



A Way Back

School - Way Back Then

Written by Sherry Penney as told by Clara Penney
(known as Aunt Clara)

When I was 12 years old I went up to Mary's Harbour to go to school. We had to go to school in Battle Harbour for a couple of weeks or perhaps a month until the school was finished in Mary's Harbour.

I remember one Friday I was sick and they told me to stay in bed and I said "No I'm not going to stay in bed cause I feels like there is something going to happen. That day I didn't obey the nurse I got up and I'll never forget it. It was around dinner time I smelled smoke and I asked 'em was there a fire?"

We had smoke salmon that day for dinner and I loved smoke salmon but I was so frightened I couldn't eat. Oh my dear the blaze was just comin' out of the hospital where we used to go to School. A crowd of men came and brought us down to uncle Sam Acremans down to the end of the Island.

Working with Bowaters

Written by Kelly Russell as told by David Lawless

When I first came to Port Hope Simpson I was only 20 years old. There were 6 of us that travelled here on a coastal boat to work for Bowaters.

The only houses that were here at that time were built by the Labrador Development Company and then sold to people of the community.

The first day we were here, Ted Penney took us all up the lake in his boat and that evening we put up the canvas tent that we lived in for 6 weeks.

We would eat, sleep, and cook in the tent, wash our dishes at the beach and use the alters for our washrooms. Supplies finally came for us to build our bunkhouse. It took us 5 or 6 weeks to put them together.

I was on a tractor hauling sticks and Chamberlain Penney was on a little tractor that is still here today. One day he was travelling the tractor out of the woods and was watching the rest of us instead of where he was going and hit a boom stick that was lying in the middle of the path. He flew right out the window onto the mud and got the little tractor stuck. We tormented him the whole time we were working and we still do today.

That winter I was cook and everyone got sick and couldn eat anything, so I came into

town one Monday morning on a team of dogs to get some fruit and juices.

I was there two days before I could get in the store because everyone was sick out here too. The last day I was here Uncle Billy Parr went to the store with me to get what I needed and I went back to the camp.

After awhile everyone got better and we came back into town to work. We started to build in over the road (the forest access road) and from the Depot out we would travel the tractors on bogs and sticks that were laid one by the other to make the roads people now hunt, build cabins, and go for rides on.

The Way Things Were

Written by Kelly Russell as told by Wilfred Burden

I was born in a little place called George's Cove. When we moved to Port Hope Simpson there was no settlement like it is today. I was 9 years old when I first went to school.

My sister Violet and I had to travel to Mary's Harbour, by boat because there was no school here yet. She had been going to school a few years before me and now it was my time to go. That was my first and only year in school.

When the next school year came around the men were getting ready to travel back with us when all the children came down with the whooping cough.

We were not aloud to go back to school that year because everyone was afraid we would make the other children sick. When the men made it back to Mary's Harbour, all the children were already sick with the cough.

After I got better, my father began working in the woods and I stayed home to take care of my family and our dogs. Time passed and school still stayed on my mind but with my other responsibilities I didn't have the time to go back.

When I got older we lived in different places almost every year. I began fishing in George's Cove and that lasted for 8 or 9 years. I fished in Occasional Harbour for another 10-15 years until the fish became scarce.

The last person I fished with was Mr. Gordon Penney and we fished together until I retired. Even though I worked all my life without an education, I believe that school is very important and I would encourage you to stick with it even if it's hard, you will go further in life.

It Was A Bad Burn

Written by Sherry Penney as told by Angela Penney

I was 12 years old and I was helping my brother Ed with his camp he was building. We were nailing cardboard on the walls when I noticed the oil jar hung on a nail up over the stove.

I remember saying to Ed “we shouldn’t have that up there it might explode” because we had a fire in. Ed started nailing the cardboard on the walls and the oil can fell down right on the stove and before we knew anything there was a fire.

Ed ran out and I just stood there, I guess I was in shock I didn’t run out right away. Ed yelled out to me to get out or he was coming to get me, I managed to get out and started rolling around and around on the snow. I just got out before the whole camp collapsed. Larry ran to get a Ski-doo to take me to the clinic.

