

This feature, occurring in each newsletter, remembers people and families from Stayner's past, gone but not forgotten.

The Lamont Story

The story of one of Stayner's pioneer families has been taken from a tape made by Alex Lamont in 1978 and transcribed by Kathy Lamont.

This is an excerpt.

The story begins with the battle of Culloden, where the Lamont Clan, from the tiny Island of Tiree in the Hebrides, fought for Bonnie Prince Charlie. When the hated English won the battle with the help of the more-hated Campbells, the Lamonts left for the new world. There is a monument

at Dunoon stating that 200 Lamonts were slaughtered by the Campbells!

Hardships followed the members of the Lamont Clan who came to Canada. John Lamont, great-grandfather of Alex, married Flora McKinnon, and after having 2 sons (12 year old Sandy & 10 year old Hughie) came to Canada on the *Ann Mary*. Here, a daughter called Maggie was born. Maggie and Hughie never married. Sandy became Alex's grandfather.

Alex's other great-grandfather, Allan Luke McLean, married Catherine McKinnon, sister of Flora. On the way over to Canada, they had a girl, Anne Gormley

(named after their ship) who was Alex's grandmother as she later married Lamont.

In 1848, John and his family travelled first to Mariposa and Brock Townships, north of Lake Scugog to join a Scottish settlement mostly from

Tiree. After 4 years, several of the families escaped an outbreak of plague by traveling by oxen cart to Newmarket. From there, they came to the Blue Mountain area on foot. The only trail available at the time was following a narrow path through dense bush. Alex's grandmother, young 4 year old Annie McLean, remembered this trip and passed the story down to Alex many years later. Her mother carried one year old Mary in her arms for the 150-200 mile trip. Another woman carried 3 year

old, Malcolm. The hardships are difficult to imagine. At night, the men would build brush fires for protection from wild animals.



THE LAMONT FAMILY

*taken at the home of Robert and Hanna Lamont
Indian Hill Farm*

Wedding of Annie Lamont and Ross Coleman

Back row: Sara (m. Tom McConnell), Allan (m. Ethel Millar), Lily (m. Edgar Robinson), Robert (m. Hanna Robinson), Flora (m. Alf West), Jack (m. Lily Blakely).

Second row: Katie (m. Joe Carr), Annie (mother), Sandy (father), Annie (m. Ross Coleman), Maggie (m. Tom

They all settled on the fourth and second line of Osprey Township. They were granted farms by the Crown. The 100 acre farms were measured by a certain number of paces from the road in a square! The settlement was called McIntyre Corners.

Small one room, one storey stone houses with dirt floors were built by some of the men. They slept on pea straw in the corners. Some members of the next generation, including Alex's father, lived in these conditions for a time.

Most of Grandma Lamont's generation were illiterate as there were no schools or teachers. However, she learned to read with the help of her children, who themselves did not have a great education!. Her favourite books were the Bible and, later, the Stayner Sun!

There also were no ministers at the time. Great-grandfather, Allen Luke McLean, preached services and taught Sunday School in the log church in the corner of the old cemetery at McIntyre Corners. The language was gaelic. The Scottish-Gaelic Bible still exists in the family today.

Sandy and Anne, first cousins, decided to become married, and since there were no ministers, they hitched the team of oxen, said they were going for seed oats, went to Priceville (another little Scottish settlement on the top of the mountain) made a good start and returned the next day. On their 50-acre farm on the south side of the fourth line, they raised 13 children.

Still existing in the family today, are the bagpipes, reportedly used in the Hebrides and the Battle of Culloden. Each settlement had a piper and theirs was Sandy McFadgyn, a cousin of the McLeans. He played on the trip through the bush to help make the journey easier. He played at logging bees, and the popular dances, even after he had to be propped in the corner to keep him upright!

The pipes were in a trunk in an attic for over 100 years. Allen got them going and played them for the first time at decoration day at McIntyre Corners. They are now mounted on a plaque, covered with the Lamont tartan, and accompanied by a map of Tiree and a scroll.

The Lamonts and McLeans moved to the Stayner area in 1888. Sandy Jr.(Robert), Alex's father, became a sailor on the Great Lakes. In 1897, Sandy Sr. and family moved to "Indian Hill", west of Stayner where Sandy Jr. married Hannah Robinson in 1905. Alex, Mamie, Clara and Annie were all born in the roughcast house still remaining on the site in 1978.

The grandparent's home had been moved from Warrington Road(where they moved later after Sandy Jr. took over the farm at Indian Hill) to next door. When Grandfather Lamont became blind, Sandy attached a wire between the two houses so the old man could travel back and forth. Alex remembered having to dismantle the wire years later.

In 1920, the family moved to Buckingham Sideroad and the children attended the little school there. They farmed 150 acres on the Second Line for several years. Later, Alex and his partner, Peggy, with their family Allan, Hughie, Laughie and Bonnie settled on Christopher St. in Stayner, and after Peggy and Bonnie left, Alex and the boys moved to the corner of John and Cedar.

Music always played a big part in the Lamont story. Alex related that fiddle playing was a way of life. His grandfather learned a little. His favourite tunes were "Heather on the Hill", Highland Fling" and, "The Irishman's Heart to the Ladies" Alex also played fiddle with many a local through the years. For the next several decades, the "Lamont Pipe Band", consisting of pipes and drums was a fixture in Stayner at most public functions. Every Sunday evening they could be heard practising outside the Orange Hall. The band is missed today and many of the members have moved away.

Alex made the tape of the colourful Lamont story for the family and we are all indebted to him.