

Vol. 9 – October 2021



HEIRS

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society

newsletter



It's Harvest time...

- gathering the fruits of our labour!

Welcome to the October 2021 newsletter.

We usually reap the bounty of our efforts over the year, each Fall. Unfortunately, my family's annual apple-picking day reinforced one good, AND one not-so-good attempt to do so.

With at least 4 kids in the car, we arrived at our destination. The coolest thing was being able to drive right into the farmer's orchard, between & around heavily-laden trees - no parking lot, just surrounded by more apples than we had ever seen at our local store.

We jumped out, started grabbing every apple in sight, and filled our 1st bushel in record time. A loud male voice reminded us... "if you don't waste any apple, you can eat as many as you want". The apple orgy commenced.

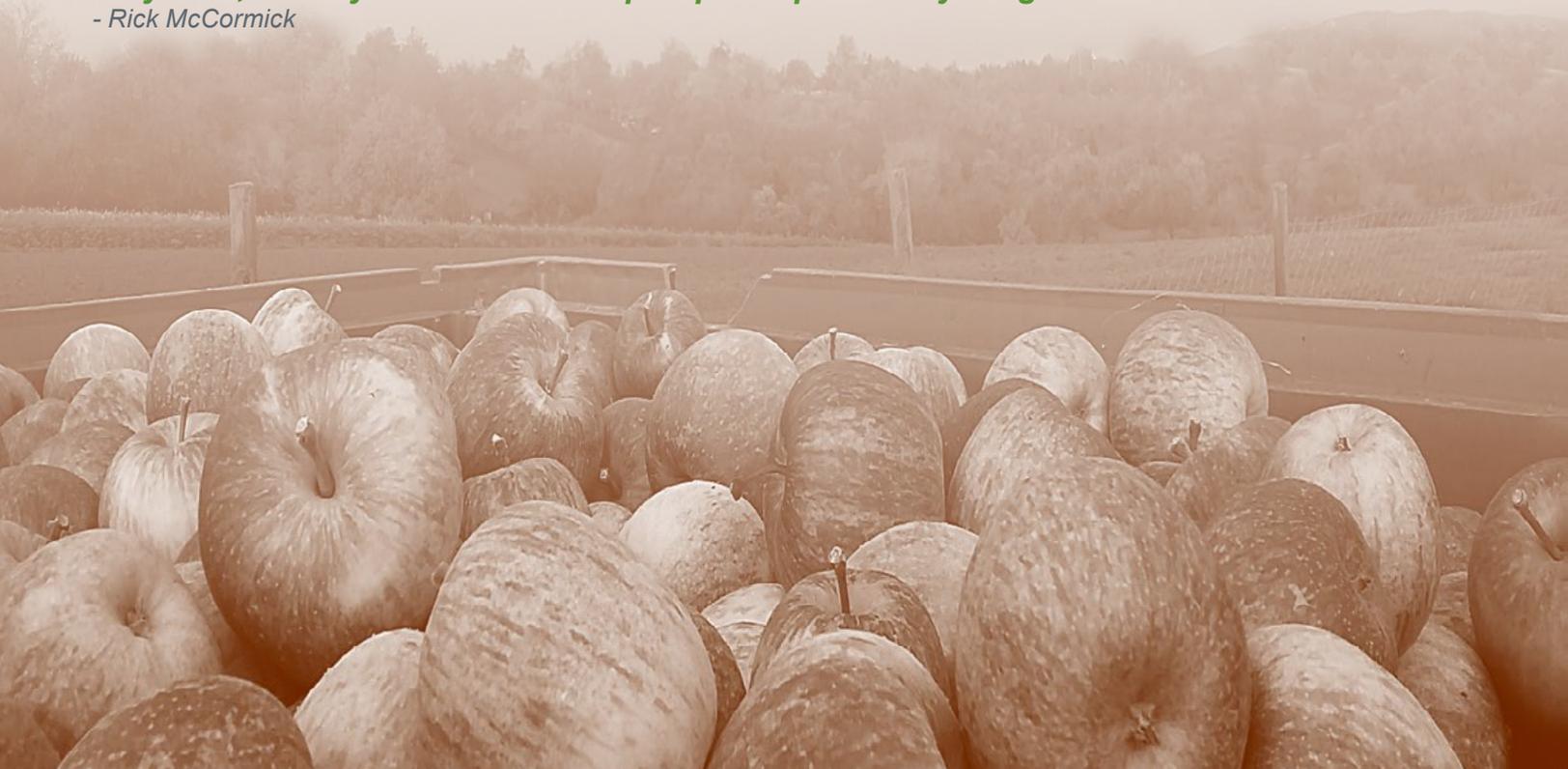
That's when the good thing appeared right in front of me. Another boy had climbed up a tree - just high enough where you couldn't reach the hanging apples from ground level. Here he began biting around the centre of an apple - all the while leaving it firmly attached to the branch. When finished, it was a living installation... which I confess, I repeated that day, and every day I found myself at an orchard, thereafter. Of course, this 'family tradition' was passed along.

