



## A Personal Perspective on the MacDonald and Hyatt Families of Hallowell County

by Don Metcalf as related by Barbara (Hyatt) Wells

March 2016

### Introduction:

Much has been written on the "West Point" corridor (that part of County Road 12 from the entrance of Sandbanks Provincial Park to the "Four Corners" and along the route to the ruins of Lakeshore Lodge). It is the intent of this article to trace out a personal history through the eyes of one of its former residents, Mrs. Barbara Hyatt Wells, who was born, raised and lived in one of the lodges established by her ancestors. The focus of the article will dwell chiefly on the lineage of two families (Mrs. Wells' and Mr. Keith MacDonald's) and how they are connected, most notably in a social fashion with minimal family relations. Throughout the article, the genealogy of each family will be traced to those subjects who played an important role in Barbara's life. It should be pointed out that there are many cases in which Hyatt and MacDonald are mentioned on both sides of the two families. However, that may be based on coincidence, second marriages producing step/half siblings or distant cousins descended from former branches of either family.



Barbara Hyatt, late 1940s, in front of the Hyatt home (Lakeview Lodge) (image 16-0960a)

The following Lodges will be discussed and are presented in order from south to north along the West Point corridor. (*see map, page 6*)

1. Lakeland Lodge (1930) Proprietor: Sarah Hyatt MacDonald
2. Bay View Lodge (circa 1930) Proprietor: Helen Rankin Hyatt and Ken Hyatt
3. Lakeview Lodge (home, 1869; Lodge circa 1930) Proprietor: Alida Maude MacDonald Hyatt and Violet Hyatt Monroe
4. Shoreacres Lodge (circa 1922) Proprietor: Amos and Em MacDonald
5. Lakeshore Lodge (circa 1879) Proprietor: Daniel MacDonald and John Hyatt

James Clayton Hyatt, Barbara's grandfather, was a farmer and entrepreneur. His father, James (Barbara's great grandfather) built the brick house in 1869. Clayton's father-in-law, Daniel MacDonald along with a distant cousin of Clayton's, John Hyatt, "redeveloped the Lakeshore Lodge into a grand hotel" in 1879. Clayton had the foresight to plant a row of sugar maples along the west side of County Road #12. This row of trees remains today, just north of the recently planted Butternut field. It did not take long for these early, dedicated and conscientious farmers to realize that a tourist Mecca lay at the edge of their farms on Athol Bay and West Lake.



Lakeview Lodge, c 1970; Image 16-0964, Barb Wells Collection



*Hyatt home, before addition of porch;  
Image 16-0954; Barb Wells Collection*

That stucco still dominates the exterior of the home, although some of the original Cobourg red brick can still be seen by the doorway from the removal of the porch. After Elwood's death, Violet married Douglas Gray and when the Lodge was taken over by the province in the 1970's, the Grays moved to a bungalow on West Lake.

Barbara remembers her grandmother having difficulty standing to prepare meals for guests so a piano stool was brought to the kitchen counter and Maude was able to turn to her chores at the back or rotate to the front to gaze out that large kitchen window and watch her growing family on the farms along the road.

With a little imagination, you may still see Maude today at the kitchen window. Though boarded up, it dominates the central north side of the lodge.



