

# Bruce Bulletin

Bruce County  
Genealogical Society  
Box 1083, Port Elgin, ON  
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<http://www.rootsweb.com/~onbcgs>



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## Upcoming Meetings and Other Events

**Date:** Monday, December 10, 2012 @ 1 pm  
**Place:** Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre  
**Topic:** Bring and Brag your finds. Bring a Christmas treat to share.

**Date:** Monday, January 14, 2013 @ 1 pm  
**Place:** Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre  
**Topic:** TBA

**Date:** Monday, February 11, 2013 @ 1 pm  
**Place:** Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre.  
**Topic:** TBA

## Highlights of Previous Meetings

**August:** The Bruce County Genealogy Society had an informative and interesting meeting on August 13th, 2012, at the Old and New Walkerton Cemeteries. We met on Cemetery Road at the entrance to the New Cemetery, and proceeded by cars to the Old Presbyterian Cemetery on the East Bank of the Saugeen River. Here, Doug Lennox, President of BCGS, gave some background on the establishment of the first Presbyterian Church in Brant Twp. called Frame's Church (1851), and the New

Frame's Church (1860), built where the cemetery is now. He spoke on the Robert Bruce family, the Harkley stones, and the McVicar stones. Ted Cobean spoke about the Truax family. We proceeded to the Old Anglican Cemetery near the Water Tower, where Ted spoke about the Anglican Pioneer Cemetery, Brant Twp. The oldest grave there is of Henry Pinkerton who died Jan. 27, 1855. Doug added information about the 7 Wilson stones.

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Returning to the new Walkerton Cemeteries, Ted gave some background on the establishment of the Cemetery and the very strict rules that the Town imposed upon its use. Andrea Popiaz, gave some information about the Henry Cargill stones, and others near the entrance to the cemetery. Doug Lennox spoke about the William Norrish family stones including that of Merwyn Norrish. Andrea spoke about the establishment of the Roman Catholic part of the cemetery.

We then proceeded to the South end of the Cemetery where Ted spoke about the establishment of the House of Refuge cemetery by the County of Bruce. There are around 100 graves there without markers, although a list of deceased has been preserved. A Cairn marks the location of this 3 acre cemetery.

As it was getting dark, we proceeded to Knox Presbyterian Church, where a social time was held, and further information was given about interesting people in the Walkerton Cemetery researched by Sylvia Hasbury, namely: Mrs. John Burke, James Brislan, and Francis (Frank) Rennie. Ted gave out information on Doors Open, Walkerton & District, Sat. Sept 22, 2012.

**September:** Upon hearing the school bell “scholars” present at a recent Bruce County Genealogical Society meeting followed the instructions of the “teacher”, Assistant Archivist Sue Schlorff, quickly moved into two lines, presented their palms and fingernails for health inspection and entered the dimly lit log school house located at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre. President Doug Lennox welcomed everyone to the historic school building and presented some historical background. Identified as S.S.#10 Amabel, Maple Grove School, it was originally erected in 1875 on Lot 10 Concession 9 Amabel Township. The walls were constructed with huge cedar logs which were harvested near the Sauble River.

The structure became the 1967 Centennial project of the teachers in Bruce

County and following the generous donation of Mrs. T. Seaman the school was moved to its new location at the Museum. Desks and seats lined two of the walls, blackboards were mounted on the wall at the front of the school and room a large wood burning stove sat in the centre of the room.

Sue Schlorff reviewed a lesson of the day which provided instruction of the five virtues; truthfulness, honesty, punctuality, cleanliness and kindness as those being essential to happiness of life.

Those attending shared stories of their days attending or teaching in one room school houses which usually included grades one through eight. Pupils and teachers reminisced about walking to and from school and that the teacher frequently boarded with a family who lived in the community. The school day started with a Bible reading and saying the Lord’s Prayer followed by the singing of the National Anthem. Current events were discussed during the opening exercises. Special events such as Arbour Day, Christmas concerts and school picnics were a source of pleasant memories.

As darkness fell the group adjourned to the café area in the lower level of the Museum for refreshments.

