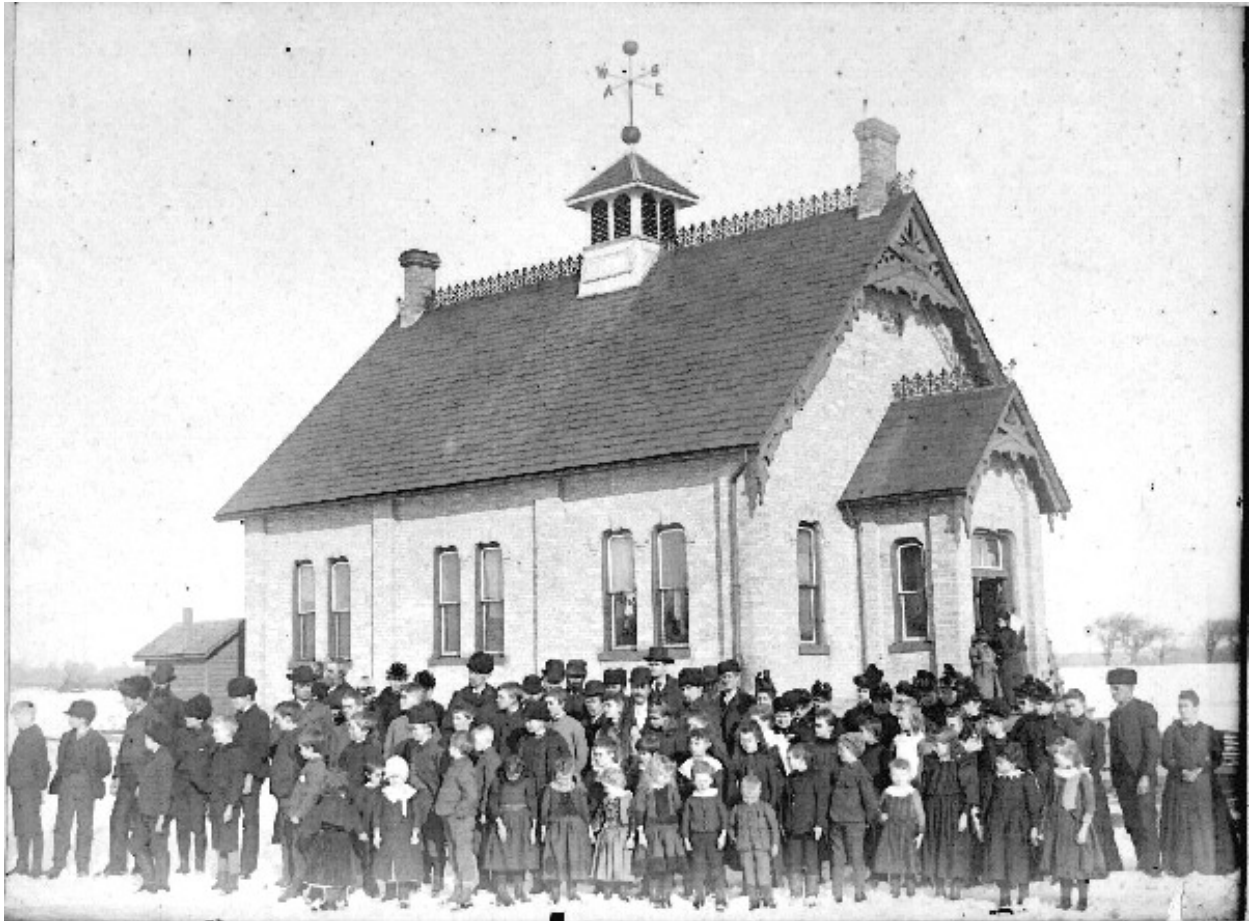


**Canadian Friends Historical Association  
Annual General Meeting and Conference, September 2010  
North Norwich Bus Tour**

*Marie Avey, guide*



*Quaker Street School Opening, 1883*

Leaving the Woodlawn Conference site we travelled west to Middletown Line (Township of Norwich) and turned north. Our route, crossing Milldale Road and continuing north to Maple Dell Road, took us past what had been the largest concentration of Black settlement in the township. The 1845 assessment roles show that nine Black families by the names of Wainer, Durphy, Joiner and Jones all held land in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> concessions along this road. No buildings of that era survive. At Maple Dell Road we were able to see an Amish sawmill business located over to our right.