*Hyatt home/Lakeview Lodge, Image 16-0963, Barb Wells Collection, 2016*

*Right: The Hyatt house today;  
Image 16-0923; John A. Brebner*



*Far right: Image 16-0916a; John A. Brebner, 2016*

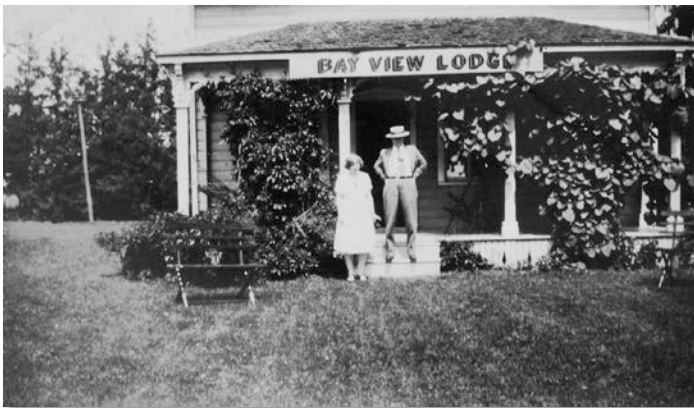




Unlike his father, farmer and businessman, Clayton, Ken made his mark in the world as a commercial fisherman. His boat was moored to a wharf in front of their home where the present day pump-house stands. Beside the dock was an ice-house where the day's catch was stored ready to be taken to market in Picton. Restaurants, neighbours and a few of the lodges were regular customers. The life of a commercial fisherman was not an easy one: Up at dawn to haul in the fish; strip the nets; realign the nets; gut and clean the fish then re-lay the nets in the early evening for another day. Ken fished for white fish, lake trout and smelt in the waters off Athol Bay, Salmon Point and the Reach at Glenora.

Ken married Helen Rankin in 1923 and they had one daughter, Barbara. It was felt that Ken wanted a boy so he sublimated that desire into the raising of Barbara. An avid hunter and fisherman, he taught Barbara to shoot both a shotgun and a 0.22 caliber rifle. At seventeen years of age, she recalls shooting her first rabbit in the woods adjacent to the Sandbanks. The local paper of the day described her as an "enthusiastic hunter who shot a nine and half pound jack rabbit by the sandbanks and a ten pounder in the Schoharie district".

Barbara was born and grew up in the (red) Hyatt home that her father purchased from Stuart MacDonald. When the Provincial Government wanted to purchase the house and farm, Barbara's father was adamant in retaining the Hyatt homestead as a private residence. The former wood framing on the outside of the house has been replaced with board and batten. It continues to be a private residence.



*Bay View Lodge, Image 16-0693; Barb Wells Collection, 2016*



*Bay View Lodge; Ken Hyatt home; Image 16-1172*

Barbara's schooling was in a one-room schoolhouse on West Lake Road that is presently privately owned.

It was a long daily trek down County Road 12, north through the woods then along County Road 18, to West Lake Road then down past the white church (*right*) to school.

She attended Prince Edward Collegiate in Picton for high-school, and as there were no school buses in her early grades, she was billeted with a family in Picton.



*Disciple Church, Image 15-1538; John A. Brebner*

But it was the summers that Barbara looked forward to. From the age of twelve in 1944 to just prior to her marriage to Jack Wells in 1952, Barbara worked long summer days and evenings to accommodate the guests at Lakeview. She was responsible for keeping the cottages clean and orderly (this not only included the regular sweeping and dusting but as there was no running water, it was her duty to deposit the effluent into a pit away from the lodge). In later years she worked in the dining room serving guests their home-cooked meals: breakfast, dinner (the main meal of the day consisting of a meat portion, vegetables, potatoes and pie or other treat for dessert) and supper, a lighter meal at day's end. Barbara recalls that both her grandmother and Aunt Violet were full of fun and mischief. Violet would often drop a large metal tray or a can of peas behind an unsuspecting guest just to see their reaction. Her grandmother would put strips of cloth in the pancake batter to see how guests would cope with this unexpected intrusion. A five-dollar week's tip left to Barbara by a wealthy American was considered a small fortune.

In the off-season the lodge was home to Barbara's grandparents and her Aunt Violet and Uncle Elwood. A workshop behind the Lodge was used as a utility area for home repairs and woodworking.

A picture of the shed (*right*) in the 1950's shows Barbara, her two children and her father standing in the door opening where a recently shot deer is hanging from the rafters. A bear "trophy" is propped against the shed front door. (*right*)

Another photo of her grandfather Clayton (*below*) shows him in front of one of the cottages tending to a flower garden. Clayton died in his one-hundredth and first year. Ken died in January of 1980.



Rear: Bear, Ken Hyatt, Clayton Hyatt; front: Barbara Hyatt Wells with children; Image 16-0694, Barb Wells Collection, 2016



James Clayton Hyatt (1869 - 1969); in the garden at Lakeview Lodge with the cottages (now removed) in the background;