When I got to the clinic, I had my hands by my sides and the skin was just hanging on the back of my hands like a pair of gloves. The palms of my hands didn’t burn because I had my arms crossed to my sides. The zipper of my coat was kinda stuck in the skin on my throat but I never had any pain right then because I was burned so bad I couldn’t feel a thing.

Ed was in a lot of pain he used to put snow on his burns to try and relieve some of the discomfort. My face was so swollen I was blind for two days. I remember saying to the nurses at the clinic “wash my eyes I wants to see”. The weather was down and we were unable to get out to St. Anthony for 2 days.

My family came to the clinic to see me and they said if they didn’t know who I was they would never had known because I was burned so much. Ed was burned too but his burns wasn’t as bad as mine. When we finally got out to St. Anthony, we were brought to the hospital, I remember it was then I started to see a little bit.

We were both put into isolation together for approximately a month so that our burns wouldn’t get infected. My face was so swollen they had to cut my food really small because it hurt to move my mouth.

My hands were burned so much my fingers had to be cut apart so that I would have full use of them. I had 9-10 skin graphs all together from my knees to my thighs for my hands.

While I was in the hospital, Dad spent 2 weeks with me and he used to say to me “Sis, I

didn't know if I should come in, I didn't know if it was you or a seal", because sometimes my gown would be so full of blood from where I used to pick at my hands. He would always try to make me laugh and cheer me up and that. I received treats from people at home and my Sunday school class.

Ed was allowed to go home before me, I was in the hospital for over 2 months and had to go back and forth to St. Anthony for a check up after I was home for awhile.

Sometimes I would feel really down especially when I see the scars on my hands and face but I also feel really blessed because I'm sure it could have been a lot worst.

Renovating our House

By Judy Ward

Our family had to move to another house so we could get our home renovated .We moved to another Labrador Housing Home. We moved on Nov. 25th, 1998. it was suppose to be for three weeks or so, but we ended up spending Christmas there. It wasn't the same as having Christmas in our own home but we had to make the best of it.

We moved back to our house on Jan. 12th, 1999. When we came back the men had our house all completed. They had 4 bedrooms built on and the bathroom was made bigger. We had all new windows, doors and tiles plus new siding, everything looked beautiful. We had to stay longer than expected but it was worth the wait.

My Days On The Groomer

Written by Kelly Russell as told by Calvin Penney

When I first started on the groomer my oldest daughter was 8 years old, that was about 20 years ago. My first job was clearing strips on the harbour of our community and the towns close by, so the planes could have somewhere to land in the winter.

After a few years Sam Kippenhuck (from Charlottetown) and I started grooming the trails from Port Hope Simpson to Charlottetown Norman's Bay-Pinsent's Arm and Williams Harbour. It would take about a day and whatever town we were at that night, that's where we would stay and we continue again the next morning.

Then we would come back to Port Hope Simpson and travel to St Harbour and 21 miles above Mary's Harbour towards Red Bay. We would also do the ski trails. We would groom the trails depending on the snow fall the night before.

I'd say Sam and I were on our 3rd year of grooming the trails, when one night we had a lot of snow. The next morning we were on our way to St. Lewis we got the groomer bogged. At the edge of one pond there was so much mud that the water didn't freeze

around the edge. The groomer broke through and we got stuck.

Sam and I hopped out of the cab and started to cut some big trees down with the chainsaw we always carried. We laid the trees one by the other on the ground and with some help of a few men cutting firewood near by, we slowly got the groomer on safe ice. That was one hard day.

Another time we were on our way from Charlottetown and just started to go down Notley's Hill when we saw a man coming towards us driving a little too fast.

He was on his way to Charlottetown with a box of green wood. I guess he didn't see us until it was too late. When he got so close that he realized he couldn't pull off the trail, he jumped his ski-doo. and landed in the snow.

His ski-doo bounced off the blade and the wood went up in the air and landed back in the box. We jumped out of the groomer to see if he was all right. Everything was fine, he was just shook up a bit.

While we were getting him back on the trail another man who was coming from Charlottetown didn't realize the groomer was there stopped and smacked into the back of her. When we had the ski-doo's back on the trail and everyone was all right we stood around and had a little laugh at the situation.

In my 13 years of grooming the trails we saw a lot of people barely escape hitting the groomer, and a few that slowed down in time but bumped the blade but no one was ever killed, "Thank God For That". I've enjoyed every day of the 13 years. I worked on the groomer and sometimes I wish I could've worked longer.

