving me the opportunity to work with you on this project. I have agreed to continue assisting as a consultant, hoping this will bring continuity to the project with the hope we can soon acquire funding to finish this project, giving the history of the Black Loyalist's the recognition and stature it deserves.

## SITE MANAGER'S REPORT



Spring is finally here and we look forward to a busy summer. Site staff have been busy formalizing plans for Founder's Weekend, 33rd Annual Garden Party and the Amistad's visit to Shelburne celebrating the 175th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery. Service Canada has given the

BLHS an extension for the Job Creation Partnership so Arlene Butler will be with us until October.

The Student Museum Supervisor for the summer has been hired and we would like to welcome Patricia Reid to the BLHS staff. Patricia is a history major at St. Francis Xavier University and she comes to our site with many life experiences as a young woman. We all look forward to working with her.

The djembe drums we ordered from Goatworks are here and they were hand-made by women of Ghana. We will continue this

summer with lessons for our local youth, with hopes that they will be able to perform a few songs at the Garden Party in July.

Two cultural day camps are being offered again this summer—July 13-17 and August 17-21. So we have a great summer lined up ahead!

June 30 Stephen Workman will be leaving us to return to Ross Farm. It is hard to believe that a year has passed by. Stephen has been a great leader and mentor and I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to work with him. Stephen tells me he is only a phone call away if I need his professional advice. I believe it is safe in saying that both staff & board members will miss Steve.

Contact me anytime at 902-875-1606 or via email at [beverly@blackloyalist.com](mailto:beverly@blackloyalist.com)

## SPECIAL PROJECT COORDINATOR—ARLENE BUTLER



I started at the Black Loyalist Heritage Society in December 2009 on a Job Creation Program. My duties include copying and filing the files that were salvaged from the fire. Also, I have assisted the Site and Project Managers with proposals and pres-

entations. I have created a brochure on the Interpretive Centre Concept. I am in the process of coming up with a lending agreement for the Library. Recently, Mr. George Borden donated over 300 books to our Library that will be available for the public. I have also attended seminars and meeting with our Site manager in Dartmouth and Stellarton. I felt extremely privileged to be able to attend. At these meetings, I learned a great deal about museums, culture and heritage, writing proper minutes of a meeting, how to preserve artifacts, how to use folklore in interpretation, and I also learned The Secrets to Travel Packaging Success. I will use the information I learned at the seminar to assist the Site Manager in a presentation about Travel Packaging Success. I have attended a

seminar regarding Genealogy and how to research it properly. I have used this information in researching queries that have come to the Black Loyalist Heritage Society. I find it to be very rewarding to help people who are trying to find out information regarding their ancestors.

Since I have been working at the Black Loyalist Heritage Society, I learned that I can do anything if I am given the opportunity. I have become more confident in myself and my work. The staff and members have made me feel like I am one of the family here. I love and enjoy working with everyone. I really look forward to hopefully working with the Black Loyalist Heritage Society in the future to assist the staff and members in keeping Birchtown's history alive.

Contact me anytime at 875-1310 or via email at [registrar@blackloyalist.com](mailto:registrar@blackloyalist.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS & FUND-RAISERS FOR 2009

**June 13: Town of Shelburne Yard Sale from 8am to 2pm**

**June 21: Father's Day Roast Turkey Supper with all the trimmings—Birchtown Hall from 4pm to 6pm. Cost is \$12/plate**

**July 13-17: Birchtown Multicultural Day Camp—kids ages 5-12—9am to 4pm daily. Kids learn about different cultures through food, sport, crafts & music. Price \$35/child**

**July 16-19: Shelburne's annual Founder's Weekend—4 days of fun filled activities celebrating Shelburne's rich history & heritage**

**July 19: Shelburne Historical Society Annual Garden Party—2pm to 4pm in the gardens of the Ross Thomson House. Admission \$5/person**

**August 12-15: Amistad Freedom Celebration 175—4 days of events commemorating the 175th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery—public tours & youth sails**

**August 17-21: Birchtown Multicultural Day Camp—kids ages 5-12—9am to 4pm daily. Kids learn about different cultures through food, sport, crafts & music. Price \$35/child**

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

The Black Loyalist Heritage Society is committed to discover, interpret, safeguard and promote the history and heritage of Black Loyalists and their descendants in North America.

### OUR MANDATE:

To ensure the chronicles and contributions of Black Loyalists share a place with other communities that shape Canada's cultural mosaic.



98 Old Birchtown Road, P.O. Box 1194, Shelburne, NS, B0T1W0  
Phone: 902-875-1310 / Fax: 902-875-1352 / Toll Free: 866-354-0772  
Email: [blackloyalst@blackloyalst.com](mailto:blackloyalst@blackloyalst.com) Web Site: [www.blackloyalst.com](http://www.blackloyalst.com)

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

SINGLE: 820.00    FAMILY: 825.00    ORGANIZATION: 840.00

NAME (S): \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE/FAX #: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

*Cheques/money orders payable to the Black Loyalist Heritage Society.  
Memberships renewed annually at the calendar year end.*

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### Mission Statement

The BLHS is committed to discover, interpret, safeguard and promote the history & heritage of the Black Loyalists and their descendants in North America.

## Black Loyalist Heritage Society Historical Site & Old School House Museum



131 Old Birchtown Rd  
Site of the Largest Settlement of Free Blacks in 1783

### Features

Remembering Black Loyalist, Black Communities Exhibit  
Genealogy  
Archaeological Artifacts  
Heritage Trail

### Open June to Sept

Monday Closed

Tues - Fri 11am - 5pm

Saturday & Sunday 11am - 4pm

Gift Shop on Site

[blackloyalst@blackloyalst.com](mailto:blackloyalst@blackloyalst.com)

[www.blackloyalst.com](http://www.blackloyalst.com)

Phone: (902) 875-1293 or 875-1310

Fax: (902) 875-1352

Admission Charged

### Our Goals Are:

- ◆ To gain recognition as original colonists
- ◆ To celebrate the survival and determination of our ancestors
- ◆ To become a national resource for information pertaining to the history & heritage of the Black Loyalists
- ◆ To plan for and attain social and economic equality of the Black Loyalists among Canadians
- ◆ To provide mentors to our youth in the Black community
- ◆ To promote the scholarship fund for the descendants of Black Loyalists
- ◆ To discover artifacts of Black Loyalists and their descendants
- ◆ To maintain the National Historic Site, Old School House Museum and St. Paul's Church at Birchtown as a public exhibition and education resource