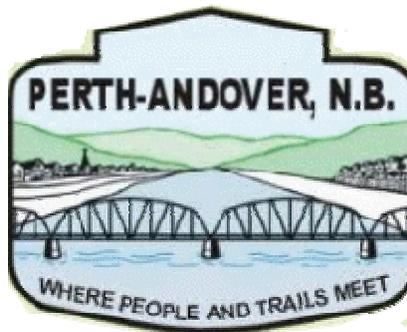


# **MEMORIES**

## **Perth, Andover and Area**

by Joe Farquhar - February 2007



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## Chapter one

### **Andover Record Office**

Being a poor sleeper, there are many long hours spent thinking about the past. Recently (2007) I spent about half of one night going over changes to our nearby town of Perth-Andover. I thought it might be of interest to someone if a comparison was made of what life was like there during the period 1930 to 1940 compared to the present.

I will try to make it accurate and perhaps more interesting, by adding a few words about each item mentioned and also how I may have been involved personally. Note that in the time chosen to talk about, Perth and Andover were separate towns and vied with each other, for example where to build the CPR junction. The arguments caused the company to build their junction at Aroostook. It was “a big loss” for Perth and Andover.

During the horse and buggy days, how our society operated was controlled mainly by local people. County lines don't seem to mean much today, but they used to. Our county was like others, divided into parishes. These parishes each appointed a councilor to form the County Council. Its office and headquarters for Victoria County was in Andover. Melvin Barclay's father James was a councilor for many years. These people met in what we called the courthouse. More on this later.

The first thing I would like to talk about is the Record Office, the red stone building close to the bridge in Andover (the present village office). It was a very important place of business. It has changed some inside, but the outer appearance has changed very little during the last eighty years. I knew something of this Record Office at an early age because Uncle Jim Howlett worked there many years as County Treasurer. Most of the office work was done with pen and ink, but they had a manual operated typewriter, and at times, my sister Kathleen (LaForest) was hired to type reports.

During the summer, Uncle drove to town with a horse and buggy. In the winter they rented a house in Perth and moved to town with the children who were in high school. On the ground floor was a large storeroom filled with large ledgers containing information about where each property was located and who owned it. One could go there to search titles. The caretaker used to help some with this. Now you may have to hire a lawyer to do it for you. The Department of Agriculture was upstairs. For many years Frank Boyer ran this office. When Frank retired, Melvin Barclay transferred from Bon Accord Seed Potato Farm, where he was a director, and worked at the Agriculture Office until he retired. The building is a very age resistant place and I believe Melvin's Grandfather, George Barclay of Upper Kintore, a stone mason and later bridge inspector, had the job of supervising it.

## Chapter 2

## **Andover County Court House**

This part will be about the Andover county court house. This is a wooden structure, just north of the Record office. It contained the Sheriff's office, cells on the first floor and basement, a large courtroom, a room for the judge, a room for private meetings between lawyers and those on trial, a stairs leading to a gallery for spectators, the main stairs, plus an outside stair. In the centre was a fenced in area known as the prisoner's box. The judge's bench was near the North end, and the court stenographer was nearby, also the witness chair. There was a table to hold exhibits and a large table for the use of lawyers and officers.

Also on the ground floor, there was a public washroom, room for the Sheriff's family, and a cook who fed the prisoners. This is one of the places where my parents used to sell eggs and butter. County Council used this building for their meetings. Trials were held here, while hearings for minor offences were held in a rented building, and heard by a magistrate. So in those times the courthouse was an important place.

Today (since 1966) we don't have a County Council. There is a Sheriff or Deputy's office in the building. Part of the ground floor is occupied by the Motor Vehicle Branch. The well-used jail in Carlingford has been torn down, and much time and money is spent transporting prisoners to Madawaska County or Woodstock. An unusual event happened one day at the courthouse. Officer Ed Kurkiski, who checked on the misuse of tax exempt gas was in the glassed in porch next to the street, when a young deer jumped through one of the windows. It was terrified, having been chased by dogs. Over the years dogs running at large have been a problem in town and caused me many a headache.

