

Glen Lyon Centennial Benefit A Walk Through Time

by Jane Barry, The Greater Saint John Community Foundation

On rare occasions, generous folks will open their homes for a good cause. Steve and Coleen Carson and Brad and Colleen Mitchell are the proud owners of a unique heritage summer home which many would love to explore. Glen Lyon, their massive and meticulously preserved home on the Kingston Peninsula at Carter's Point, will be shared with supporters of Peninsula Heritage on August 21, 1-4pm, for a benefit "Soiree". Kingston Peninsula Heritage Inc. is a small but mighty group of volunteers who recognize the value and merits of celebrating and preserving the local heritage of the Kingston Peninsula. The energetic volunteers formed Peninsula Heritage in the early 60's, recognizing the peninsula's wealth of artifacts and structures. They have studied and recorded over ninety homes and landmarks through photographs, local oral histories and research (<http://www.kingstonnb.ca/Built%20Heritage/index.html>). They own the Baxter property and the Cedars Lighthouse on Long Reach and operate the John Fisher Memorial Museum and 1810 Carter House at Kingston Corner, which was declared an Historic District in 2000.

It's a special year since it's been a century since Colonel Colin Livingstone constructed the imposing summer retreat, near his native Saint John birthplace, but distant from his American home in urban Washington D.C., where he became a successful and leading business figure in the last century. It was a destination for many of the "well-connected" Livingstone's numerous colleagues, who trekked to New Brunswick in summers past for respite from the city heat to the tranquil surroundings of the Saint John River. The Colonel, the founding President of the Boy Scouts of America who was involved in the ownership of several railways and a bank, and his wife Anna, would travel aboard their steamer each June from Washington to Glen Lyon, hosting dignitaries from the US and overseas.

The construction of the 1910 estate was the talk of the peninsula, providing employment for most every tradesman and skilled craftsman for miles around over a period of two years. Not only did they erect the three storey eight bedroom home with servants quarters and rooms on a grand scale, complete with wraparound veranda and modern plumbing, they also built a bath house, ice house, stables, boathouse, windmill and other ancillary structures on the large property with the commanding river view.

The Mitchells and Carsons have been careful stewards of the residence, preserving records, artefacts and furniture as much as possible. The 40 X 17 drawing room is oak-panelled and kitchen features a vintage cook stove, highly polished in black and silver. A framed 1910 Saint John Globe newspaper clipping spells out some details of the Washington architect N.T. Haller who designed the colonial home built by local firms with familiar names like Currie Brothers, R.A. Corbett, E.V. Wetmore, H. L McGowan and D. Doyle for \$12,000. Top quality materials for "one of the finest summer residences on the River" were supplied by well-known local firms like Murray and Gregory, W.H. Thorne & Co., T. McAvity and Son, MRA's and C. and E. Everett.

Glen Lyon was the name of the saw mill on the adjacent property which was constructed in the early 1800s by a man by the name of MacGregor (who is thought to have been from Glen Lyon in Scotland). By 1854 Colin Livingstone's grandfather, William was the owner of the mill. The Livingstone family sold the property in 1945 to Gwendolyn and Aubrey Turnbull. Turnbull was an engineer with NBTel and converted the house to a year round residence several years later. The Turnbells owned the property for 35 years and sold it to Edwin and Nancy Morehouse in 1980. Steve Carson says "Brad Mitchell and I first visited the property in 1988 and after returning several times, acquired the property in 1991." For the Carsons, the property has special significance since they held their wedding reception at Glen Lyon in 1995, a few years later than Derek and Jackie Oland's.

The Soiree will feature tours of the main home, boat and ice houses, string quartet music, refreshments with wine and beer, supplied by Moosehead included in the ticket price of \$30. For tickets or information contact: John Fisher Museum 763-2101, Carter House 832-2902, Joan Small 763-2479 or purchase at Enterprise Saint John, 40 King St. & New Brunswick Museum, Market Square



Photo: Peninsula Heritage is organizing an afternoon benefit "Soiree" Saturday, August 21, 1-4pm, at the historic summer residence "Glen Lyon", Carter's Point, on the Kingston Peninsula. Some of the organizing Committee are pictured at the handsome summer home: co-owners Brad and Colleen Mitchell, Kathy Thornhill, Joan Small, Judi Baxter, past PH President, Eric McCumber, Lois Miller, and Sue White (absent Co-owners Steve and Coleen Carson, PH President Beth Quigley and Elinor Hughes).



Community Profile is a weekly column highlighting community causes and work done by non-profit organizations in the Greater Saint John area. It is contributed by Jane Barry, executive director of The Greater Saint John Community Foundation. Contact the foundation at 506-672-8880. To view other Community Profiles go to www.saint-john-foundation.nb.ca