

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Thurs., Jan 21, 1965

ACROSS THE ISLAND

Mrs. Moreside 106 Is Visited This Week

By NEIL A. MATHESON
Provincial-Farm Editor

I HAD the pleasure this week of visiting Mrs. Catherine Moreside who tomorrow is observing her 106th birthday anniversary at the home of her son and daughter-in-law Mr. and Mrs. Reagh Moreside, North Milton.

If young folk of today think they have all the fun, and are inclined to look with pity on the people who lived through those earlier pioneer years, they should talk to this lady.

"Do you remember your wedding day?" was one of my questions and the lady recalled for me that she had been married in Charlottetown without her parents knowledge, and then driven to her home in Wheatley River with her husband to tell them about it.

The former Catherine MacDonald worked at Johnny Hooper's in Milton and her husband, James A. Moreside lived in North Milton. Part of the plan was to fool the people who would have given them a Charivari, and in this way they succeeded. The people in her home district did not learn of her marriage until almost one week later. Tradition insisted the charivari had to be carried out on the first night the couple arrived in the district.

TO FURTHER mislead her old neighbors, Catherine MacDonald Moreside stayed several days at her home, while her husband returned to his farm in North Milton.

Mrs. Moreside is alert and bright at 106. She is downstairs for her meals and is easy to talk with, as her hearing is good, though she is almost completely blind.

A few weeks ago she fell down stairs but this amazing lady was able to shake off the effects of her fall and was sitting in her armchair, dressed to a Queen's taste when I called on her to get her picture earlier this week. She has a sister who will be 100 if she lives until next autumn, and a son, George in Vancouver is 82 years of age.

(See Guardian woman's page tomorrow for her picture.)

Gallant Family Reunion Coming

THERE WERE so many outstanding events in the Centennial year of 1964 that the true significance of many of them was lost. But one of the celebrations planned for last year was postponed until 1965, because it was felt by the organizers that they could not do it full justice.

From my good friend Dr. Henri Blanchard I have a note on the Gallant Family Reunion which will be held next August – likely the week before Old Home Week – and it will feature a gathering of the 700 Gallant families of this province who are descendants of Michel Hache-Gallant and Anne Cormier who settled at Port La Joie, now Rocky Point, which was chosen as the capital of this Island by the French and where some 60 families gathered. The original family consisted of seven sons and five daughters.

IN THE first census of the Island in 1728 there were only 38 Gallants at Port La Joie but there are close to 2,000 Gallant families today in the Maritime Provinces alone. And, Dr. Blanchard assures me, numerous other families who are direct descendants of Michel and Anne, are to be found in every other Canadian province and through virtually every State in the U.S.A.

As many as possible of those families will receive personal invitations to attend next summer's Gallant reunion here where they can visit the land where the long line of their descendants originated.

All Gallant families in this province are being cordially invited to participate in the welcoming of their numerous relatives, though many of them may be far removed from the families here.

The province's outstanding French historian, Dr. Blanchard has listed many of the important events of the past in his interesting book "The Acadians of Prince Edward Island", to which I referred when it was published last year.

Dr. Blanchard, quoting Professor Daniel C. Harvey, notes regarding the selection of Port la Joie as capital "Though later subjected to much criticism because it was comparatively poor in natural resources, Port la Joie remained the capital throughout the entire French period (1720 to 1758), and under the English, the city of Charlottetown was erected on the same harbor, not far from the original site. . . In this sense the capital dates from 1720, 29 years before the founding of Halifax in 1749."

First Officers' Club Recalled

COMMANDER GEORGE Buntain recalled for me last Saturday evening that he and Lt.-Col. F. B. (Ben) Conrad got together one day somewhere about 1925 and organized the first Army and Navy officers club, later to be known as the United Services Officers Club, the name by which it is known at the present time.

The first commanding officer of the Charlottetown navel company, Cmdr. Buntain, held the rank of Lieutenant at that time and I presume Col. Conrad was also a subaltern, at this time. Colonel G. Elliott Full was chosen as the first club president. "We wanted a man whom the people in general would respect", George Buntain recalled as he told me the story of how the club got its start in this city.

Drinking for example was severely frowned upon at the time in those early days, some 40 years ago, and there was always something to drink, besides water, at the Army-Navy club, I gather.

Roast Pig Buffet Dinner

I MET Cmdr. Buntain at the Roast Pig buffet dinner at the club and must thank Past President Ivan Kerry for the invitation. Ivan was telling me several weeks ago about such a dinner they had held some weeks previously when I started to ask about details. So he invited me down to see and taste for myself.

The pig – it weighs 30 to 40 pounds – is roasted in its entirety from snout to tail, with a Red apple in the mouth, and carried to the table on a huge platter. Tommy Davies's Royalty Oaks looked after the roasting and serving, with Mr. Kerry much in evidence at

the serving table. There were many other delicacies on the heavily laden table – as some 160 guests can assure, but the roast pig itself was delicious.

I understand Mr. Kerry started the roast pig dinners at the club last fall when he was closing out his year as president. At least part of the instruction for the unusual meal came from Ivan's mother in Western Canada.