The not-so-good thing? My brothers always filled their pockets, stuffed extra apples in all our jackets & even more behind & under the car seats, while Dad paid for the 'measurable bounty' in the trunk. Petty larceny, which I passed along to my kids too - as something never to do!

So I hope that this year of masking up, getting fully-vaccinated & keeping our distance will provide a healthful bounty for everyone this Fall (with no risk of falling out of a tree).

Stay safe, and try not to mention 'pumpkin-spiced' anything for a whole week!

- Rick McCormick





HEIRS is OPEN!

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 10am - 3pm

Harrow-Colchester Arena, Harrow

243 McAfee Street **(519) 738-3700**

COVID RESTRICTIONS & PROTOCOLS APPLY

- **COVID-19 vaccination proof required**

In accordance with provincial regulations, for all Town of Essex recreation facilities.

- **Hand sanitize upon entry**

- **Face masks must be worn at all times within building**

- **Max. Capacity: 8 people** (including HEIRS staff members)

- **Please call in advance to confirm availability**

Thank you for your consideration & patience. We look forward to researching with you!

DUES... Although dues owed for 2021 are now encouraged,

ANY DUES OWED BEFORE 2021, ARE FORGIVEN!

Payment of just \$30 will thus bring you up to date.

Members still in arrears as we enter 2022 can expect their newsletter issues to be forfeited.

HEIRS MEETINGS: Due to recent Covid restrictions & protocols, our meetings are postponed for the remainder of 2021.

More info for 2022 meetings & the board elections in May will follow!

We also take a moment to acknowledge that a full year has past since we lost our board members, Kathy Langlois & Richard Herniman.

Need an answer (still)? During the Covid lock down period, members who sent in questions about their family, especially about any 'brick walls' are encouraged to resubmit them. Send your questions by email to the office at heirsont@gmail.com. Many new files have been located with loads of family info, and we may now have a photo of your "Uncle Iggy", or for whatever else you are researching.

(re) Marketable: The Heritage Colchester group will hold its market fair on the grounds of the old schoolhouse on Bagot Street in Colchester. About 50 vendors will set up their wares & attendees. Enjoy a carriage ride around the village, through the cemetery & by the harbour.

*This fund-raiser event to save the school-house & allow it's restoration as an historical site will be held on Saturday, October 16th, at 10am. **HEIRS will attend... see you there?***

Genealogy of the 'New Settlement' Neville Family

A profile of six generations - by HEIRS member Chris Tweedie, Ottawa

This profile describes my mother's branch of the "New Settlement" Neville family, descended from Edward and Catherine Neville through their fourth son Francis. This and other branches of the Neville family have since expanded across Ontario, Canada, and the United States.

The first generation of Nevilles in the New Settlement around 1790 - Edward Neville, UE and his wife Catherine. Edward, born in Ireland around 1753, came to North America in the 1770s. He likely found his way to the Mohawk Valley and Fort Hunter area in the Province of New York where he worked on one of the area's large estate farms. Edward and Catherine, an Indigenous woman from the Mohawk nation, were married in the 1780s.

During the American Revolution, Edward served as a corporal with Butler's Rangers, a British colonial regiment operating out of Fort Niagara. Afterwards for his loyal service, Edward was granted about 200 acres of land at the New Settlement on the north shore of Lake Erie. There, he & Catherine built a log cabin & farm, acquired additional land, & raised five sons including Francis Neville, born in 1796. Neville men would later serve in the War of 1812.

The second generation - Francis Neville married Nancy Williams in 1824. Francis received a land grant along the Talbot Road where they built a log home & farmed. Nancy and Francis had nine children - four daughters, three of whom married into the local Gilboe family, & five sons including James Neville, born in 1825.



**James Neville, winter 1867-68,
working on the family farm near Ruthven**

The third generation – James Neville married Sarah Wigle in 1848, which brought together several local families. Sarah was the daughter of John Wigle and Salome Fox, granddaughter of Isabella Scratch and Wendel Weigele, and great granddaughter of Leonard Scratch and Mary Monger. Sarah and James lived and worked at the family farm near Ruthven, and had ten children - six daughters and four sons including Colin James Neville, born in 1851.

