

Great Village & District Fire Brigade Answers 117 Calls



Robert Layton and his wife Meredith receiving his Maritimer of the Week award. (Simpson-Giles Photo)

Kathy Simpson-Giles

The Great Village and District Fire Brigade had a very eventful 2009, with 117 calls being answered by the Department. This figure represents our busiest year yet. Sixty of those calls were medicals and 27 more were motor vehicle collisions. On the fire scene, the thirty remaining calls broke down as follows: nine chimney fires, two structure fires, four fire alarms sounding, three vehicle fires, five brush fires, one straw fire, four for power lines arcing and two mutual aid calls. This totaled 1176.2 man-hours on scene.

On the training side of fire department life, we spent 533.75 man-hours in training, covering topics such as CPR, pumper training, the new Automated External Defibrillator, jaws of life, SCBA's (breathing apparatus used by firefighters to enter a burning building or where there may be gases or other

hazards), forcible entry, and many other topics related to being a firefighter in today's world.

Beyond the training, equipment must be maintained. This includes both equipment and the five vehicles that we run. It also includes general maintenance on the halls. In total, volunteer members put in 615.3 man-hours on work nights.

As most of you are aware, we purchased a new pumper/tanker in September of 2008. It is a Freightliner with a 1500 gallon tank and a 1050 gpm pump. It certainly is a great asset. As it moved into the Great Village Hall, the old GMC was retired and Number 2 was moved out to the new hall in Londonderry. We hope to replace our rescue unit (Truck # 5) within the next couple of years.

We were also able to replace several of our SCBA's this year. This is an important piece of equipment to keep the firefighter safe in fighting

various types of fire.

This is where the community support comes into play. We are very fortunate within the coverage area. Each year, the Ladies Auxiliary does the Lobster supper in May with us as well as the Canada Day Chicken BBQ in July and the Annual Firefighters Auction takes place in October. The support from the community is immeasurable. It is because of your help and continued support, that we are able to better our vehicles and equipment, and in turn are better able to serve you when an emergency arises.

We would like to take a moment to thank our Ladies of the Auxiliary and friends for their support, which included, just this past weekend, a very early awakening. Some of the ladies were up at 3:30 am and at the fire hall making sandwiches and coffee for us as we fought a structure fire. The same ladies were there until around 2 pm and made a beautiful hot breakfast of bacon and eggs and hot cross buns. We probably don't say thank you often enough to them, but we sincerely appreciated the meal. It was delicious!

It is always nice to see someone deserving getting recognized for their contribution. Earlier this year, Robert Layton was named "Maritimer of the Week". As far as we know, Robert is the longest serving active fire fighter in Nova Scotia. He is in his 65th year of service. He is Lt. of Fire Police and is current in First Aid/ CPR and Oxygen Administration and can be relied on to attend most calls.

There is one more point I would like to stress. Please get your civic number signs. In spite of programs like Fire Prevention, in spite of careful precautions on your part, emergencies do happen. A civic number sign displayed at the end of your driveway makes it so much easier for us to find you.

Thank you for your support.

Great Village Historical Society Notes

Linda Shears

The Great Village Historical Society held two working sessions (Feb. 24 and Mar. 17) to organize the information in preparation for writing the history update. The regular monthly meeting was held on Mar. 3.

The panels for the pergola display on "The Age of Sail" and "The Shad Fishery" are nearly completed. The placement of photos, maps and captions is being finalized.

Those interested in historical maps of this area would appreciate the publication by Jane Wile of the Topographical Township Map of Colchester County, Nova Scotia. Between 1865 and 1888, the Ambrose F. Church Company produced detailed maps of much of Nova Scotia, with businesses and residences meticulously labelled. The Colchester County map was completed about 1874. A complete version of this historic map of our county can be seen on the internet at www.genegane.com. The paper copy is available at the Colchester Historical Society Archives on Young Street.