### Chapter 3

## Churches

In this time period, Perth-Andover had at least the following: United, Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal and Anglican. To go to a Catholic service would mean going to Maliseet, Aroostook or Clearview. I knew more about the Anglican and United, because my family went some to the Church of England at Bairdsville with Rev. Joseph McAuldin from Andover or the United Church at Kilburn with Rev. Ian MacNevin from Andover. At Kilburn, Sunday school was taught by Mrs. Wiley Grant, Mrs. Archie MacPhail and by organist Mrs. Jock Olgivy. The church would be full with kids walking from as far as Muniac. We crossed the ice with horse and sleigh. I was supposed to learn things like the books of the New Testament.

The beautiful stained glass window from the Kilburn church was moved to the church at Upper Kent. The church at Bairdsville has survived. One day after the service at Kilburn. The Rev. MacNevin gave a quick hop into his sleigh. This startled the horse and it gave a big jump, throwing the Minister headfirst into the snow, which was loose and deep, so he escaped with only bruised feelings. While I still can't repeat the books of the bible or remember the words to the Hymns for children, some good memories remain.

At the time Kilburn had a fine quartet. They were Perry Bishop, Lev Lunn, Tom Morehouse and Wiley Grant. I loved to hear them. In those days going to town on Saturday evening was a big thing. Most of the stores were in Perth. Self appointed preachers like Billy Burns would pick a central spot like the Railroad crossing, hold forth long and loud, telling listeners how nice it would be in heaven as opposed to burning in hell. Today the only Church in Perth is the Seventh Day Adventist School and church. In Andover we have older buildings such as the Baptist, Anglican, United Church of Canada. The old Methodist Church is a museum. There are several new modern buildings, including the Wesleyan, Pentecostal and Catholic.

## Chapter 4

### **Communications**

By 1930 our society had moved from stagecoach and river boats to rail, telegraph, and telephone. Mail bags were sent from or picked up at the CPR station in Perth and then transported to the post office by horse and wagon. The Post office in Andover was near the north end of town and run many years by Mrs. Pringle Kelly and sister-in-law Jesse Kelly. Here the mail was sorted with mail to rural areas taken by horses. Bill Miller and later Hubert Brown traveled about ten miles to Bairdsville, over to Dover Hill and back to town via Beaconsfield, rain or shine. Two horses were needed to rest one day and rest the next.

It was always interesting to be at the station when the big steam locomotives arrived and maybe to meet a passenger. The station agents were important people, exempt from army duty and could listen to messages coming over the wires in Morse code while waiting on a customer. A few people had radios, but only as receivers. Two-way radios had hardly come into use. We had the usual wall model telephone, with three dry cell batteries and a crank operated generator. Most rural areas had party lines with several customers on the same set of wires. Some people spent hours listening to other people talk and were referred to as rubbernecks.

A loud ring indicated trouble such as a house on fire. One short ring drew the attention of a switchboard operator at Andover who could connect you to another circuit. Bills were paid at that office. Telephone poles were of cedar, sometimes carrying cross arms and several lines. These lines were kept free of old trees and didn't break down very often. Ice storms were not as common then. The maintenance man at Andover was Roy Grass, who patrolled the lines by horse and wagon, or sled in the winter. He would put in a new phone or replace the batteries. In 1935 we were the last phone on this line,

#63 ring 3. Letters-handwritten with pencil or pen and ink were the normal, stamps were 3 cents compared to 51 now.

On Saturdays, Jim Barclay who had an early model Ford farm truck would usually be in town. He would stop at the Post Office at Gendall's store, Curry Siding, to pick up any mail coming to this end of the road, a spool of thread, or other things people might want from the store. "A community minded man". If we had any mail I walked down in the morning to get it.

People at Trout Brook settlement and Lower Kintore didn't have a telephone line, so lots of times they came to use our phone. Today communications have changed dramatically, but not always for the better. There are one party phone lines, cell phones, Email, trash mail, two-way radios, computers, micro-wave stations, repeater stations in space and things I don't even know about. If we want to pay the price we can talk almost instantly to any part of the globe.

The post office is now in Perth. We are lucky as yet our mail is carried from there. People in town can have a private box or go to some point where boxes are clustered. Before going further, I will explain how I seem to be talking about being in two places at the same time. My family lived at Bairdsville for eleven years, returning to Upper Kintore in May of 1935.

