

# Samis family to celebra

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The surname Samis goes back a long way, as far back as the Apocrypha. Thus, hosting a family reunion could be a catering challenge. Current genealogical computer records show 5,228 entries and rising.

But, the descendants of

Ebenezer and Sarah Samis are not daunted. They're happily anticipating 100-150 people at the July 27-29 reunion to mark the 200th anniversary of the immigration to Canada of Ebenezer and Sarah Samis.

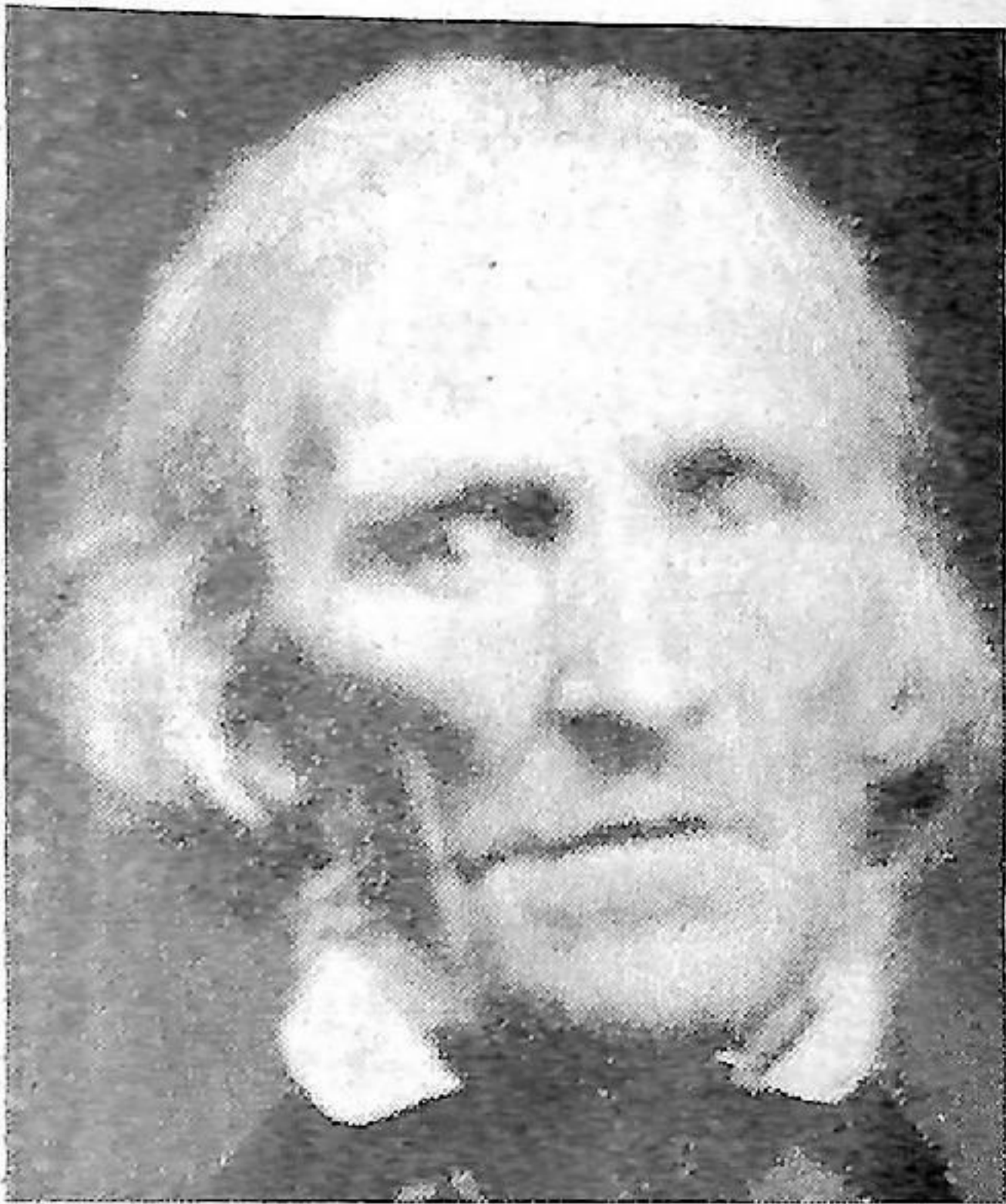
The weekend is billed as "a wonderful chance to make connections with your ancestry and meet unknown cousins". That is precisely what has been going on since a Samis reunion was first organized locally in 2001.