## Queries

1. **Anderson, Morrison, McKenzie:** Seeking information about William and Margaret Anderson and their children Isabella, Eliza, Ellen, William and Alexander. They arrived in the area after 1830. Also Robert W. Morrison, contractor/builder/farmer, who married Eliza Dill Anderson in 1860. They had 8 children, Elizabeth, George, Catherine, Margaret, Robert, William, Roberta and Ellen, and were active in the Old Kirk (Presbyterian). Isabelle Anderson may have married Duncan McKenzie, son of Angie McKenzie and his wife Elisabeth McPherson McKenzie. Email: [bjrinde@gmail.com](mailto:bjrinde@gmail.com)

## ***How to Find a Missing Branch of Your Family***

### **Write a Letter ----and Wait**

*By Mary MacKay*

When I was researching my Little John McCurdy Family Tree in 1999 the Michael McCurdy Family was a puzzle to me. Michael McCurdy and his wife Mary Brennan had been pioneer settlers on Lot 6 Concession 1 Elderslie long before my John McCurdy Branch settled down the road on Lot 9. Our family was Protestant and theirs was Catholic so my Mother said we weren't related.

"But both families came from the same place in Ireland, near Bushmills," I argued, "I bet when I get back to Ireland, I'll find we are related." And sure enough we are but it's back two more generations in Ireland.

"But it might be fun to see what I can find out about them," I thought.

Lot 6 where Michael McCurdy pioneered was on the Saugeen River and as a child growing up the farm was known to me as "The Anthony McCurdy farm". A census record proved Anthony was a son of Michael. I contacted a grandson of Anthony who lived in Maryland, USA who provided me with information on Anthony's descendants but very little about Anthony's siblings.

Lot 5, Con 1, on the other side of the Saugeen River, was first settled by a John McCurdy. He proved to be Anthony's older brother and Michael and Mary's oldest son. Unfortunately, John died at 46 years of age. John and his wife, Annie Foley, had five children but only the three boys lived to be adults. A short news item in the Paisley Advocate told me the oldest son, John Leo McCurdy and his mother went to Vanscoy, Saskatchewan.

"I wonder if there are any descendants? How would I find them?" I questioned.

Answer: I wrote a letter to the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society.... and waited!

A month later for a small fee I received, a copy of page 215 of *They Plowed and We Followed*, the history of the Vanscoy area and there was the story not only of John and his mother who went to Vanscoy in 1903 but also the story of his brothers James and George who had left Bruce County the year before. Also included was a cemetery record for John's brother James.

Two months and \$33 later more info arrived on the death of James' widow and this interesting comment: *there is a H J. McCurdy listed in the phone book at 215 Ave H South, Saskatoon.*

"Yes!" I cheered. "That could be Hugh John McCurdy, son of John Leo who had gone west with his mother."

So I wrote another letter... and waited. Not so long this time. Within two weeks a letter arrived from a very surprised Hugh John McCurdy. "How did I find him? And how did I know so much about his family?"

In perfect penmanship he wrote me a seven page letter telling about his uncles and cousins and what he could remember about his great aunts and uncles. He also commented that he had the family bible and boxes of pictures which his mother had put names on the back. She also saved newspaper clippings. What a treasure chest! I entered his information in my files and added the Michael McCurdy family as an appendix to my Little John McCurdy Family History and printed it. They weren't really that closely related so I didn't need to pursue it any further. I was satisfied.

Twelve years later in August 2012 those boxes of pictures and the family bible were sitting on my dining room table, brought there by Hugh John McCurdy's great nephew, Nathan. He had no idea how the names on the back of those pictures fit into his family tree but I did! How did he find me? From another letter...I had

written in 2004 in reply to one from Hugh John's niece, Heather McCurdy, telling me her uncle Hugh John had passed away and her father Eugene was not well.

Nathan's interest in his McCurdy roots spiked when he came home for Christmas December 2011 and began rummaging through the family papers in his grandmother's basement. He found boxes of pictures, the family Bible and other memorabilia of the McCurdy family and my letter that Hugh John had brought with him when poor health forced him to sell his homestead in Saskatchewan and move to Angus, Ontario to live beside his brother Eugene and sister-in law Barbara. Nathan was so interested he actually photographed some of the photos and papers and upon his return to Vancouver he went onto Ancestry.com. In August 2012 he flew from his home in Vancouver BC to Orleans, Ontario to visit his mother, Heather McCurdy. The two of them drove to Angus to visit his grandmother, Mrs. Eugene McCurdy from Angus Ontario and Marilyn Hunt, Maryland. Taking the picture was Nathan's mother, Heather McCurdy, from Orleans Ontario.