## Chapter 5

### **Places of Business**

Practically every place of business was located on the flat next to the St. John River. In Andover they included the following. From the south: The Abe Vinegar place, they bought animals from local farmers, sold meat and had

a store of sorts with a dirt floor. A theater was near the bridge, the record office and courthouse mentioned before, John Niles hardware, the telephone office, O.A. Zwicker's blacksmith shop, The Farmers store and a blacksmith shop across the road, Warren Jamer's sawmill, B.S. Moore Canoes, Gillett's store, Andover station, potato houses, post office, race track, Andover Grammar school (with a World War I cannon at the entrance), Beveridge's candy and Stanley Ritchie Horse Doctor (where the Wesleyan Church is now.)

Perth Then: Fraser company store, Ann's tea room, RCMP (a rent), Lewis canoe, Lewis Sawmill and woodworking, liquor store (a rent), Murray Wright blacksmith shop, machinery sales, welding shop, church, CPR station and junction with spur line to Plaster Rock, potato house, Hayward's bakery, Dr. RWL Earl (at home), dentists Dickson and Arthur Wade, Bank of Montreal, Graham's funeral parlour and harness shop, Johnson Drugs, Lewis Drugs, R.W. Estabrooks Clothing, H.V. McCrea meat, Dr. A. Macintosh office, Victoria County News, H. Inman barber, Stewart's plumbing, heating and tinsmith, Gamblin's store and restaurant, Harry Dickinson general store, Green's department store, MacPhail hardware, Sadlers lumber office, Miles McCrea blacksmith and constable, Herb Baird General store, Norval MacPhail Indian agent, Charles Olmstead Magistrate, Guy Porter potato broker, Marsten and King insurance, Armstrong brothers construction, J.L. White Lumber and pulp, A. Whitman Lumber, Golf, Tennis, and skeet all on the Armstrong property, McAllister & Goodine Welding, machinist and garage, Amos Ingraham meat shop, Rogers Hotel, Fire hall, lots of bootleggers, The Silver Slipper dance hall, and Vinegar's Clothing.

## Chapter 6

### **Police**

There were various grades of constables to choose from. Some were hired to work at events like dances at the Silver Slipper, some employed by the town

or county and some appointed by the province. Around 1930 the first Mountie was posted to Perth. His last name was Wilson, dubbed Dummy Wilson by those who were used to doing their own thing. Shortly before the war (1939) Cpl. Frank Russell came to town, then a two-man post. One Assistant had the name Littler. They had a rented office and one car to use. Although the crew became larger, they never had a proper station until about 1965. Over the years Perth-Andover has had some very good RCMP officers and some who weren't worth their salt.

## Chapter 7

### **Yarn #1**

So this isn't too much like a history lesson, I will tell a yarn or two, this one referring to the original Farmers Store. I liked blacksmith shops. Our horses were high strung and hard to handle. Gordon Hatheway worked at the shop near the store. He was small but could cope with our animals. One day in the winter, we left our team at the shop, went to the store for some lunch. The store was in one main room, a main counter, a bench for customers to sit on, a woodstove and the store was crammed with all manner of goods. The manager was Charles Dunster from Birch Ridge. They had the usual barrel of crackers and cheese that came in big round blocks that probably weighed fifty pounds or more. Dad bought a few cents worth of the crackers and cheese and we lunched on those without anything to drink. My Father was much tougher than I. He apparently enjoyed the lunch and had a nice chat with the storekeepers. I had a hard time to eat any.

### **Yarn # 2**

This story is in three parts with the main part happening in Perth. It begins in Bairdsville during the Great Depression. Poor people must have liked the looks of our place, or followed a sign because it was very seldom a

peddler, tramp or less fortunate person, who didn't turn in our driveway. Father had a soft spot in his heart and gave many a handout.

One early winter's day a well known peddler was making his rounds and stopped at our place. His name was David Pinaler (name changed in case he has relatives still living here) and he drove an old white horse. Mr. Pinaler was a big tall man and he wore a sheepskin coat that reached to his boots. He spoke with a heavy accent and for starters would ask if we had for sale any horsehair, cowhides, "vool" or "veasel" skins. His horse was put in the stable and fed, and Mr. Pinaler was fed and given a place to sleep. My folks had recently bought a new set of team harness and the next day when Dad went to harness our team, one of the new bridles was missing. Along about March the next spring, we were in Perth and starting for home. Close to the end of the bridge we saw the old white horse tied to a hitching post and the driver not in sight. I was startled when Father did something that was totally out of character for him.

