

POSTSCRIPT TO JONES FALLS



Seeley's Bay Specs

ST. PETER'S A.C.W. - Seeley's Bay

Our meetings during the winter are held in the afternoon starting with dessert and coffee. Our new Rector, the Rev. Don Bailey and wife Elaine have not moved into the rectory as of yet and were, therefore, not present at Ethleen's meeting place. His service on Sunday was enjoyed by all.

The meeting opened with prayer and the Scripture and Meditation taken from the "Living Message".

Ethleen read the minutes for the Nov. and Dec. meetings. These were approved. Marjorie Bradley gave the treasurer's report which was approved.

Correspondence was discussed, followed by membership renewal. Two new members joined - Marjorie MacIntyre (Gamble) and Mrs. Tuggey. Both are very welcome members.

June Goodwins was asked to take over the Election of Officers. President will be the person who holds the meeting each month, assisted by the previous pres. All other offices remained unchanged. Mildred Hudson and Elsie Willoughby were added to the Visiting Committee.

Mary Dean requested one or two additional Sunday School teachers and Mrs. Hans Koopman has agreed to take on the duties of organist relieving Darrell Dean. We extend our thanks to her.

The meeting closed with prayer and 2 readings by Charlotte McConnell - "A Recipe for a Happy New Year" and "A Recipe for a Happy Life". Elsie Willoughby moved the meeting be adjourned.

Our February meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. Jean Rogers on Tuesday, Feb. 5.

February 19 - Shrove Tuesday - is set for a Pancake Supper and Card Party at the Legion Hall, Seeley's Bay. Prizes given. Everyone welcome.

Jones Falls Soap Opera

Recently, a personal diary of Peter Sweeney, the first lockmaster at Jones Falls, has been discovered in the National Archives. The diary covers a period of twelve years from 1838-50. It reads like a Victorian melodrama.

Sweeney, his wife and two children were all heavy drinkers. His wife hated him, his children rejected him and his lock workers complained about him to the government. He must have been a wonderful man.

Sweeney was constantly involved in a hide-and-seek game with his wife over liquor. In 1848, he hid his grog in the cookhouse. Mrs. Sweeney and Kitty, his daughter, broke into the cookhouse and drank it all. Two years later, he was lurking in the bushes on the other side of the lock, trying to find the bottle Mrs. Sweeney had hidden for herself. Often, there are resolutions in the diary not to drink. Every month, Sweeney broke his resolution. Sweeney loved to attend Methodist camp meetings although he was Catholic. The reason for his enjoyment of the camp meetings was the plentiful beer afterwards.

Sweeney had one son, Tom. I imagine he would have preferred not to have a son at all. Adolescent Tom was hired as a worker to help his father at Jones Falls. He promptly fell in love with the wife of another lockman, Mr. King. Fist fights and name calling became an everyday occurrence at the locks. The Kings left the station after Leggett, the local magistrate was called in to intervene.

Other lock labourers launched legal suits against Sweeney. In 1846, Tom was sent down to Davis Lock as a canalman after a quarrel with his father. In 1847, he was back on the locks at Jones Falls. The arguments between father and son increased. Finally, Tom threatened to shoot Sweeney, crossed the American border and did not return home.

Daughter Kitty, educated in a Kingston nunnery, had her



difficulties as well. She became involved with a temporary labourer, John Weaver, in 1848. Both Sweeney and his wife opposed the relationship so Kitty eloped. Her husband was hired on at Davis Lock the next summer. When Weaver took his teenage wife to that station, Sweeney followed and brought his stubborn daughter back. In the autumn of 1850, Kitty gave birth to a son who Sweeney spitefully referred to as Kitty Sweeney's son. He found it difficult to admit that the last name of the child was really Weaver. Kitty's two year marriage could not stand such opposition. She remained with her father for the next twenty years of her life.

Mrs. Sweeney eventually could not stand to live with her obnoxious husband. By the end of the period the diary covers, she was spending nights with

friends or in a separate building at Jones Falls simply to avoid her husband. She died, still a young woman, in the 1850's.

Sweeney wrote in his journal that he was disappointed and tired of his life. (A wonder why.) He remained as lockmaster until 1850.

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