

Delta Marsh History Initiative, Steering Committee Meeting
9:00 am, 25 February 2003
Home of Shirley Christianson, Portage la Prairie

Present: Barry Bills, Maurice Blanchard, Shirley Christianson, Denzil Gamble, Gordon Goldsborough (sec), Bob Jones, Cynthia Jordan, Winnie Pauch, Myrna Mackey

1. **Minutes** of the last meeting (20 January) were approved by consensus.

2. **Delta discoveries:**

- a) *Krieger* – Goldsborough has exchanged email with Janice Krieger but, so far, has not arranged to speak with her mother.
- b) *MacDonald* – Goldsborough has received an audio cassette tape from Gordon MacDonald and a drawing of the layout of the MacDonald Brothers' store at Delta. We listened to a few minutes of the tape, in which Mr. MacDonald responds to a set of questions provided to him by Goldsborough via his daughter Heather. Goldsborough will transcribe the tape.
- c) *Weber* – Bills has some photos from the Weber family on 3.5" floppy disks. He will arrange to transfer them to a CD.
- d) *Newman* – There is nothing to report in follow-up to idea of the Newman family as a potential source of information. Jordan reported by Bill Newman will return in the summer; this would be a better time to contact them.
- e) *newspaperarchive.com* – Goldsborough reported his success at finding material on Lake Manitoba, Totogan, and other materials in the Internet web site www.newspaperarchive.com, which contains scanned versions of the Manitoba Free Press from the late 19th to early 20th centuries. For example, there was an article in an 1875 issue about a meeting at Totogan at which local residents advocated for a steamboat to be put on Lake Manitoba. Gamble requested a copy of the article, which Goldsborough will provide to him. Gamble recalled a book, written in the late 1970s in French by St. Laurent's Mother Superior, on Totogan. He will try to find his copy.
- f) *1906 census* – Goldsborough relayed the news about the recent public release of the original 1906 Canadian census, which was carried on in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. It contains useful information on Delta, because this area was only recently settled at the time of the 1901 census. The problem is that many of the Delta residents in 1906 were lake fishermen who may not have resided there in the summer, when the census was taken.
- g) *1909 fisheries commission* – Goldsborough reported on his discovery of a transcript of a federal government-appointed fisheries commission, which took testimony about the status of Manitoba fisheries. A public meeting of the commission was held in Portage la Prairie, and it was attended by fishermen from Delta, St. Ambroise, and elsewhere. It contains excellent information on the day-to-day life of fishermen at this time. Goldsborough is transcribing it from the original microfilm but its length will make this a long-term project.
- h) *Tomalin* – Pauch reported that she had a two-hour interview with June Tomalin on Saturday, 22 February. She took along our video camera and recorded the entire interview. In discussion that followed, other potential interview subjects were identified: Joyce Ward, Les Garnham, Bill Hutchinson, Neva Pearson, and Dr. Bigelow. Goldsborough will compile a full list of interview subjects and will circulate it so we can arrange to start these.
- i) *Bumsted newspaper searches* – Goldsborough reported that, during the Christmas holiday, Sian Bumsted continued her work searching through Portage papers on microfilm at the Manitoba Legislative Library. She apparently found several useful pieces of information but has not provided copies to us yet.
- j) *Photos on CD* – Bills brought back photos loaned to us by various people: DM0012, DM0014, DM0051, and DM0052. He wanted to confirm whether we have put these photos on CD and, if so, where the CDs

are located. Goldsborough will find them and forward to Bills.

- k) *Younghusband* – Shirley and Stephanie Christianson have sent email to a Charles Younghusband to see if he is related to the Younghusbands of Delta. They will report back when he replies.
- l) *Delta sunsets* – Jordan recalls that an article on the spectacular Delta sunsets appeared in *National Geographic*, possibly in the 1930s.

3. Publicity:

- a) *Fish fry* – Availability of the building at Delta on 1 July has been confirmed with the Delta Waterfowl Foundation. Goldsborough has sent email to the Delta Beach Association to ask if they would be interested in some kind of joint event. Bills will look into a tie-in with Heritage Days at Fort La Reine. It was agreed that we will have a Silent Auction, perhaps located outside the building to avoid congestion. Perhaps we can combine letters soliciting donations with those thanking donors for the last auction. Christianson and den Haan will organize the auction. Goldsborough will prepare tickets for distribution by the end of April.
- b) *Newsletter* – Goldsborough reported that the latest newsletter was done and provided to Bills for distribution. He made 1300 copies, fewer than originally anticipated, but that seems adequate for the demand so far. For the next newsletter, two articles were promised: 1) Jones will write an article on changes in the duck populations over the last 70 years or so; 2) Gamble will write a synopsis of Totogan history.

4. Other business:

- a) *Financial statement* – We are still waiting final word on outstanding ticket sales to finalize the accounts for the last fish fry.
 - b) *Grant application* – Goldsborough received an application form from the OnSite employment program. Ordinarily, it supports the employment of people in the environmental field but, in discussion with OnSite officials, they seem interested in pursuing the idea of a project in environmental history. Goldsborough will investigate this further and report at a future meeting.
 - c) *MHS affiliation* – Goldsborough has paid the annual fee of \$40 for our affiliation with the Manitoba Historical Society. This will enable us to insert one of our newsletters with an MHS mailing sent every two months. Goldsborough noted that there are presently no Portage la Prairie firms represented in the MHS's Centennial Business program. Goldsborough has contacted a few business that he suspects may be eligible. Guinn and Simpson were also suggested, as it was believed that they originated in Neepawa in the 1880s. Goldsborough will email the application form to Mackey.
5. **Next meeting:** The next meeting will be held at the home of Shirley Christianson (118 Wilkinson Crescent, Portage la Prairie) at **9:00 am on Monday, 24 March.**
6. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 am.