Google gave them my phone number. A call verified I was living in Paisley and the next day Michael McCurdy's 3x great grandson and his mother and grandmother visited me in Paisley. Also joining us was Anthony's grandson from Maryland who just happened to be holidaying in Owen Sound! What a day! We had a lot to share!!

Never underestimate the power of snail mail.

Write a letter... and wait.



Pictured above are descendants from three generations and two branches of the Michael McCurdy Family who visited Paisley to search for their McCurdy roots. From left to right they are Mary MacKay, Paisley, Joe Hunt from Maryland USA, Nathan Rector, Vancouver, BC, Nathan's grandmother, Mrs. Eugene McCurdy from Angus Ontario and Marilyn Hunt, Maryland. Taking the picture was Nathan's mother, Heather McCurdy, from Orleans Ontario.

### **McCurdy's Bridge over the Saugeen River on Brant-Elderslie Townline**



Putting canoe in on the farm which in pioneer days belonged to Michael McCurdy



Pictured above are descendants from three generations of the Michael McCurdy Family who converged in Paisley at the home of Mary MacKay (nee McCurdy) to search out their McCurdy roots. They are pictured here with Mary in front of the cairn in front of the remains of St Michael's of the Angels, North Brant Catholic Church on Concession 14 Brant. From left to right they are Heather McCurdy from Orleans, her mother, Mrs. Eugene McCurdy, from Angus and her son Nathan Rector, from Vancouver BC. Nathan was excited to find the burial place of his great-great grandparents and his great-great-great grandparents.

## Scottish Research Website

Here is another good source for people doing Scottish research. Credit to <[SCT-ISLAY-L@rootsweb.com](mailto:SCT-ISLAY-L@rootsweb.com)>

<http://digital.nls.uk/directories/about-directories/index>

Over 700 digitised directories covering most of Scotland and dating from 1773 to 1911 are available here for online searching.

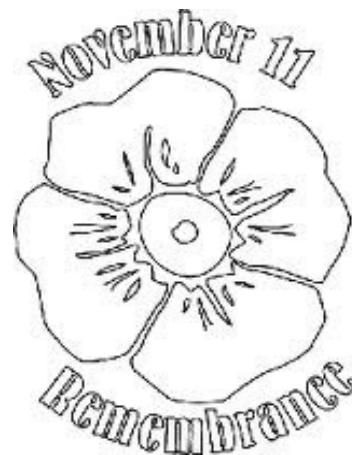
With their alphabetical list of a locations inhabitants and information on their profession and address, the directories enable you easily to find out where people lived at a certain time and how they earned their living.



## **How to Confuse Your Descendants**

### *Found on a Rootsweb mailing list*

1. Thou shalt name your male children: James, John, Joseph, Josiah, Abel, Richard, Thomas, William.
2. Thou shalt name your female children: Elizabeth, Mary, Martha, Maria, Sarah, Ida, Virginia, May.
3. Thou shalt leave NO trace of your female children.
4. Thou shalt, after naming your children from the above lists, call them by strange nicknames such as: Ike, Eli, Polly, Dolly, Sukey.---making them difficult to trace.
5. Thou shalt NOT use any middle names on any legal documents or census reports, and only where necessary, you may use only initials on legal documents.
6. Thou shalt learn to sign all documents illegibly so that your surname can be spelled, or misspelled, in various ways: Hicks, Hix, Hixe, Hucks, Kicks.
7. Thou shalt, after no more than 3 generations, make sure that all family records are lost, misplaced, burned in a court house fire, or buried so that NO future trace of them can be found.
8. Thou shalt propagate misleading legends, rumors, & vague innuendo regarding your place origination.
  - a. you may have come from: England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales....or Iran.
  - b. you may have American Indian ancestry of the \_\_\_\_\_ tribe.....
  - c. You may have descended from one of three brothers that came over from \_\_\_\_\_
9. Thou shalt leave NO cemetery records, or headstones with legible names.
10. Thou shalt leave NO family Bible with records of birth, marriages, or deaths.
11. Thou shalt ALWAYS flip thy name around. If born James Albert, thou must make all the rest of thy records in the names of Albert, AJ, JA, AL, Bert, Bart, or Alfred.
12. Thou must also flip thy parent's names when making reference to them, although "Unknown" or a blank line is an acceptable alternative.
13. Thou shalt name at least 5 generations of males, and dozens of their cousins with identical names in order to totally confuse researchers.
14. Thou shalt marry the brother/sister of your sibling's spouse.
15. Thou shalt twist and entwine all the family lines by intermarrying with your 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cousins and other extended family.
16. Thou shalt make sure that you are not at home the day the census taker comes knocking and be sure to move in the middle of the enumeration period and be counted twice. sure to move in the middle of the enumeration period and be counted twice.