He jumped off, grabbed the bridle off the tethered horse and threw it in the back of our sled. We continued toward home. It was two or three years later in the spring and we had just moved back to Upper Kintore. Father and I were in the barn on a very cold and wet day. We were surprised to see the old white horse come up the driveway, in the open door on to the barn floor. I think the driver Mr. Pinaler was probably more surprised to find us there. Our place had been vacant most of the time we had been in Bairdsville, and I don't think Mr. Pinaler knew we had moved back. Not a word was spoken by the peddler or by my Father.

I think Dad felt more compassion for the comfort of the horse than its driver. Mr. Pinaler sat on the wagon seat with his head bowed for about half an hour, and then backed out and left. We never saw or heard tell of him again.

### Yarn # 3

Writing about lunching on crackers caused me to remember a lot about my Dad, that was just forgotten or taken for granted. He was one year old when our people came from Scotland to Upper Kintore in 1874. He grew up where the rule was survival of the fittest. Our dentist, A.K. Wade of Perth made the remark more than once, "Your Father has a great constitution". In his prime Dad was five foot seven and weighed 126 pounds. He worked long and hard, went to bed early and got up early. He ate hearty, wanted meals on time, and seldom lunched between them. While I heard him to say he liked the taste of whiskey, I never knew of him taking a drink.

He never drank milk, pop or beer and little water. In the morning he sometimes put molasses on his porridge. With his meals he drank black tea, that had to be hot right off the stove. His favorite desert, which he called pie, was a 2-tier white cake with homemade jam between the layers. Mother was a good cook and he liked that also. Dad rose early, woke me, then we did chores for about an hour before breakfast (oatmeal cooked overnight in a double boiler) milk and brown sugar or molasses. Sometimes we had bran for cereal. This came from our wheat and was milled in Britton's mill at River de Chute. I had difficulty making a meal on the bran. If we had beans, bacon, eggs, or pancakes they were homegrown. These were depression years.

### Chapter 8

#### **Environment**

Back to comparisons, now let's consider environment. This is referred to as something that surrounds us, such as air or water.

Then: This is one-sided topic so we will only consider the basics. First

the air; It was about this time that our main source of power changed drastically from horsepower to machine power in the form of steam, diesel, gas, electric, or diesel electric. Our main employment was farming and lumbering. These both required large numbers of horses, both driving and work horses. These animals needed hay and oats, the waste broke down quickly and fertilized the land. Potatoes, (a main crop) were alternated with grain and hay, so erosion was not a major problem. As well as air, we are now dealing here with soil. The waste from almost all animals, either domestic or wild, soon went back into the system, (an asset).

How the water was used was more serious. The St. John River was used like a sewer or dump. Almost all living along the river let waste go raw into the river. Some poison used to control insects and disease was used as well as some fertilizer. There was smoke from heating with wood, coal smoke from trains as well as smoke from mills and from clearing land. A look at old photos show the hills near Perth bare from the effect of forest fires.

In late summer the shore of the river was littered with the rotting bodies of fish that migrated in from the sea to spawn and die. The roads were not paved. Salt was used in much smaller amounts to feed to livestock and preserve food. Hardly any plastic was in use. A lot of garbage was eaten by birds and animals. What was left was spread out thinly enough not to be a problem. In the spring the river got a major housecleaning when everything that would float was washed out to sea. The word "clearcut" was never used or practised.

The environment **now**: The farmland is often used several years in succession to grow the same crop, such as potatoes. It lacks vegetable matter and most liable to erosion. Deadly poisons are used such as Pre-merge, top killer, insecticides, and herbicides. It is no wonder this is a bad area for cancer. Tons of salt are used on the road, the forests are stripped to the bone, springs dry up, the run off water is violent, the river bed is nearly dry in the

summer, waste from industry runs into the river, sewage from the town is piped into the Perth lagoon where it breaks down some before going further. Some garbage is recycled while most of it is trucked many miles to the headwaters of Green River to a landfill.