Returning To School

Written by Kelly Russell as told by Velma Burden

I went to school until I turned 16 and then quit because I was starting a family. The year after I got married and settled down. With one young child and another on the way I just didn't bother to go back to school. While my children were growing up, my time was limited but I always wanted to go back.

Five or six years ago I started to do some courses through the mail and began to go to the Learning Centre here in Port Hope Simpson. I would go a few days a week on the computer and really enjoyed it.

The summer of 1997 I was working in St. Lewis at the crab plant when I got my call to go to school here at ABE. I quit work and came back here to start School in the Fall. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to do the work where I was out of school since I was 16, but

after a while I got use to it and started to enjoy it.

I got a call to go to work while I was still in school, but I turned it down so I could finish my education.

I was in school for one year and five months and this past January (1999) I finished with my grade 12, our graduation will be on June 5/99.

I would like to encourage anyone who would like to go back to school and get their grade 12 to take the step because you are never to old.

Comical Fellow

Written by James Sampson

*This old man was up on the ice fishing
and 3 gentlemen went up and asked
him how many trout he had.*

*“Just a minute, “he said,
“I’ll count them, 2+2 is 4, and 2 is a couple of
more,
this one, that one, and 2 makes 10!”
Lie said this so fast they laughed in confusion!!*

Our House Burned

By Della Kippenhuck

When I was ten years old, our house burned. There were fourteen of us in the house. Mom got up in the morning and went out to the kitchen and George Rowe was breaking out the windows. He thought he was yelling “the house is on fire” but he was not saying anything.

Mom came up the stairs yelling to us to get out of bed, the house is on fire. I got up going to get my dog but my sister was hauling on my arm for us to get out of the house. We ran down the stairs and got out the window and went down to uncle Winston’s house.

I remember crying because my dog burned but I was glad that none of my family had any burns.

We stayed at uncle Winston’s for three months until dad got the new house ready to live in. It was good to be home again.

My Parents Wedding

By: Nicole McNeil

I was glad when my parents were finally getting married. I can remember when I was a little girl I used to think they were married until one day my mom told me they weren't married. When everyone heard that they were getting married everyone was so glad for them.

We called my brother Kirk who was working in Goose Bay at the time to tell him that mom and dad were getting married, well talk about one happy guy. Kirk told us that he will be coming home for the wedding.

When the day came that he was suppose to came home his flight was cancelled and we though Kirk wasn't going to make it but he did and then my aunts and uncles came to the wedding.

We had a lot to decorate the hall food. of people helping us and preparing the food

Everyone helped out in whatever way they could. Finally, the wedding day came December 12, 1997. I was my Mom's maid of honor and I was very happy. Kirk was the one who gave her to dad, that was the happiest day of our lives.



Photo courtesy of Nicole McNeil

Nellie's Story

by: Nellie Kippenhuck

I quit School when I was 17 years old, I really liked School but I had a big problem keeping up with the rest of the class. I guess you could say I was a slow learner. I started to go to the Learning Centre in 1992-93. I really like doing my reading and math courses on computer.

I was in the Creative Initiatives program that was offered at the Centre in 94-95 which was full time, the same as day school. I took part in the Literacy Conference in Goose Bay in the Fall of 1995 and I enjoyed it very much. I went to St. John's in April 1998 for a conference, I met some really nice people there. I like to be involved and enjoy learning new things.

I would like to encourage anyone to come to our Learning Centre and see what we have available. One of the best things I like about the Centre is you can learn what you want and at your own level, take that step and be involved.

Comical Fellow 2

Told by James Sampson

One thing I can remember, I went up the river one morning to try for some trout. When I got there I saw a man on the ice trying for a trout too. So I went to where he was at and said, "Good morning Mister, How are you getting on with the trout?" "Well, "he said "I calls myself doing very good. I only wants 11 more for a dozen!!"

Comical Fellow 3

Written by James Sampson

*This old man died, and another old fellow came
along all dressed up to go to his funeral.
He asked a 3rd man was he going to Uncle Bill's
funeral?
"No, indeed I'm not, "he said.
"If he can't come to mine, I'm not going to his!!"*

Dog Sled Race

Written by Kelly Russell as told by Viola Lawless

When I was 17 years old I remember the town had a sports day and Ben and George Rowe wanted someone to race their dogs in a dog sled race. We had to go out the bay so far, turn around and come back in again.