## News from the Bruce County Archives

### Additions to Archives Web Pages

Photographs continue to be added to the Historical Photos website at <http://photos.brucemuseum.ca>. More detailed descriptions of all photographs on the site continue to be added with the assistance of Archives Volunteers, improving the effectiveness of the site's search function. Photographs may be browsed for interest or purchased online as well!



BCM&CC, A85-10#63, Ladies' Field Hockey Team, Wiarton, 1901

A "Research Links" page has been added to the Museum's website at <http://www.brucemuseum.ca/archives-and-research/research-links>. This page includes links to useful online resources and sites under the headings of: Archives, Libraries & Museums, Books, Cemeteries, Census Returns, Church Archives, Directories, Genealogical & Historical Websites, Immigration, Maps & Geography, Marine, Military and Municipalities and First Nations.

We have also updated the Archives' "Finding Aids" webpage at <http://www.brucemuseum.ca/archives-and-research/finding-aids>. Included are descriptions of some of our fonds or collections, such as the John Peirson fonds; inventories of particular types of resources, such as directories and vital statistics; and topical finding aids that list the resources available concerning particular popular topics, such as Captain John Spence and Chantry Island. Archives staff and volunteers continue to work to create finding aids to assist visitors and researchers in understanding the many resources available in the Reading Room and Archives.

Over 1,000 photographs taken between 1880 and 1920 by John H. Scougall, a prominent Kincardine citizen and amateur photographer, are now available for viewing on the Museum's website at <http://www.brucemuseum.ca/archives-and-research/jh-scougall-photo-collection/>. The photographs have been organized into the following categories to assist in browsing: Agriculture, Architecture, Business and Industry, Disasters, Marine, People, Social Events, and Views and Misc. These photographs are available for purchase, in digital or hardcopy



Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, A992.022-B-0643 Scougall form, by contacting Archives & Reading Room staff.

## Archives Events

From August 17 to 19, Archives staff, along with members of the Bruce County Genealogical Society and the Bruce County Historical Society, enjoyed sharing genealogy and local history with people at the Bruce County Heritage Steam and Antique Tractor Show near Paisley. Thanks to an internet connection provided by Bruce Telecom, we were able to assist people in exploring the world wide web to search for their ancestors. Visitors also had an opportunity to browse a display of scanned archival documents available for viewing in the Reading Room & Archives!

## Archives Staff & Hours

Archivist Ann-Marie Collins continues to enjoy her maternity leave with her daughter, Clara. Reading Room Attendant, Lisa Luscombe, has now also left for maternity leave. We are pleased to have Allison Brown join us in the Reading Room attendant position. Allison has a post-graduate certificate in Museum Management and Curatorship from Fleming College and experience working at Billy Bishop Home & Museum.

Feel free to call if you have any questions, comments or suggestions (519) 797-2080 or 1-866-318-8889 ext 129.

Sue Schlorff, Archival Assistant  
Deb Sturdevant, Archival Assistant  
Allison Brown, Reading Room Attendant  
[www.brucemuseum.ca](http://www.brucemuseum.ca)

### **Bruce County Genealogical Society-2012**

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#### **Executive**

**President:** Doug Lennox  
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**Assistant:** Sylvia Hasbury  
**Treasurer:** Anne Goeden  
**Membership Secretary:** Anne Goeden  
**Past President:** Anne Goeden

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#### **Newsletter**

The newsletter is published quarterly: February, May, August, November. Articles of interest may be submitted for inclusion and should give credit to the original source.

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