

Sunny Bank, Our Ancestral Home
By Andrew Patterson (1995)

Chapter 12

Tid-Bits

Frequently events arise which are of significant interest, but don't warrant a lengthy story. This chapter is devoted to a chronological listing of items which are pertinent to the history of Sunny Bank. Many are already discussed at length elsewhere, but are included here to provide continuity. They have been taken from a wide variety of sources including diaries of people who lived in the area. Therefore, I cannot vouch for the accuracy of all the information. I am especially suspicious of some of the temperatures, although they have been included. There are often discrepancies from one thermometer to another, and temperatures can vary greatly from sun to shade.

Sources are given, except when the event is common knowledge from several sources. At the end is a complete list of the sources used.

1758, Sept. 27 Capt. Bell and eight men of Wolfe's army, came up the York River and destroyed the lumber mill on Mill Brook. -- Diary of Capt. Bell, PAC

~1764 Lieut. John Paterson settled in Sunny Bank.

~1770 Felix O'Hara began the first store in Gaspe. --RP

1804 The first post office on the Gaspe Coast was established in Douglastown. --RP

1815 William Grant settled in Sunny Bank.

1837, Jan. 1 Gaspe Basin Post Office opened.

1838 Henry Brian Miller hauled his house from Sandy Beach on the ice and settled in Sunny Bank.

1854 Henry Eagle settled in Sunny Bank.

1857 Thomas Fitzallan Nelson settled in Sunny Bank.

1859 A shipping company called "The Gulf Port Steamers" established a regular service from Quebec City, stopping at Gaspe, Shediac, N. B. and Pictou, N. S. --DP

~1860 Felix Coffin began a hotel in Gaspe on the site where Baker's Hotel was constructed 20 or 25 years later (presently the site of Auberge des Commandantes). --DP

1866 James Fitzpatrick became York's first mayor. --RP

1871 First Canadian census was taken. Population of Sunny Bank had reached 71 persons.

1871 The telegraph was set up along the south coast from Matapedia to Cap-des-Rosiers. --RP

1872 Sunny Bank's first school was constructed. --DP

1885 Edward McGregor Coffin settled in Sunny Bank.

1885, Jan. 1 Gaspé Bay South Post Office opened. --PAC

1885, June 26 "A fearful hailstorm raged here." --EF

1886 & 1889 James and John Palmer, brothers, settled in Sunny Bank.

1893, July 18 Consecration of the burial ground in York. --EF

1895 Arthur Clark settled in Sunny Bank.

1895, Dec. First St. Andrew's Church was completed.

1897, Jan. 26 "Coldest weather on record, -52; F" from Benjamin Patterson's diary. --RP

1897, Sept. 17 First covered bridge across the York River from Sunny Bank to Wakeham was completed. --RP

1899, Aug. 1 Original Sunny Bank Post Office opened, in what later became known as Brassett.

1900, June 4 Sunny Bank Post Office moved to the home of George Patterson, where I now reside.

1904, Nov. 29 Crossed ice at Gaspé Basin with horse. from the diary of Benjamin Patterson. --RP

1905, June 8 Hail stones, "as big as hen's eggs," fell killing sheep and cattle and damaging buildings. Crops were a total loss. from the diary of Richard Annett. --RP

1906, June 20 St. Andrew's bell erected at a total cost of \$287.82. --EF

1908 barrel of flour (196 lbs) cost \$3.25. --BPAl

1908 Telephone lines along the south coast from Matapedia reached Gaspé. --RP

1909 Alfred Miller found rocks along the upper York River with traces of copper. --AM

1911, Aug. 12 First train arrived in Gaspé from Matapedia. --RP

1914, Feb. 10 Parcel Post service began in Gaspé. from the diary of Benjamin Patterson. --RP

1914, June 6 Six inches of snow and many sheep died in the storm.

1914-1918 Ten young men of Sunny Bank served in WWI, with the loss of one life, that of James Palmer at Vimmy Ridge.