"A lot of us didn't know each other," Don Samis, originally of Cramahe Township, now of Courtice, says.

"We organized a Samis reunion one year after father died," Clay Samis, Don's brother of Brighton, relates. "We put it on the Internet, all kinds of sources. It was held in Cobourg."

The initial catalyst was a lady near Parry Sound seeking Samis family information who found Don's daughter Karen's e-mail on a university listing. Karen referred the request to her father and the drums started beating. In fact, the current generations tracked and connected all branches of the five Samis sons of original Canadian settlers Ebenezer and Sarah Tuttle Samis of 1807.

"Just about every Samis in Canada is descended from these



**MICHAEL SAMIS**  
**2ND GENERATION**

Born 1784, died 1865 in Arkona, Lambton County, son of Ebenezer and Sarah Samis.

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## SAMIS DESCENDANTS

Don Samis, standing left, of Courtice, is cochair of the upcoming 200th anniversary reunion of Samis settlement planned this July 27-29 in and around Cobourg. Don's brother Clay Samis of Brighton is standing at right. Seated, from right, are Chuck Martin of Brighton of the Benjamin Samis line; Donna Griffin, daughter of Mabel Samis Dingwall Puddy of the Israel Samis line, and her husband Don Griffin.

## THE SAMIS FAMILY TREE

Two hundred years ago, one Ebenezer Samis arrived in Canada with his wife Sarah Tuttle Samis and five of eight children. The family first settled near Morganston, northeast of Castleton in Cramahe Township, on 100 acres of Crown land. Ebenezer was listed as a Loyalist, but stateside records indicate Ebenezer may, in fact, have been an American Revolution supporter. Records from Long Island indicate Ebenezer was listed as "sick in Huntington", a way of avoiding forced service to the British.

Whatever the details, the Samis forebears arrived at what is now Lakeport in Northumberland County. It was a small community with a little church founded in 1785, officially organized in 1798 — Canada's oldest Baptist church. That church was destroyed by fire, but some of the salvaged beams were used to build a new church at Wicklow, the Haldimand Baptist Church, in 1824. That church burned in 1986, and a small replica chapel now stands at the site on County Road 2 between Colborne and Grafton.

There is no record of Ebenezer, born in April 17, 1742 in Huntington, New York state, and Sarah Tuttle's marriage. In fact, little is known of Sarah, believed to have been born in New York state.

The couple had eight children: Abijah (b. 1778), David (b. 1779), Benjamin (b. 1779), Michael (b. 1784), James (b. 1792), Israel (b. 1792) Ebenezer II (b. 1797) and Annie (birth/death unknown). Only Benjamin, Michael, Israel and Ebenezer II arrived in Canada and, of those, James left Canada in the late 1820s.

The first land record of the children found lists Michael Samis with a land lease in Hamilton Township in 1808. An 1809 census record shows one man over the age of 60, three males aged 16-60 years and two females listed as Samis' residing in Hamilton Township.

Over the ensuing years, Samis' have lived in Hamilton, Haldimand, Emily, Cramahe, Clarke, Darlington and nearby townships. As the diaspora continued, branches of the family went as far as California and British Columbia, and throughout North America.

Locally, there have always been Samis family descendants in the Cramahe-Brighton area, intermarrying with McKagues, Parkers, Scotts, McIndoos, Kelleys and other pioneer family descendants.

But, it is from the seven sons of Ebenezer and Sarah that the 2007 Samis reunion attendees determine their nests in the branches of the Samis family tree.

— MANDY MARTIN

COLBORNE CHRONICLE  
JULY 12/07

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