If you've ever wondered how the Hustler got its name, the answer is found in the McLellan Family History which was published in The Weekly Record in 1984. The Hustler is a steep path which runs up over the hill from the end of the bridge to the Station Road, providing a shortcut to those agile enough to climb it. Judge R. F. McLellan tells of how his father, Samuel David McLellan, rescued a friend from the Rock Hole, located just a couple of hundred metres above the bridge which spans the Great Village River. McLellan quotes Captain Wilbur Johnston from his written account of his near drowning, about 1865:

What I do remember,

though, is of getting nearly drowned in the old "rock hole" where we used to swim during the noon hour. No bathing suits for us! I was just learning to swim, and I struck out and attempted to cross the river — and I couldn't make the opposite side! The boys all noticed me start bobbing up and down, but figuring I was just cutting up some new kind of capers, I guess, they neglected to come to my aid. After I sank for the third time, however; and when I remained down, Sammy Dave McLellan dove valiantly in. Sammy submerged a number of times and — after a courageous struggle — succeeded in towing me ashore. "Those born to be hanged will never be drowned", I suppose you three, Laura and Tim and Grier, will be thinking. Well, old Mrs. Hustler was washing clothes a short distance away. I was carried to her and rolled over one of her huge tubs. Finally the water was emptied out of me — and I was able to play hookey from school that very afternoon! Sammy Dave, my rescuer, turned out to be an able lawyer. He is now a judge in Truro, Nova Scotia. I suppose Sammy has entirely forgotten that incident, by now, and has no idea as to the catastrophe it would have been to this world had he not dragged Wilbur Johnston from the old 'rock hole' and rolled him over one of Mrs. Hustler's washtubs. Well, I haven't forgotten the matter — and after I get that million dollars I am saving for I am going to mail Sammy a certified check for just half of my million. Now, if you please, don't notify Sammy of my intention, for I want it to be a terrific surprise to Sammy — and it will. Mind you, I am not intending to send him the half million because of any suspicion that he wants or needs a half mil-

lion, but merely to surprise him. It sure will be a great surprise to Sammy! And to me, I fear; for that million is coming mighty slow.

Judge McLellan concludes this story by saying: "And before leaving his boyhood days I remind you that he (Sammy Dave) never had any pockets in his trousers for they had been cut off by his father to prevent him from carrying tobacco in them."

So, the Hustler was doubtless named after Mrs. Hustler, who lived somewhere near the Rock Hole. The late Martha Graham told of sliding down the railing on the Hustler as a school girl, sitting on her apron. Her mother could never understand how she wore out her aprons so quickly! Martha also had a story of how the Hustler came to have steps and railing installed. The wife of Dr. T.R. Johnson was so concerned that her husband would injure himself travelling up and down the Hustler with his horse and wagon that she paid to have the steps put in so that he could not use the Hustler in this way. Perhaps she did prevent an accident from happening but the new improved version wore out Martha's aprons! Other sources say that the Great Village Women's Institute paid for the installation of the Hustler steps, but Martha's story is more interesting.

The e-mail for contacting the Great Village Historical Society is: gvhistorical@gmail.com. If you have information or photos which would be appropriate for the updated history book (1960 to the present) or old photos which were not published in the first history book, please contact us. New members are welcome to attend our next regular meeting on Apr. 7 at 7:30 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall.

Karen Casey

Colchester North

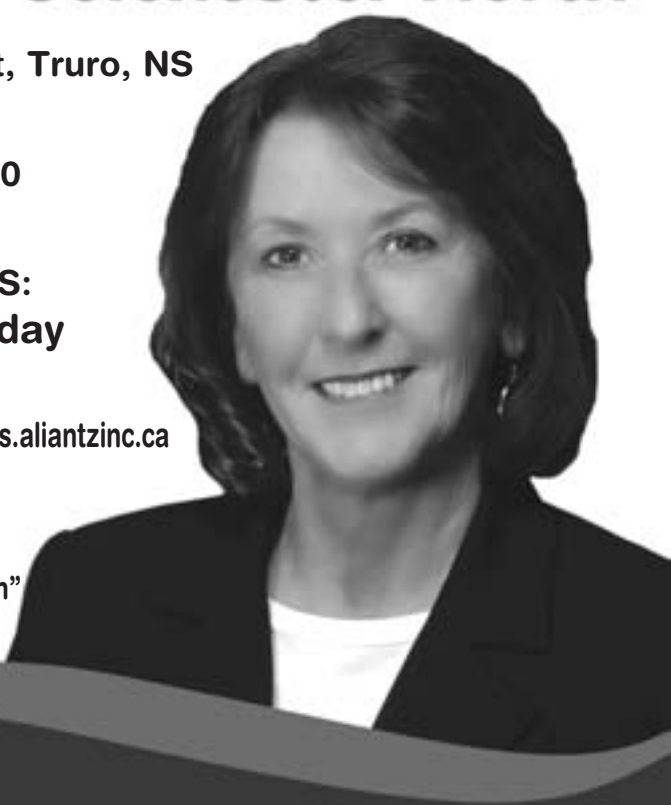
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