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# GLENGARRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

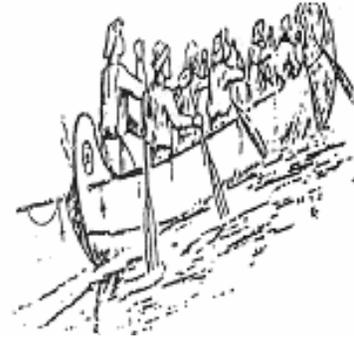
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## NEXT MEETING

**Date:** May 1, 2008  
**Time:** 8:00 p.m.  
**Location:** St. Andrew's Parish Hall  
**Topic:** Celebrating with Simon:  
The 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Simon Fraser's  
explorations



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### √ Note the Change in Venue √

The **Cornwall Township Historical Society** (CTHS) and the **Glengarry Historical Society** (GHS) are pleased to invite you to this 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Simon Fraser's harrowing ride down the great river that bears his name.

We will meet, quite appropriately, in the town where Simon Fraser ultimately made his home, St. Andrew's West, on the banks of the Raisin River. Meeting time is, as usual, 8.00 p.m. but the location is the **St. Andrew's Parish Hall** (that's the low, round building at the foot of St. Andrew's Church) at the corner of County Road 18 and Highway 138. There is ample parking (1) to the South of the Parish Hall, (2) in front of the Church, and (3) to the West of the Parish Hall.

According to the plaque outside the Parish Hall, this is the oldest, remaining stone structure in Ontario erected as a Church circa 1801. It was built under the auspices of St. Regis

missionary, the Reverend Roderick Macdonell with the assistance of local settler, "Spanish" John Macdonell who was instrumental in obtaining contributions for its construction from members of the North West Company. The Parish Hall was used as a hospital during the War of 1812 and served its congregation until it was replaced by the adjacent, new Church in 1860.

### Fraser at the Crossroads

The crossroads at County Road 18 and Highway 138 are a gem of history. Opposite St. Andrew's and the Parish Hall is the Old Burial Ground, dating to 1784, and restored as a tribute to the memory of the pioneers by the Provincial Government of Ontario in 1938.

As many of you are aware, the stone wall surrounding the cemetery was once again restored as recently as 2007. Funds for the restoration, under the direction of the CTHS, were made

available through the cooperative efforts of the Province of Ontario, the Hudson's Bay History Foundation, Simon Fraser University in B.C. and private community donations that included, among many others, both the CTHS and the GHS.



Dedicatory Plaque at the Cemetery's Main Gate. Note the Celtic Cross surmounting the plaque and the Celtic interlace design on the plinth of the Cross.  
Photo: O'Flaherty.

As you walk through the cemetery, you will note the little log Church, nestled by the Raisin River. Built by the CTHS in 1991, this is a replica of the first Roman Catholic log Church that served the United Empire Loyalists from 1784 until the new Church (now the Parish Hall) was built in 1801.



Replica of First Log Church in St. Andrew's. Photo: O'Flaherty

At the southeast corner of the cemetery, a simple and unadorned

tombstone marks the final resting place of the Explorer, Simon Fraser, and his wife, Catherine, who died the day following her husband. It is a rather humble monument that we whiz past daily on our busy little trips into Cornwall that belies the greatness of the man.



Tombstone of Simon & Catherine Fraser.  
Photo: O'Flaherty.

## Fraser on the Fraser

Born in the U.S. in 1776, Simon Fraser was a descendent of the Frasers of Culbokie and Guisachan. He came to Canada following the American Revolution and joined the North West Company where he was admitted to Partnership in 1801

From 1806 to 1808, Fraser continued the exploration begun by Alexander Mackenzie of the Peace and Fraser Rivers. Here he encountered a succession of falls and cascades and banks so steep and high that part of the journey had to be made on foot. The

journey downriver took 36 days and the return trip 37 days.

After retiring from the North West Company in 1818, Fraser settled on the Raisin River, near St Andrews where he operated both a sawmill and a grist mill, neither of which proved to be successful, due in part to ill health. Fraser had been injured while serving as captain of the 1st Regiment of the Stormont militia during the rebellion of 1837–38. The government pension provided for his military service was small resulting in straitened circumstances in later years. One of the last partners of the North West Company, Fraser died in 1862. His wife died the next day, and they were buried together in a single grave in the cemetery at St Andrews.

Sources: Canadian Dictionary of Biography & W. Kaye Lamb, The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser, 1806-1808.