1915 Second classroom added to the original school.

1915 Gaspé Fish Hatchery moved to Sunny Bank.

1918, Sept. 7 Joseph Patterson bought a Model T Ford from George Eden for \$325.00 (first car in Sunny Bank). from the diary of Richard Annett--RP

1921, July 6 Famous '21 fire began at Spruen's Rock. By the 16th it had burned down to Fourth Lake (Lac Baillargion). Over 300 men were employed fighting it but it was only extinguished by the first snowfall. --RP

1921 First garage started by Joseph Napoleon Girard in Gaspé. --RP

1923 A lot of Sunny Bank men went west to harvest wheat. --CP

1927, Nov. 4-6 Extremely heavy rain. Largest flood ever seen on York River. Several bridges washed out.

1928, Feb. 15 John Eagle's home burned. --RP

1928, Aug. 20 Road completed from Gaspé to Sunny Bank through York. from the diary of Benjamin Patterson. --RP

1929, July The "Great Belt Highway" which later became the Perron Boulevard, was completed around the Gaspé Peninsula. --RP

1929, Aug. 19 First service in the new St. Andrew's Church

1930 Sunny Bank's first rink.

1931, April 19 Began ploughing. Earliest spring on record. from the diary of Benjamin Patterson. --RP

1931, April 28 Birches by the house coming out in leaf. from the diary of Benjamin Patterson. --RP

1931, July 30 Second covered bridge across the York River completed. --RP

1932, Oct. 9 Ross Bridge opened, spanning 765 ft. from Gaspé to Gaspé Harbour. It had a double draw bridge for boat traffic. --RP

1934, March 3 A carnival was held on the rink at the Lowlands. Turned out to be the last one, as the rink closed that year. --BP

1935 The new school was built with 2 rooms.

1935, Aug. 16-22 Hottest spell on record. Highs ranged from 98; to 103; F for seven straight days. Nighttime temperature never fell below 85;. from the diary of Benjamin Patterson. --RP

1938 The fish hatchery moved to its final site.

1938 Two extra rooms were added to the York Schoolhouse to make it the size it remains today. It then became an intermediate school, with grades 1 to 10, serving students from all of York. --FP

1938, March 8 Sunny bank Post Office moved into the house of Joseph Patterson. --BP

1936, March 20 Lloyd Coffin drowned on the ice on the "Upper river." (western end of the marsh) --BP

1941, July 31 Bad Forest fire and a thunderstorm at the same time. Turned so dark that the lamps had to be lit at 3 in the afternoon. --BP

1942, Feb. 22 First "black-out" practice for war time. --FP

1942, Apr. 26 large ice run on the York River. --BP

1948, July 24 A plane crashed into the mountain at Grand Grave killing all 29 passengers and crew.

1948, June 28 Electric power turned on in York and Sunny Bank.--RP

1953, June 7 First service in St. Andrew's Church with electric lights. --FP

1953, Oct. Work completed on the third bridge across the York River. --RP

1955, July 8 Hottest temperature ever recorded in Sunny Bank, 106° F in the shade. --CP

1956, Oct. 8 Road was paved in Sunny Bank. --FP

1957, Dec. 25 Green Christmas. --FP

1958, Sept. 3 Closed York School. Students from Sunny Bank were then bussed to Gaspé High School. --AP

1959, June 21 Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited Gaspé. More than 5000 people were in attendance. --RP

1962, Dec. 5 Gaspe got its first TV station, in black and white. --AP

1967, June 10 Sunny Bank Post Office closed. --AP

1970 The York Council was abandoned and we became part of the Town of Gaspe. --AP

1970 Present York Rink opened for its first season. --AP

1978, Oct. 20 Fourth and present bridge across the York River opened to traffic. --BP

1995, April 5 I'm sitting at my computer with a blizzard raging outside. Living proof of Gaspe's unique climate. PS it snowed 47 cm. --AP

2010. Dec. 13-15; Major flooding in Sunny Bank. About 40 houses sustained damage and the road was blocked for over 24 hours. The damage was estimated at over 2 million dollars.

Sources:

- AM Mr. Alfred Miller
- AP Andrew Patterson
- BP Ms. Bessie Patterson
- BPal Mr. Bert Palmer
- CP Mr. Coleman Patterson
- DP Ms. Dorothy Phillips
- EF diary of Ms. Emily Patterson (Falle)
- FP Ms. Fannie Bartlett (Patterson)
- PAC Public Archives of Canada
- RP Passing Years, by Raymond Patterson