I was so afraid of dogs and just my luck one of them broke free. I couldn't use the whip because I was so scared but somehow on the way to the finish point I gained speed and pasted Annie Russell and came in first place. I was so happy! For winning the race I got a pair of jeans. In the end it was worth it.



Photo courtesy of Michelle Clarke

Grand-Father's Dogs

Written By Thelma Kippenhuck

When I was 4 years old we lived in William's Hr. My grandfather had a team of husky dogs and new pups. They weren't tied on or in a pen because they were good dogs. My brother Simon was 2 at that time and we were playing outside. I was in a little dory that was on land and Simon couldn't get in so he was on the way in the house to get mom to help him in.

The pups were by the door playing like you see them sometimes. One of the pups knocked him down to the ground and then all the dogs jumped on him and started to bite his head, legs and back. He was in such bad shape that we didn't think he was going to live.

Mom heard me crying and came out to see. Uncle Lenard Russell heard mom crying out and came and drove the dogs away from Simon. The dogs chased uncle Len to the door with Simon in his arms and then he came back out for me, swinging a stick so the dogs wouldn't eat me and he carried me in the house too. They had to take Simon to the "Old Hospital" that was here in Port Hope Simpson in a motor boat and it took over 4 hours because we didn't have a fast motor like you can get today. Mrs. Celeste Acreman was the nurse that took care of him.

Back then they would put people to sleep with some kind of heater gas and where the only lights were kerosine lamps, she couldn't use them for safety reasons. My mother had to hold a flashlight over Simon while the nurse sewed up his cuts. He was in the hospital for 2 weeks and when he left he couldn't walk.

My Grand-father killed every husky he had even the pups. I was a little over 4 years old when this happened and I could remember as if it was yesterday. This was something I will never forget and till this day I am still afraid of dogs, even house pets but my brother Simon still loves dogs!

Simon Strugnell is still alive today. He has a family and is the owner of Strugnell's Woodworks here in Port Hope Simpson.

A Hard Time

Written by James Sampson

I remember one time my brother-in-law, Charles Russell and myself were going to Battle Hr. for some seal pelts for our dogs. So we left here in the morning, went to Mary's Hr. and had a lunch then we went to Indian Cove. We tried there but it was too high a price so we went to Battle Hr.

There was a fellow there who had plenty of seals but they were in another man's store and he was gone to Mary's Hr. with the key. So we left there and went to Indian Cove again. We stayed there all night and in the morning we got two pelts from a fellow there and left for home

Our next stop was Mary's Hr. once more. When we got there I met a man and he asked me where I was going, I said Port Hope Simpson. Well he said I just heard the forecast and it calls for Southeast wind and snow. I said we'll try it anyway. So we left and we got halfway up the bay when the breeze came on.

By the time we got down Lewis's Bay there was about two feet of snow that fell. I would walk in front of the dogs with my snowshoes on and beat a path so they could pull the sled.

We went in an old cabin and stayed all night. We made a stove out of galvanized buckets that were out around the cabin. I had some dates that we shared, it was all we had to eat.

The next morning we left again for home. We were all one day and night until 5 o'clock the next morning. We walked almost 22 hours with snowshoes on. It was a hard trip!



Photo Courtesy of Gail Sampson

My Accident

Written by Kelly Russell as told by Viola Lawless

I can remember when I was 11 years old and my Grand-father and my uncle came home with some wood. I was somewhat of a “tomboy” and they always gave me my own way. After they took the wood off the sled, I jumped on wanting to go for a ride. I fell off the sled, landed on the ground and broke my arm.

Back then there were no nurses to check out my arm and you couldn't fly to St. Anthony like today. I had to go straight to bed. Uncle Ted Penney and Aunt Clara Burden sat my arm in a wooden splint. Every second day they would come over to my house and redo the bandages.

It took a long time for my arm to heal and I still couldn't get out of bed so my friends would come over and play in my room with me. When it was time for them to go home I would cry because I couldn't go to their house or play outside. When my arm healed I was more careful with what I was playing on because I didn't want to miss all the fun with my friends.