At Pleasant Valley Road we noted a one-room country schoolhouse (now a residence) which served the community from the late 1800s until June of 1961. We continued north on Middletown Line where we passed a large white brick house constructed by the Hulet family. William Hulet was a stepson of Peter Lossing founder of the Norwich settlement. A.E. Hulet, who lived in this home, was well known throughout Canada as a breeder of superior Holstein cattle. Dr. Gertrude Hulet, who grew up here, was a missionary physician in India. There are two stories told in the



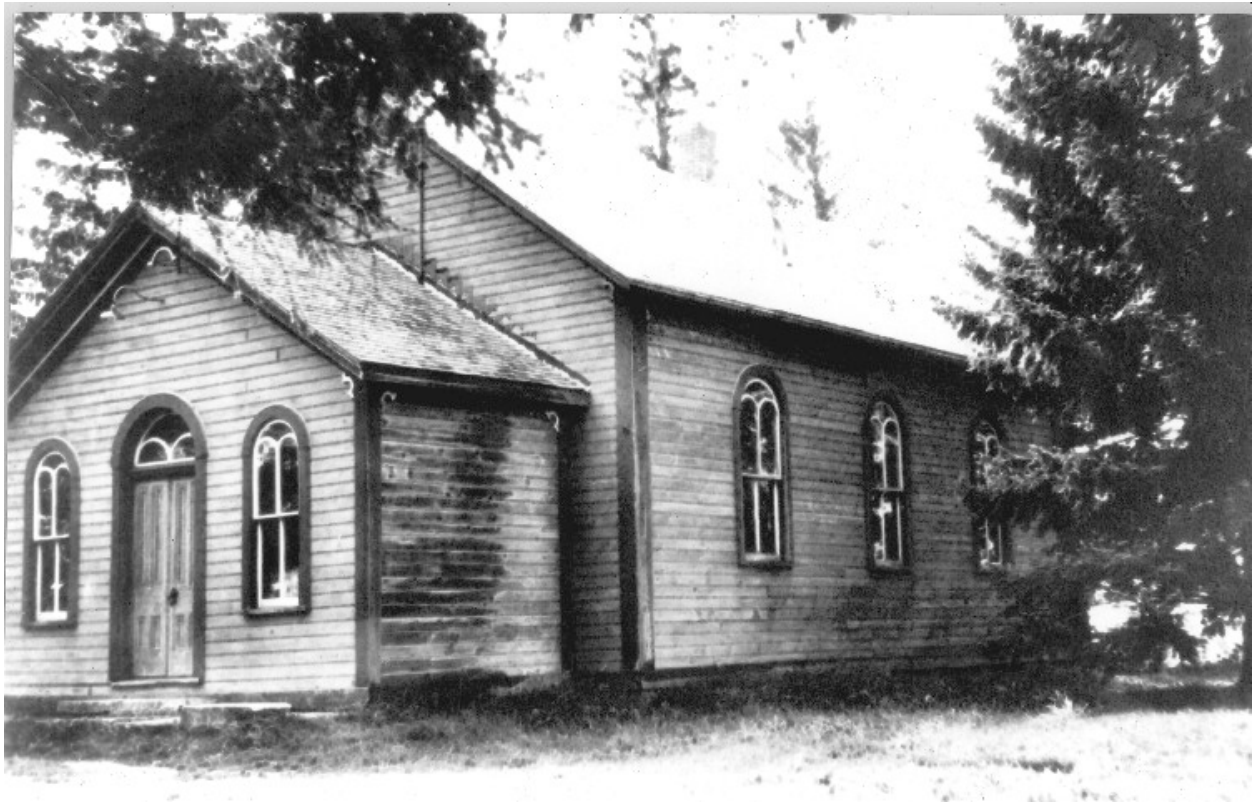
*Quaker School, photo by Ethel Polden*

community about why this house was built with no windows on the north wall. One is that Mrs. Hulet did not want her sons looking out on the tavern at Lynes Corners just to the north. The other is that Mr. Hulet did not want his wife to see him visit the tavern!