Image 16-0688; all images Barb Wells Collection, 2016



Violet Hyatt and first husband Elwood Munroe; Image 16-0689



Ken Hyatt and his wife Helen Rankin; Image 16-0698

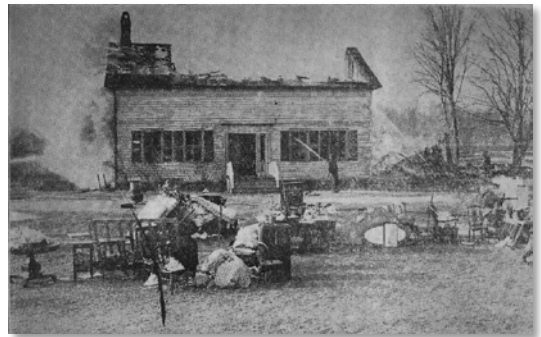


Alexander MacDonald founded the MacDonald farm, east of the Hyatt home where the boarded-up farmhouse remains. His brother, Robert MacDonald and family, lived in an elegant two storey framed home (*right*) on the site of the present day Keith MacDonald house. Robert's father, Daniel MacDonald, built the house in 1836.

That house was destroyed by fire on March 6th 1950. Robert's family included Walter, Bruce, Edith, Ethel, Amos, Stuart and Amelia. Barbara remembers fondly of visiting the elaborate home with two kitchens (winter and summer) to spend time with Edith, an older friend who helped at the Hyatt home. The two would erect a makeshift tent using canvas and split rail fencing and would play "house" in the woods beyond the house. (*below*)



*MacDonald Farm House, Image 16-0697a*



*Farm house after 1950 fire;  
Image 16-0679, Picton Gazette*



*Miss Parker, Edith McDonald, (d/o Robert McDonald), Barbara Hyatt; about 1940;  
Image 16-0699, Barb Wells Collection*

It appeared that Edith appreciated the companionship of Barbara as she lived alone for most of her life.

She enjoyed visits from her brother Bruce, who lived in Picton, and was her family contact and support.



*James McDonald Hyatt (1831 - 1919);  
Image 16-0686, Barb Wells Collection*



### Historical Lodge Sites, Sandbanks Provincial Park

Image 16-0975, courtesy John A. Brebner, 2016

Amos, another of Robert's children, had an enormous impact on the life and development of the area.

Amos and his wife "Em" (Barbara often referred to her as "Aunt Em") resided in a brick home on the east side and toward the west end of County Road 12. The farm home welcomed guests in the summer and became known as "Shore Acres". Amos initiated Provincial Government involvement in the region after seeing the invasive sands encroach over the Evergreen House site in 1911.

He persuaded the Provincial Government to establish a reforestation project in order to save the farmland from the encroaching dunes.

A forestry station was eventually established in 1922 under the direction of Arthur Herbert Richardson.



Evergreen House, Image 13-6657; PEC Archives

While local lore suggests the inn was overcome by sands and buried, the truth is that it was dismantled, and the materials used for cottages and construction at the Lakeview Lodge.



Amos tended to a large maple sugar bush just north of his property and across the road from Clayton's sugar bush and the rows of sugar maples along the roadside. Just north of the present day park butternut plantation and at the edge of Clayton's sugar bush was a sugar shack where the sap was converted to syrup.

Amos and Em were childless and in their later years, the home was taken over by Eva and William White, the latter, a hired hand to Amos.

The Whites ran their acquired estate as a tourist home until it was taken over by the provincial government in the 1970's. The home and the sugar shack across the road no longer stand. The two sugar maple bushes are all that remain as a memorial to the MacDonald legacy.

Alexander McDonald built the original McDonald farmhouse in 1867. The house still remains at the easterly end of the road and anchors the entrance to the newest recreational trail at Sandbanks Provincial Park.

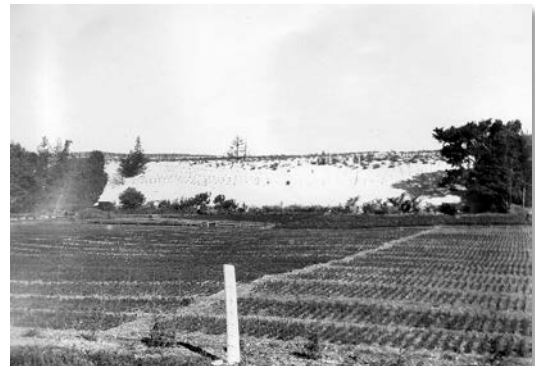
All that remains of the farm is the boarded-up house, a machine shop, a hog shed and a silo (right). The barn was destroyed in the 1990's along with a few other outbuildings. Philip, Alexander's son, and his new bride, Sarah Hyatt, moved into the home in 1895. Their son, Norman, married Aoda Ostrander and were the parents of Keith who farms to this day with his wife, Eleanor, on a farm west of the original MacDonald homestead.