The fourth generation – Colin Neville married Eleanor Voy, from Perth County, in 1878. As a young man, Colin travelled west to work with the 1873 Northwest International Boundary Survey, later returning to manage and expand the family farm. He also worked as Vice-President, Erie Tobacco Company and was known as a progressive and engaged member of the community. Eleanor and Colin had a daughter and three sons (see the harvest photo) including Lorne Franklin Neville, born in 1880. Colin died during the 1918 flu pandemic.

The fifth generation – Lorne Neville married Cora Wilkinson in 1905. Cora was a member of the founding family of Leamington. Cora and Lorne lived on a small farm, a gift from her

father, on the outskirts of Leamington. Lorne worked as a streetcar driver in Walkerville & took great interest in bringing new species of plants and trees to his gardens. They had a son, Arnold Wilkinson Neville, born in 1906.

The sixth generation - In 1929, Arnold Neville married Olive Hutchinson, originally from England. Arnold was a resourceful and hard-working man who took over running the farm in

Leamington while holding various other jobs. Olive was well-read and enjoyed teaching. They had three children including my mother, Elizabeth Neville.

Wonderful memories remain from my early years with my grandfather Arnold on his farm. I'm grateful to my mother & her cousin Edward J. Neville UE, whose research in the 1990s documented stories & photos used in this profile. Copyright 2021 Chris Tweedie



**Family and Friends Pitch In at Harvest on the Neville Farm, Hwy. 3 near Ruthven, 1896
Are Any of These Folks Your Ancestors?**

Holding the reins & sitting on the wagon to the left is Colin James Neville, owner of the farm, with his young sons Elmer & Everett, with teenage son Lorne standing at the rear. Standing directly behind Colin is Albert Gunning with Charlie Chase to his left. The man standing to Colin's left is George Sheridan & his young son Stanley. In front of this wagon is Eleanor, Colin's wife, & in a hat to her right is Perry Shanks. In front of the horses are Bill Stockwell (large moustache) & George Lee with the pitchfork resting across his shoulders.

Right side wagon, sitting & holding the reins is Mike Wigle. Young woman standing to his right is Erma, Colin's daughter. Directly behind her is George Fox & Willis Chase to his right. The 3 young men standing behind Willis, near the wagon are unidentified.

Photo taken by Joel Wigle, & later collected by Edward J. Neville ... young Everett's future son.

6 Local Harvest

Favourite Southern Food...

According to a scrapbook page (dated 1942), which was donated to HEIRS some time ago, the vegetable okra was a valuable crop in this area.

It was being grown near Jeanette's Creek, just outside Tilbury. Mostly used for seasoning, it can also be an attractive individual dish and is still very popular in the southern USA.

A farmer by the name of John Kriefalusi, who had left his native Czechoslovakia as WW 2 approached, grew okra here and said he counted it a poor season when he didn't net \$200 an acre from his okra crop. He was growing 13 acres of it that year.

His land at Jeanette's Creek was a lightly drained swamp, and would grow almost anything. John had carrot fields producing 45 tons of large juicy carrots every year. Long rows of onions were harvested and shipped to big markets everywhere.

In 1942, he and his family were busy picking okra. It is a fast maturing plant, which is not an easy proposition to grow. A night of delay could ruin the crop, and John often worked at harvesting until the moon came up.

That year, John expected to average 4,000 pounds of okra per acre.

A local broker bought much of the crop.

John sold the remainder to nationally-known soup companies.



Okra resembles a green pepper, but is longer & narrower; but not as shiny.





The Fingers of the Ladies dish, featuring okra, tomatoes & onions.

Directions for this dish...

Sauté 4 smashed garlic cloves in 3 tablespoons olive oil over medium heat until golden.

Add 4 cups okra (halved length-wise) & 1 small onion (cut into wedges).

Season with salt & pepper, cook until okra is tender & bright (10 -12 minutes).

Add 1 pint halved, cherry tomatoes; cook until just bursting (3 minutes).

Finish with a splash of cider vinegar.

Generally to cook okra, most chefs slice it & cook it, with tomatoes & onions. Best to buy when young & tender, it is recommended that the tomatoes & okra not be mixed, until just before serving as the tomato acid will darken the okra. If kept separate, the okra remains its attractive natural shade of green.

Some big hotels serve okra if guests request it. It was thought that there was a tremendously big future for it in Canada, according to those who grew & marketed it in 1942. At the time, Toronto was the main market for the Jeanette's Creek okra.

Harrow, As It Used to Was...

- by Ted Steele, HEIRS Director

Interviews were conducted with local seniors back in 1978. These folks were asked about growing up in Harrow, and what they remember most about the town. This article is the first of several of these local interviews we can share....”

Hugh Arner was born in 1900 to Gordon & Harriet J. Arner, along with 9 siblings. His thoughts on Harrow were captured just two years before he passed away in 1980. They are quite interesting, as Harrow itself now enters a new time of growth & change. He was 78 years old when interviewed...