Nearly everything we use or eat is wrapped in or made from plastic, which breaks down very slowly. Thousands of machines, autos, trucks, planes, etc. send fumes into the air. We have huge amounts of waste oil and millions of used tires. Not a pretty picture.

## Chapter 9

### **Yarn number 4**

This event took place in the theatre in Andover that I mentioned in another story. Mrs. James Howlett (Bertha), my mother's sister seemed to want to upgrade society in town, so invited a trio of ladies to come to Andover and present an evening of classical singing. If entertainers like the Messer show had come it would have been standing room only. It didn't appeal to the people in our town, and only about two dozen showed up. It was not nearly enough to pay the bill. I am not aware of how much but quite sure Uncle paid the difference. I never understood or liked classical music so put in a bum evening.

## Chapter 10

### **Water Supply**

Andover's water supply **then** came from Tibbets brook which starts in Carlingford (a farming area). It runs near the Fort Road then through town and empties into the St. John River. Fire Hydrants were at intervals along the main

street, and buildings like the record office and school had the luxury of running water. Fields near the source were in use and at times pastures for cattle. Some of this area was later planted in trees.

After the war (1939-1945), I happened to have something to do with Tibbetts Brook three times. First a few deer wintering in the little valley were killed in mid- winter. Secondly, I supervised the cutting and burning to make a larger holding dam. Then to stay all one day and night to help wash the dam site with Wajax forest fire pumps. There was a thick covering of silt on the bottom of the pool. Also a colony of beavers once had to be removed. Milk cows were tethered in summer near the present boat landing in Andover.

Perth Water supply **then:** Their water came from Hud's brook at the North end of Town. These little brooks are named after early settlers like the Tibbits of Andover and the Larlees of Perth. I believe the first Sheriff of Andover was a Tibbits. The Larlees were long-time mail carriers. The land for the Perth Ranger Station was purchased from a Mr. P Larlee. Hud's Brook starts in the wooded hills east of town and was free of pollution at least until recently. There was a pipe beside the gulch road that brought the water into Perth.

Water supply **today:** Since Perth and Andover are now united we will refer to them together. These brooks are small and when the population grew they required more water. There is now a water Tower at the north end of Andover and the towns are joined by pipes running under the river. Test wells were drilled at the south end of Perth on the McRea flat, about 30 years ago. A site was picked for a well on the riverbank close to the Beech Glen Road (common name Jawbone road).

A large volume of water was available at this site. The town is built on a deep bed of glacial till, (Sand, gravel, boulders, and clay) left by receding glaciers. The water lines now have lots of pressure. How safe or good tasting it

is might be questioned. It can be treated with chlorine or boiled. A lot of people drink bottled water, which is very expensive.

When Perth had their bad fire (1977), water was pumped from the river to a water cannon from Loring Air Force Base. This helped save the upper end of town.

## Chapter 11

### **Village Management**

This is a fairly new system. The villages are combined and the boundaries are marked with signs. The municipality is run by an elected council. There is a mayor and five councilors. The present staff is Mayor Karen Titus with councillors Carter Kennedy, David Morgan, Rick Beaulieu, Susan Murchison and Jim Baird. Council meets once a month. They handle things like building permits, property taxes, grants, maintenance, openings and meet politicians.

## Chapter 12

### **Music**

For this topic we will combine towns and just try to picture the past as compared to recent times. Amos Kelly is 85 and has a wonderful memory. He helped fill in some of the blanks. During the depression days of the 1930's entertainment was homemade. My first impression of music coming from the village was a lasting one. My Aunt, Mrs. James Howlett, threw a house party. The main dish was chicken pot pie. One house guest from town was Ralph Waite. He ate a huge helping of the chicken, then played a banjo and sang. He could play as well as eat.

Amos said Mr. Waite had been a bank manager in Cuba for 21 years and then worked a number of years in the office of potato broker Guy Porter Ltd. in Perth. While there he formed a country band known as the Corn Huskers. They lasted several years. The members were all male and included the following: Mr. Waite, Gerald Ritchie, Harold Loose, Tom Dewitt, Jim Smith, Alex Wiley, Charlie Moore, Amos Kelly et al.