Shortly after the World War One, when roads and transportation were improving, more and more people were opening up their homes to tourists discovering the recreational regions in Ontario. The county was one of these destinations and people flocked to the West Point area of Prince Edward for rest, relaxation and recreation. Amos MacDonald who received guests in the summer months was often overbooked with requests. He asked his "cousin" Sarah if she would mind taking in the overflow guests.

Sarah saw this as a great opportunity and in 1930, she established a tourist lodge across the road from the McDonald home. It was a two-story hotel with a formal dining room that was named Lakeland. It was described as an immaculate operation that harbored a telephone, running water and a private electrical plant. Nine cottages rimmed the outer boundary of the lodge. Farm fresh produce as well as milk and eggs came from the MacDonald farm across road.



*Remains of sugar shack, south-east of crossroads, County Road 12 ; Image 15-2270, John A. Brebner*



*Tree planting at Forestry Station, c 1924; Image 12-1961, PEC Archives, 2014*



*1867 McDonald Farmhouse; Image 16-1455, John A. Brebner, 2013*



*Lakeland Lodge, Image 12-1408*



*Aerial view of site of Lakeland Lodge, 2015. The old MacDonald home and farm buildings are shown just north of County Road 12. Image 14-1897, John A. Brebner*

Barbara remembers being sent to the lodge by her mother, Helen, to obtain cream and eggs for their own use and was rewarded with a nickel for her efforts. This was immediately spent on her favorite confection, the 'Revel' – a chocolate-coated ice cream treat. Barbara's mother often took in overflow guests from the Lakeland and the Hyatt home was dubbed "Bay View Lodge". After her death, Sarah was presented with the award of "Quinte Women of Distinction" for her efforts as a Tourism Pioneer. Sarah was involved in the Women's Institute and other volunteer organizations while supporting her husband's farm business, as well as running Lakeland Lodge. Philip died in 1936 and her son Norman and grandson Keith, with a few hired hands, continued running the farm. This petite, dynamo of a woman died in 1955. In the 1970's, the Provincial Government bought the MacDonald farm and Lakeland Lodge and cottages. The Lodge and the outbuildings no longer exist.



*Left: Lakeland Lodge dining room, Image 15-7828*



*Above: Aerial view of Lakeland Lodge showing cottages and recreational facilities; Image 15-7826*



## Epilogue:

In 1952 Barbara Hyatt married Jack Wells in the White Church at West Lake. Barbara moved from West Point area to live with her husband at the Wells homestead in Waupoos. Together they raised three children. It was there that she helped the Wells family in their apple orchard, tended to the selling of apples, home grown squash and pumpkins at the little fruit stand in front of the red brick home.

She was active with developmentally challenged residents at the "Heights" and sang in the choirs of both the Waupoos and Glenora United Churches. Today Barbara continues to be an active, caring mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Her granddaughter, Victoria Peever Carroll, was employed as a student naturalist at Sandbanks Provincial Park in the early 1990's.

There is no going back. The remaining lodge and farm buildings are memories of another time and era. The intent of this article was to take you to the inside of the homes and lodges and see through the eyes of a little girl all that was fun, warm and above all, love. I am exceedingly grateful for Barbara Wells' keen interest in family history and the preservation of the MacDonald and Hyatt homesteads and landmarks. It is for this reason that I dedicate this article to Barbara.

Don Metcalf

March 2016

If you enjoyed this reminiscence from Barb Wells as told to Don Metcalf, you may be interested in some other local history and genealogy. The Friends of Sandbanks are working on...

The [McDonald Family Genealogy](#), very much a work in progress from local records, gravestones and personal recollections by family members...

The [Hyatt Family Genealogy](#)...

**Sand Drift in Block H**, Hallowell Township <map 1854 - 1922>

These documents will be appearing throughout 2016 - 2017.

We welcome historical contributions and archival images of this area... please contact us at:

[media\\_relations@friendsofsandbanks.org](mailto:media_relations@friendsofsandbanks.org)

## Sources:

Images: Prince Edward County Archives; Barb Wells collection; John A. Brebner 2012-2016; Mariners Museum Collection