Hugh stated...

We owned a meat store. Our father built it where Pro Hardware now stands. Later he bought the property across the road from Mr. T. Flood, who owned the grist mill; the mill was on Centre St. Our store was put on rollers and rolled across the street, then backed into where the post office is now

The prices of meat in those days were much lower - during the war years, there was a government ceiling on the price, no more than 20.5 cents a pound. With black-marketing being fairly common, you bought meat for 20.5 cents a pound and your invoice showed that. Then, a few days later, you met the sales agent and he collected another 2 cents a pound.

***Was I ever robbed?** No, I wasn't, but the store was, just once. Joseph Ford and another man were present, when a man came in through the back door and another through the front. They escaped with about \$250, but were caught a short time later, and were sentenced.*

Richardson Hardware in Harrow was for many

years considered the best hardware store this side of Toronto; this side of London, definitely true. There were 3 stores beside one another, Richardson's, Clark's grocery store and then our meat market. Pro Hardware now occupies all 3 sites.



Arner General Store, Harrow c. 1921

The public school was located where Bruce Martin's and Jamie Halstead's stores are now (Home Hardware and Fergie's). Teachers I recall include Miss Foster (sister of Maurey Foster), a Mr. Johnson, and Wilfred Sellars' sister. Mr. Johnson was principal for many years.

***Harrow had restaurants** - there was a dining area in the hotel; there were 2 hotels. There was the Halstead House, and another called the Drummond House. The Drummond House had a very good dining area and served good meals for many years.*

It was taken over by a man named Ballard, then by Frank Herdman, and I think Charlie Pigeon too. There were no real restaurants.

Charlie McKenzie was our first hot dog salesman. He had a little wagon, and sold hot dogs, popcorn, and hamburgers. He generally parked in the alleyway by our meat store every Saturday night.

In the afternoon and evening he sold more hot dogs and hamburgers than most restaurants would sell in a month. Cost was 10 cents for a hot dog or hamburger - **and they were very good too.**

We had a lot of dances during the winters, and bridge clubs too. For dances, the Fanzell orchestra came from Detroit, and we danced at Ferriss Hall, where Ferriss Hardware is now. The upstairs dance floor was beautiful and could accommodate 100 dancers at one time. If you were outside, you could see them dancing upstairs.

Cost was \$2 to \$2.50 a couple; New Year's Eve might cost \$5 a couple, depending on how much the orchestra was charging.

They played from 9 until 1, but a collection taken from the dancers would keep them playing an extra hour & this might be repeated. **Some dances lasted till 3 or even 4 AM.**

Occasional barn dances were held, at Marshfield on Walker Road, and on Colchester Road at Woodman's Hall in Colchester, (where the former schoolhouse is now). Not very big, but a lot of people went for the dancing.

Doctors? Some of the doctors were Dr. Hazzard, Dr. Campeau and Dr. Collins. Campeau was the first, then Hazzard and a few years later, Dr. Collins, a mighty fine doctor. Dr. Ketchum was here, too, and I just heard he is in trouble in Michigan. Dr. Baker was here too.

Dentists were Dr. Montgomery, and then Dr. Carr, who stayed here the rest of his life.

Political leaders? Mr. E. F. Darby was mayor for quite a few years. J. H. Madill was town clerk. Jake McLean and Howard Heaton were on town council. Allan Quick was mayor for a while.



Centre: Edmund F. Darby, Harrow's 1st Mayor

My father bought the first car he ever had for \$275 from Ern Pastorius at an auction. It was an old Ford model T. It looked like a good deal.



We drove it a lot and got our money's worth out of it. I drove a horse and buggy growing up. We also had old used buggies, used for driving cattle called buckboards.

Look for another senior interview recalling early Harrow, in our Nov. issue.

HEIRS RESOURCE CENTRE

*** UPDATE * We're open Sept. - November**

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 10AM - 3PM

Max. people allowed at one time is 8. Confirm space before arrival at 519.738.3700. Proof of vaccination, face masks must be worn at all times within building, hand sanitize on entry & social distance kept requirements.

Newsletter

Published 9 times per year, in conjunction with General Meetings held on the 4th Thursday of the month, September to June, (December excepted). Receive full colour newsletters by email, or a B&W print version by regular post. Simply provide your email or street address to our office.

Memberships

\$30 CDN / U.S. per person or couple.

Memberships run May 1st - April 30th, annually.

Send cheques to:

HEIRS PO Box 53, Harrow
ON, Canada N0R 1G0

Please include phone, postal address, email & family names you are now researching.

Send e-transfer payments / donations

to: heirsont@gmail.com

Non-member using Research Library

\$10 per visit (+ photocopy costs).

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