We continued north one more concession and then turned east onto Quaker Street. Just at the north-west corner of the intersection we noted another large white brick house (1880s

era) still sporting a dinner bell in its cupola. It was pointed out that the first farm on our right was the home farm of Quaker Gilbert Moore, and the site at which the Norwich rebels of 1837 practiced their drills. No original buildings remain on that site, but at the site just east, Mrs. Sutton, also a Quaker, frightened scavenging militia men away from her home in the rebellion's aftermath by telling them her children had red measles. In 1837 only the back part of the present building existed; the front part of the house was constructed using money the Suttons made by selling horses to the Northern Army during the American Civil War. As we continued east on Quaker Street we passed Thompson Elevators, a testament to the agricultural capabilities of the area. Each year they process tonnes of corn and beans from area farms.

The former Quaker Street School (now a home) served three generations of some local families before closing in 1961. The farm house



east of the school house was built by the Derbyshire family, ancestors of Olympic skating champion Barbara Ann Scott. The Derbyshires and other Quakers are buried in the C. Gordon Walker Burial Grounds where we stopped and toured. This was the site of the “Old Brick” Quaker Meeting House built in 1850 when the meeting had outgrown the original facility and burial ground further east.

Moses Mott, who had come to Upper Canada in 1810 with Lossing’s settlement party when he was only twelve, had to leave for some months of self-imposed exile in the United States lest he be taken into custody as a rebel supporter. Appropriate to the settlement’s bicentennial, just a few metres to the east we passed the spot where the Lossing party cut the new settlement’s first tree almost two hundred



*The Mott House*

The grave of Louisa Walker, Quaker missionary to India, was noted at that site. Across the road from the Derbyshire house is the Gary DeLong house built c.1835. His father was the brother-in-law of Peter Lossing and co-founder of the settlement. The DeLong farm was later owned by Harvey Farrington who introduced large scale cheese making to the area. A cairn at the cemetery marks the establishment by Farrington of Canada’s first co-operative commercial cheese factory in Canada on the DeLong farm in 1864.

The white frame Mott House on the south side of the road was built in 1837-38. Its construction was interrupted when its owner,

years before our tour.

We disembarked from the bus for a tour of the Pioneer Cemetery so that we could check out a few significant graves. We noted the burial sites of Peter Lossing, Henry and Anne Wasley, great-great grandparents of US President Herbert Hoover, and Daniel Bedford who was hanged as a rebel for his part in the rebellion of 1837. It was here that the first Quaker Meeting House, a frame building, stood. The land for burials and meeting house was donated by Peter Lossing. Across the road was land taken up by another Quaker family who arrived here in the spring of 1811. That family, the Cornwells, has a large agricultural



*Arthur Clayton House*

operation today (on another site in the township) and is well known in the community.

We turned left off Quaker Street and made our way south toward the village of Norwich where we visited the local Museum. On the Museum site stands the last of the seven Quaker meeting houses built in the township. It dates from 1889 and was erected by Conservative Friends after a split with those who had shared their meeting at the “Old Brick.” The former meeting house displayed many items relating to Norwich’s Bicentennial year including a number of items brought to Norwich by the original settlers from Dutchess County, New York. Also on the grounds is the Lossing saltbox which was moved here from Peter Lossing’s homestead. It has been carefully restored to the early nineteenth-century time period. On its original site, it, like many of the homes built by the first settlers, was situated on a hillside and had a “walkout” basement kitchen. The large barn displays

many items developed for use in the agricultural life of this very fertile area, and the Archives next door houses thousands of paper documents telling the community’s story. The Tri Elm schoolhouse sits here awaiting restoration. We could easily have spent the rest of the day at that site soaking up local Quaker history!