## Anderson: Localizing Fraser

***Anderson's his name, the fur trade's his game.*** It will come as no surprise that the CTHS and the GHS have asked **David Anderson** to be our guest speaker on May 1. In addition to being a premier local historian, David is also an historian of some repute on the fur trade, having spent many years researching and developing The Development of the Voyageur Contract: Contracts of the North West Company. In this regard as well as in his capacity as curator of the Bethune-Thompson House in Williamstown, David has studied the original documents of both Simon Fraser and David Thompson in great detail. However, David will speak to us about Simon Fraser on May 1 from quite a different perspective.



David Anderson at home in the Bethune-Thompson House in Williamstown. Photo: O'Flaherty.

David will break ground in placing Fraser within an authentic SD&G context. As David told me, Fraser was related to the Frasers of Culbokie and therefore a cousin of none other than the Big Bishop, Alexander Macdonell. Legend has it that the famous scrapbook of the Big Bishop's "Aunt Fraser" may have come to the U.S. with Simon Fraser's parents. As an artifact of some worth, David believes it may be irretrievably lost. He does point out however that there may be other unknown artifacts lurking in SD&G that relate to Fraser and the Big Bishop whose worth may be unknown to their owners. In addition, David will address the inter-family connectedness. That is to say, folks in SD&G that we know who may in fact be related to Simon Fraser or the Big Bishop.

David, as many of you know, resides in Williamstown at the Bethune-Thompson House with his wife, Delande and their two children. In addition to his love of history and genealogy, David Anderson also holds degrees in Chemistry and Philosophy and on the days when he's not researching, running his book business or reading about Roosevelt, you can find him playing with his two cats and his dog, Oscar.

## The Museums' Summer Programs 2008

**Glengarry Pioneer Museum**  
**Dunvegan ON**  
**613-527-5230**  
[www.GlengarryPioneerMuseum.ca](http://www.GlengarryPioneerMuseum.ca)

**Nor'Westers & Loyalist Museum**  
**Williamstown ON**  
**(613) 347-3547**  
[www.glen-net.ca/museums/nw\\_summer\\_05.html](http://www.glen-net.ca/museums/nw_summer_05.html)

<i>May 17 &amp; 18 1 - 5 pm (OPENING)</i>
• Memories of Glengarry (oral history) • Dedication of Trapper's Cabin
<i>May 31 - June 1 June 7 - 8 1 - 5 pm</i>
Art Show & Sale
<i>June 8 12 Noon - 4 pm</i>
Clan MacLeod Picnic
<i>June 15 1 - 3 pm</i>
Sunday Lawn Social with Entertainment †
<i>June 29 11 am - 4 pm</i>
Appraisal Day & Silent Auction †
<i>July 12 &amp; 13 11 am - 5 pm (4 pm Sunday)</i>
Giant Annual Book Sale
<i>July 19 - 20 10:30 am - 12:30 pm</i> <i>(ALSO held on August 23 - 24)</i>
Antique Woodturning Workshops †
<i>July 20 1 - 3 pm</i>
Sunday Lawn Social with Entertainment †
<i>August 16 - 17 10:30 am - 12:30 pm</i> <i>(ALSO held on August 30 - 31)</i>
Preserving Your Photos Workshops †
<i>August 17 1 - 3 pm</i>
Sunday Lawn Social with Entertainment †
<i>September 6 - 7 1 - 5 pm</i>
Doors Open Ontario - FREE admission † Art of Quilting / Children's Fun
<i>September 21 11 am - 4 pm</i>
Harvest Fall Festival
<i>October 5 Time TBA</i>
Driving Tour of Historical Glengarry
 † For more details, call 613-527-5230 or visit <a href="http://www.GlengarryPioneerMuseum.ca">www.GlengarryPioneerMuseum.ca</a>

<b>May 17</b>
Official Opening Special David Thompson Exhibit
<b>June 21</b>
Loyalist Day - Activities
<b>July 12</b>
Pioneer Day, featuring food, crafts and music pertaining to Loyalist Days
<b>August 8, 9 &amp; 10</b>
Williamstown Fair Photography Display
<b>August 12-15</b>
The Children's Program
<b>August 20</b>
Wine & Cheese Fundraiser
<b>September 6-7</b>
Doors Open Ontario - FREE Admission
<b>September 27-28</b>
Apples & Arts Tour
<b>October 13</b>
Closing - Thanksgiving Weekend
<b>October 27</b>
Dessert & Bridge Card Party at the Char Lan Arena 1:00 pm
<b>Watch for Other Special Events</b>

**See You on May 1st!**

. . . . . **Rosemary O.**