Amos was quite young and he may be the only one still living (Amos died in 2013). Amos's wife was Arvella Pirie from South Tilley. South Tilley was one of the places the band played for dances. Their instruments were all acoustic and included the banjo, guitar, mouth organ, accordion and fiddle. Amos played the accordion and fiddle and still does. At that time playing the guitar and singing cowboy songs was the fad. If anyone had a battery radio and time to listen, they could hear great country and western stuff like Sons of the Pioneers on WWVA Wheeling West Virginia. Two very popular songs of the time were *Cool Water* and *Tumbling Tumbleweed*. Great stuff. Faraway stations came in best during hours of darkness.

There were other musicians in town and other kinds of music. Blind musician Luise Blakesly taught piano. Milton Lewis played classical violin, Vernon Dixon the banjo. Mrs. Pringle Kelly was organist in the United Church. There would be others that I didn't know or have forgotten. The main instrument in churches, halls and private homes was the pump organ. There were lots of fine singers. Norval McPhail and Charles Olmstead were good bass singers. Several members from the Robert McCrea family were noted for singing at funerals. They included Herb McCrea, and sisters, Mrs. Lunn, Mrs. Todd and Mrs. Ingraham.

The small single reed mouth organ (marine band) was very popular and on sale at the drug store. Down East Square dancing was still alive. The Silver Slipper dance hall was well known. It was owned and operated by the Hafford brothers, Jim, Clarence and Wilfred. Most music was played by ear, only a few

able to afford music lessons. Crank operated record players were then in use and were a help in learning new tunes. The fiddle was the best for a lead instrument and used for playing at dances. Fiddles were imported and listed in the T. Eaton Catalogue for under \$10.00. The best ones were made in Italy, France and Germany.

Music **Now**- Around the 1950's and 1960's, with vast changes in technology and how people lived, there came a big decline in acoustic instruments such as the fiddle. Electric guitars and all kinds of other electrical instruments and amplifiers were common. People played or listened to Rock and Roll and other most eerie stuff, always played ear splittingly loud. Singing was also loud. Songs and tunes were composed in great numbers, most here today and gone tomorrow. The best tunes are as good today as they were a hundred years ago.

Around 1980 the pendulum started to swing back. Fiddles that had been gathering dust for 50 years were put in use again. Old time fiddlers such as Willard Harris were still here and helped in the big revival. This trend spread all over Eastern Canada, helped greatly by such players as Don Messer and Ned Landry.

Lucky for me I became wrapped up in the new hobby of repairing fiddles, and made the first one in 1984. Old fiddles came out of attics by the dozens. A year or two later I got a call in the fall, from Cameron Bishop inviting me to a jam session. It was held in the music room at Southern Victoria High School. This club was spearheaded by Cameron, his wife Dawn, Ed Love and Murray Grant. Soon really good fiddlers like Amos Kelly and Lawrence Lafrance joined in. We continued at the music room or members homes. We were also joined by Clifford Lockhart.

Then a most fortunate thing happened. Guitar player Garold Hanscom came, went home and dug out his grandfather's fiddle. Garold had played this

fiddle as a young lad and soon became a most dedicated fiddler, leader of the group and so a success story started, the Wednesday Evening Fiddlers.

After using the school room, the new Tourist Bureau became a meeting place. Quite a few people came to listen, but eventually someone complained, and the club was ousted. Right at that time The Knights of Columbus opened up their hall and the Fiddlers were offered the use of the downstairs for the price of donations. The main floor and fine kitchen could be rented for large events for a fair price. This K of C hall was ideal, lots of parking space, good sound, and spare rooms that were used for class rooms. Sadly, after several years the hall closed and became a furniture store. At that time the United Church in Andover had built a new hall, and it became the new meeting place for the Wednesday Evening fiddlers. This is a fine place for lessons and jam sessions, but for larger events, the Curling club at the Legion has been used.

After using the K of C for a few years, a second most fortunate thing happened; Garold began teaching for the first half of the session. The better young players like Marjorie Lafrance, Kate LaFrance, Kristin Bragdon and Holly Farquhar led the group while Garold was busy teaching. Lawrence Lafrance became the regular keyboard player and his brother Bob played guitar and sometimes sat in on the piano. The other notable thing was that everyone of every age was welcome and all it cost was a voluntary donation to play, listen or take lessons.