Leaving the Museum we turned right (north) on Highway 59 and travelled three miles to Beaconsfield, site of a meeting house built in 1879 to spare the local friends and their small children the long winter sleigh ride to the “Old Brick” on Quaker Street. This building is now a home and has been relocated one mile east to 405908 Beaconsfield Road. Returning to County Road 14 we noted the former Beaconsfield schoolhouse at the corner, another building that has been converted to a home (its roof was lowered when it became a home). At one time Beaconsfield also had a store and a post office. Travelling south on County Road 14, we approached Highway 59 and continued south on it, passing the pioneer Gillam brick house with its basement kitchen



*Milldale Cemetery marker*



*Quaker Cemetery*

and fireplace still intact. Further south we saw the original site of Tri Elm, the private Quaker school on the Clayton farm. We continued south on Highway 58 through the village of Norwich to Milldale, site of another Quaker meeting house and cemetery. The building is no longer there, but there are a number of interesting graves including that of William Barker, a prominent Quaker who was the father-in-law of Thomas Wright, builder of

the octagonal house, now known as Woodlawn in which the CFHA AGM and Conference was held.

As we travelled to the Otterville corner, it was pointed out that the land to our left from Quaker Street south was all part of the Lossing purchase of 1810. The southern part is referred to as the Lower Settlement and the part extending north of Milldale to Burgessville is known as the Upper Settlement.

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**Canadian Friends Historical Association  
Annual General Meeting and Conference, September 2010  
South Norwich and Otterville Bus Tour**

*Gail Lewis, guide*

The South Norwich Historical Society was pleased to host the 2010 CFHA AGM and Conference at Woodlawn. Woodlawn's setting is the former site of the Pine Street Meeting House. This is also the former home of

Thomas and Mary Jane (Barker) Wright. After lunch we started with a description of Woodlawn and why the Wrights built this home in an octagonal shape. Wright had the ingenuity to construct this home in 1861 following the



*The Otterville Grand Trunk Station Museum and Blacksmith Shop*

principals set out by Orson Fowler; he purported that the octagonal plan, at the time, was to be the wave of the future.

The Otterville Grand Trunk Station Museum and Blacksmith Shop are on the same site as Woodlawn, as well as the Pine Street Burying Grounds and Erbtown Cemetery, so we continued to explore these historic sites. At the Station Museum we have tried to maintain the waiting room and Station Master's Office as original to an operating station. The baggage room is our interpretation centre for local history; here our volunteers do a great job of presenting attractive displays of history and artifacts.



*The 1845 Grist Mill*

At this point the bus arrived for our Friends to visit the historic sites in the North end of the Township of Norwich with Marie Avey as guide. After the North Norwich portion of the tour, we met again to continue the Historic Otterville tour at the Mill which also has been restored and maintained in working order by our Historical Society. This 1845 Grist Mill with its massive timbers and its highly mechanized works are a wonder to see. The current mill was built by Edward Bullock and also was operated for many years by the Lossing family. This mill site has been the centerpiece of Otterville for over 200 years.

Our tour continued to the African Methodist Episcopal Cemetery. The story of the free Blacks that came to this area was related as well as the restoration of the site, which is almost complete. As I spoke, the Friends present were collectively moved to clear this spiritual site of sticks and limbs. This joint act of kindness was a beautiful event to witness.

We then made a short trip to Rock's Mills, formerly Spencerville. This was home to Adam Spencer and his wife Catherine Gainer. Originally owned by Robert Addison and then



*Entry gate to the African Methodist Episcopal Cemetery.*

Gilbert Stover, the Spencer family was the one to install the stone ground flour mill. This passed to Spencer's son-in-law, John Rock, whose name ended up being attached to the settlement. At the time of our visit the Mill was in the midst of being torn down. Its charming setting remains today.

Our tour ended with a hasty trip back for supper at Woodlawn. The meal prepared by the Historical Society was enjoyed by all.

Thanks to the organizers for bringing this special event to Otterville. It was a pleasure for everyone in the Society to host your AGM. I personally was so pleased to be able to relate some of our history and make the acquaintance of so many good folks.