

Delta Marsh History Initiative, Steering Committee Meeting
9:00 am, 26 February 2002
Home of Shirley Christianson, Portage la Prairie

Present: Barry Bills, Maurice Blanchard, Shirley Christianson, Gordon Goldsborough (sec), Shirley Love, Don Poschenrieder

1. **Minutes** of the last meeting (15 January) were approved by consensus.

2. **Delta discoveries:**

- a) Shirley Christianson reported that Peter Ward is collecting information on Delta history and will try to attend a future meeting. Goldsborough will send him a copy of the minutes from our last meeting. He will also send a copy to George Storey.
- b) Shirley Love reported on a woman named Grace Dunn, now deceased, who lived in a Winnipeg nursing home. Ms. Dunn wrote a book containing information on Delta. Shirley was given her name by Richard Morgan of Brandon. She has made arrangements to obtain a copy from a nurse at the home who has one.
- c) Maurice Blanchard mentioned that he used to hunt at the marsh with Dr. Wilfred Bigelow of Brandon, who had several large photographs of the marsh. Maurice thinks that Dr. Bigelow married into the Cadham family who had a cottage at the marsh, and for whom Cadham Bay is named. Goldsborough's genealogical records on the Cadhams do not confirm this possibility. Goldsborough has a phone number for a son of Dr. Bigelow's, living in Winnipeg, that he obtained from a mutual acquaintance. He will contact him to see if Bigelow has any information, photos, etc. pertaining to Delta.
- d) Shirley Christianson reported that Irene Blight of Oakville has a couple of photographs of the cottage at #19 West. An unexploded bomb fell through its roof during WWII pilot training. Ms. Blight has other stories and should be interviewed this summer by our student research assistant.
- e) Shirley Christianson reported that Lois Forsythe, Brenda Borland, and Judy Thompson are collecting historical information and will provide it to us when ready. She mentioned that relatives of Cam Newman, now deceased, who had a cottage at the East Beach, should be solicited for information.
- f) Maurice Blanchard recalled that cannon balls littered the ground at Lynch's Point as a result of bomb training for pilots during the Second World War.
- g) Barry Bills drew attention to an item in the *Portage Daily Graphic* of 11 February 2002 that described a dog race between Delta and Portage in 1927. The "First Annual Delta Dog Derby" attracted five entries for prizes of \$50, \$30 and \$20. The race was followed by a dance at the McDonald Hotel. Barry will get the full story from the 1927 paper.
- h) Goldsborough reported that he met with Mrs. Jean Hanna yesterday (25 February) and made copies of her photographs of beach life at Delta in the 1930s. He will put the copies on a CD-ROM for deposit in our archives.
- i) The report by Glen Suggett on the Murder Oak at our last meeting was discussed briefly. Blanchard maintains that this case did not involve the last execution in Manitoba. Suggett will provide a short article for the next newsletter, which Goldsborough anticipates having ready for distribution in April.
- j) Goldsborough reported that the latest issue of "The Conservator", the magazine of Ducks Unlimited Canada, contains an article by Jake Macdonald on Dick Wallin's Sports Afield Lodge at St. Ambrose. The article mostly reviews widely known information about Jimmy Robinson and Delta history.
- k) George Storey attended the meeting briefly to loan us a book of records kept by his parents when they were the caretaker and cook for the Portage Country Club in the 1930s. Among other details, it contains

records on the visit by Clark Gable to the club. There are numerous recipes in its pages that might be used as the basis for a fundraising book featuring “old time” recipes and other historical information. Goldsborough borrowed the book to see what information it contains on dealings between the Storey family and their neighbor Donald Bain.

- 1) Maurice Blanchard mentioned that he has several issues of a magazine entitled the “Farmers Advocate” from circa 1904. Some of them mention Delta.

3. Publicity

- a) The second Fish Fry will take place in Portage at the Herman Prior Center on Saturday, 2 March, starting at 11:00 am. Maurice Blanchard will bring sufficient fish and trimmings, with plates etc. for 600 people. Shirley Christianson will pick up the drink concentrate from McDonalds. Shirley Love will pick up 10 cases of pies from McCains and deliver them to the Co-op on Friday for cooking, then to the Prior Center on Saturday. Goldsborough will prepare a presentation of historical photos similar to the one shown at Delta in November, including acknowledgements to McCains, Portage Co-op, Prior Center, and others. Suggett will prepare several large posters of historical photos. Barry Bills will handle ticket sales at the door. Setup will begin at 9:00 am, with Suggett, Goldsborough, Bills, and Jones assisting. Goldsborough will check if Gary Garrioch can help, and Shirley Christianson will check with Winnie Pauch; Don Poschenrieder will help if he can get out of another commitment. Bills will check with the city government to see if a sign advertising the event can be displayed on the boulevard of Saskatchewan Avenue.
 - b) Goldsborough reported that he has updated our web site. He wants comments on it, including ideas on how to improve it.
 - c) Goldsborough will bring a draft of the second newsletter to our next meeting. Items to be included are: 1927 Delta Dog Derby (from Bills), miscellaneous Delta news tidbits (from Bills), Murder Oak (from Suggett), name and phone for Don Poschenrieder as a contact, and the address for DMHI web site.
4. **Finances:** Goldsborough reported that the finances for the Initiative, as of 26 February, are unchanged from the previous minutes of 15 January.

5. Other business:

- a) *Student research assistant* – It was agreed that a University student should be hired to assist with collection of materials during the summer. Goldsborough will prepare an advertisement and distribute it to the Student Employment Center at the University of Manitoba, and to other places where students may see it. He will also provide copies to Bills for distribution around Portage, and publication in the *Daily Graphic*. The job qualifications should include: self-motivated, outgoing, holder of a valid drivers license (and preferably having use of a vehicle), a background or interest in history, computer skills, and eligibility for student employment wage subsidies (i.e. must be returning to University in the fall). The job will be 35 hours per week at \$9.00 per hour. Room and board will be provided at the Delta Marsh Field Station at no charge to the student. The deadline for applications will be Friday, 22 March, to be submitted to Goldsborough at the University. He will collate all applications in time for our next meeting to review them and compile a short list of applicants for in-person interviews to be held at the University campus in Winnipeg later in the week with Goldsborough, Suggett, and possibly others.
- b) *Acquisition plan* – Goldsborough circulated a protocol for receiving and cataloguing new acquisitions with the minutes of the last meeting, and solicited comments on it. With respect to new acquisitions, Christianson has been asked by some people if the information they provide will be altered in the book. Goldsborough recommended that she reply that we reserve the right, as is done by newspapers, to edit submissions for length and content but we will commit not to change the focus or intent of the submissions. All submissions in their full, un-edited form will be deposited in our archives.

- c) *Next fundraising event* – Goldsborough asked that we start thinking about other fundraising activities during the summer. One possibility raised by Bills was to participate in Heritage Days at Fort La Reine over the Canada Day weekend. Christianson suggested a cookbook based, in part, on historical recipes contained in the Storey PCC log. Garrioch's idea of a calendar is still on the table pending input from Gary.
- 6. **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 Tuesday, 26 March**.
- 7. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 11:35 am.