

Calling Wilson and McElhinney Families!

By Linda Harrington

It is a shame to see old head stones in disrepair but at what cost and for how long does the responsibility continue?

This is a dilemma facing members of the Isgonish Marsh Burying Grounds Association and they are reaching out to family members for support.

The Isgonish Marsh Burying Grounds dates from the Planter period in Nova Scotia, around the 1760's and it is located on the North side of Hwy 104, just before the exit to the Debert Industrial Park.

Some of the stones located here carry familiar local names- Barnhill, Crowe, Staples and Peppard to name a few. Association member Stacy Culgin says there are 35 stones but she expects there are hundreds more buried there, either without stones or the stones have been lost to the years.

The Isgonish Marsh Burying Grounds Association was established in 1987 to try and preserve the burying grounds but the task seems to be endless. Extensive work on the stones and footing was carried out in 1991, with work continuing through the years. The intent is to keep the burying ground in its primitive state, by repairing, not replacing the stones. Stone Mason Heather Lawson, from Bass River has been a huge assistance.

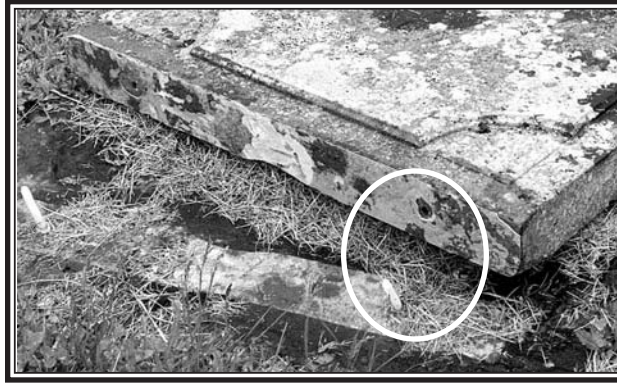
The annual spring visit to

the grounds saw winter damage to stones again. One stone lies in three pieces and Stacy pulls out a photograph to show what the stone looked like after repairs in 2011. The names William Hamilton Wilson, died June 24, 1862 and his wife Jane McElhinney, who died March 11, 1819 are engraved on the stone.

"The work on this stone was just done in 2011, at a cost of \$300," says Stacy. "The good news is most of the damage is once again on the same breaks, which is what we like to see, rather than new damage. But how much money, and for how long, does the Association keep paying? We are hoping there may be some descendants who might like to offer financial support for the repairs."

Stacey points out work that Heather Lawson has done on the stones, "She used plastic plugs on the footing here that are meant to support a gentle fall if the frost heaves it over and it looks like they worked." The stone is lying on the ground, having come off the footing in the exact spot of previous repair with no new damage. "We are so lucky to have an expert like Heather available in this area."

If anyone is interested in offering financial donations for repairs they can contact Stacey via email at sculgin@eastlink.ca or by phone at 902-662-3867. The Association is a registered charity and tax receipts can be issued.



Stone Mason Heather Lawson has done some repairs to the headstone using "tricks of the trade" to prevent further damage. Here a previously repaired stone has toppled over without any new damage, thanks to the plastic plugs she installed at the original breakage point (circled).



BEFORE



AFTER

A headstone belonging to William Hamilton Wilson and wife Jane McElhinney lies in three pieces after frost damage this past winter. The stone had been previously repaired in 2011 at a cost of \$300.



Sign marking the entrance to the Isgonish Cemetery located on the Chiganois Marsh. The Isgonish Marsh Burying Grounds Association was established in 1987 to try and preserve this burying ground located here since the 1760's.



The Isgonish Marsh Burying Grounds, located on the North side of Hwy 104, just before the exit to Debert Industrial Park.



Stacey Culgin, Secretary of the Isgonish Marsh Burying Grounds Association, looks over a damaged head stone with connections to the Wilson and McElhinney families. The Association is hoping there may be family members who wish to contribute funds to repair this and other stones.

PHOTO FEATURE Great Village Garden Club

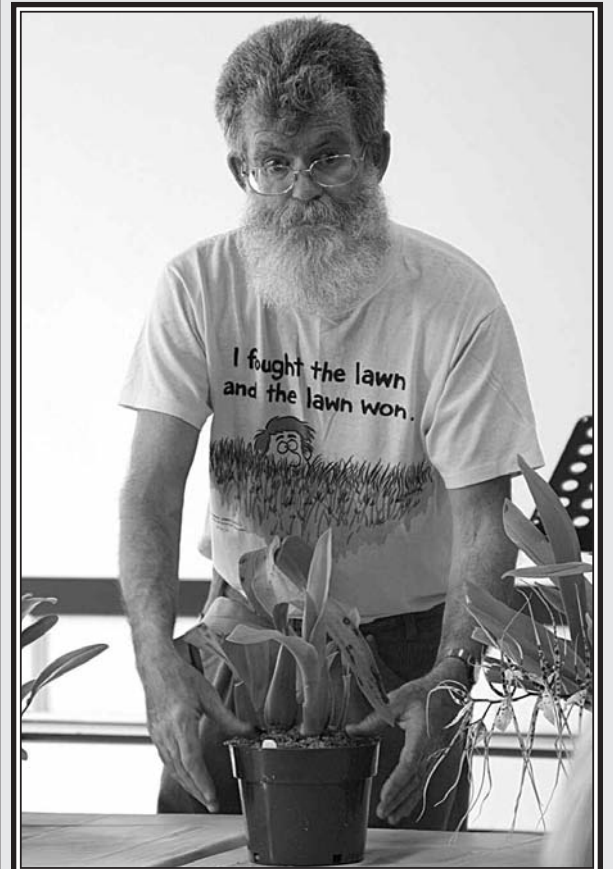
(Fletcher Photos)



Patti Sharpe gets ready to assist other Great Village Garden Club members at their annual planting session at the cenotaph in Great Village.



Members of the Great Village Garden Club are hard at work at their annual planting outing at the cenotaph in Great Village. Shown from left to right are Maureen Chisholm, Cathy Mazur, Patti Sharpe, Pat Flemming and Arthur Haskins.



Barry Langille made a presentation on Orchids at the May meeting of the Great Village Garden Club.

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