A lot came from outside the town and a good number came from Maine. The students varied in age from youngsters to seniors and one member Dr. Lee White is over 90. Garold's reputation as a teacher spread rapidly, so he now spends a lot of time with students besides on Wednesday evenings. So many requests are received at times it is at times hard to take all of them. They vary from nursing homes to funerals, weddings, fairs, dances, benefits and others. One of the best features of the club is the great number of young people, so if some go away to University or other places, there are others ready to take

their place.

We will mention other forms of music. Some enjoy Bluegrass, Rock or other types of music and Classical lessons are available. Music in the schools seems to be in a slump, not active like the years when Lois Campbell or Dave Eagan was there. Up until recent times if a piper were needed it meant getting one from Saint John. This changed with the formation of the Southern Victoria Pipe Band in the 1960's. This group went to Expo 67 in Montreal. This band is alive and well and some of the original members like Darlene Morton are still active. I am going to note another change that has happened in my time. In years past, churches relied on the organ for music with organists faithful till the last. Now other instruments are used and enjoyed.

### Chapter 13

#### **Yarn#4**

I have mentioned my Uncle Jim Howlett driving from Bairdsville to work at the record office in Andover. At the time we are going to talk about, he had changed from horse and buggy to a car. It was new, square in shape and had glass in the doors. One day I had been left in Andover to get a ride home in the new car. It had a regular gear shift lever, but Uncle didn't know much about cars. He might get it in second gear and leave it there. This would cause the radiator to boil.

There was very little traffic of any sort on the road that afternoon. There had been a shower that day and the road was a bit slippery. When we got to the level stretch near the home of Dibble DeMerchant, the car took a sudden switch off the road and headed for the nearest telephone pole. My uncle gave a startled "By Gad", gave a hard jerk on the big wooden steering wheel and we missed the pole by inches. We drove in a big circle and back on the road. It was lucky for us that there wasn't any ditch at that location. I had

a big story to tell Mother that day.

#### **Yarn # 5**

In June of 1934 there were 6 students in grade 8 at the Bairdsville school. Mary Gerard left before the end of term to return with her family to Scotland. The others were Lena Baird, Elsie and Marion Lockhart, Borden DeMerchant and myself. Our teacher was Margaret Baird. At the end of grade eight it was time to think about high school. The Lockhart girls were good students but never applied to go. The times were very hard then for everyone and they probably didn't have the money. Mother was very worried because I was a poor student, mainly because I couldn't memorize. That was a big factor in those times. I didn't have much to wear so Mother got me a white pullover shirt with a picture of Mickey Mouse on the front.

To write entrance papers took three days I think. Where to stay was the next worry. Mrs. Frank DeMerchant knew someone in Andover (Mrs. Albrey Glass) and suggested they might put me up along with their son Borden. Mr. Glass lived in a six-sided house on the main street. He was unemployed at the time and very cranky because the telephone company wouldn't hire him. That was where his dad Roy Grass was employed.

Besides being bad tempered, Albrey had the reputation of being the meanest man in town. I nearly starved and one evening when I was down town a little while they locked me out. Writing the papers was a terrible experience. I couldn't do half of them. We three all failed the entrance papers. When school resumed I started to take grade 8 again with Teacher Jean Burnham. It didn't go much better and at that time Father had a severe financial setback, so I left school and helped cut wood. So much for education learned in the school house.

## Chapter 14

### **Yarn #6**

This happened in Andover on a nice warm summer day. I am not much on history, but there was a holiday with festivities. I think this one was for Queen Victoria's birthday. A check in the dictionary shows this to be May 24. Mother and I got a ride to town with Uncle Ned Porter. He was a farmer in Easton Maine and had an open touring car. Public buildings like the record office were decorated with flags like the Union Jack.

About midday a fire was reported in town. From our position near the Andover end of the highway bridge, we could see smoke coming from the end of the Vinegar place which was near where the Brunswick Funeral Parlor is now. Soon several husky young men came with a push cart loaded with a hose. This was attached to the nearest fire hydrant, a hole chopped in the roof of one of Vinegar's outbuildings, which were used to house farm animals, and they soon got the fire under control. We soon heard the cause of the fire. A lot of firecrackers were being set off. Some kids threw theirs on to a pile of manure and debris in one of the buildings. This shows some great changes have occurred in the last 75 years.