Much Too Close

Written by Wanda Parr On behalf of George Rowe

The day of January 3, 1998 started as any other day during the winter months in Labrador. I was ready to head out to my rabbit snares with my grandson, Trent Parr at 8:00 am, it was -17 degrees that morning.

Trent was accompanying me this time because there wasn't very much ice formed in the

ponds or bay yet. We were taking the safest route possible, or so we thought.

We had gone down through the country as far as possible and were heading across the mouth of Beaver Brook. Trent, being the level headed young fellow he is, had the good sense to stay behind me some distance.

I went out on the ice and didn't realize that it was so thin. This was an area that would normally have plenty of ice in January. Well, I was almost to the thicker ice when my Bravo Trapper went through the thin layer of ice.

This is not an experience I like to talk about, but maybe someone who reads this may think twice before they make the same mistake I did.

It took a long time for my snow machine to sink through the slob and freezing cold water. While it slowly sunk, I stood on the seat of the snowmobile, while my grandson watched in horror

Trent was quick to think and act as he stayed along the shoreline and frantically cut trees. With the aid of the trees he tried getting close enough to reach me but he went through the thin ice and used the trees to roll back upon some thicker ice. I was sinking a few inches more every few minutes.

It seemed like every tree that Trent cut was just not long enough to reach me. Through the freezing cold of the morning he worked steadily, and it seemed as though this would be the end of me. After about 25 minutes in the freezing water, which seemed like an eternity, I was only bobbing up and down on the windshield of the snow machine.

The windshield was all that was keeping me from going completely under the chilling water. Trent finally cut a tree that he thought I could reach, but it was still too short.

I attempted to swim to the tree, which was about 20 feet away, and after grabbing after it a few times, I finally reached it and Trent pulled me to the good ice.



Photo courtesy of Wanda Parr

Trent and I were both overjoyed but there were more obstacles to overcome. My Bravo Trapper was at the bottom of the pond, and Trent was travelling on a Bravo Trapper that didn't have a windshield. You can just imagine driving on a machine with no windshield after coming out of the freezing water.

Trent gave me one of the two coats that he had on and once we got on the snowmobile he made me drive home because it occurred to him that I would freeze if I sat on behind him for the half hour journey back to our hometown, Port Hope Simpson.

On the way back home, Trent pounded my body all over to try to keep me from freezing in the sub-zero temperatures and chilling wind.

When we arrived at the Airport, Trent put me in a truck with Derek Burden, the airport worker, and he went into the airport to let the nurse know that there was an emergency coming in.

I was at the clinic for approximately three hours while the nurses frantically worked to get my body temperature back to normal. I am a very lucky person to be alive today.

I owe my life to my grandson, Trent, for being so brave and not giving up the struggle to get me out of the freezing water that January morning.

Trent is going to be awarded a Medal of Bravery for his courage in saving my life and will be travelling to Ottawa in May 1999 to receive his award from the Governor General of Canada.

Congratulations to Trent Parr for his outstanding effort and his Award of Bravery.

Heaven's Home By The Sea

Written by Margie Russell

A wonderful weekend this turned out to be
My family, my friends relaxing by the sea,
Occasional Harbour in it's winter bliss
For a winter get away no place like this.

A summer home settled by the sea
Where a fishing lifestyle once use to be,
Now a peacefu' haven just to get away
From the hectic worry of everyday.

The kids seem to love the fresh clean air
The freedom to roam just anywhere,
Where toast bread and tea never tasted so good
We'd stay here forever if only we could.

Still we must leave for the place we call home
But we're sure to return whenever we roam,
For here is a paradise for a free heart to be
A place next to heaven this home by the sea.

Young Man's Tragedy

Written by Lester & Ross Penney

In a Labrador Community, not so long ago, a grey haired mother sat and watched a rosey sunset glow. Looking out her kitchen window, down across the frozen bay. She's thinking of her darling son who've just now gone away.

He left Port Hope Simpson, around quarter to four, not knowing as he left his home, he would return no more. Speeding along on his Ski down to Lewis's Bay, and upon his returning home, he must have lost his way.

When he left Mary's Harbour, the storm was raging strong. For on his way up across the bay he knew that he'd gone wrong. The light in Fox Harbour, he must have seen across the Bay, not knowing as he followed this, that he had gone astray.

Well a search went on for many days, but no trace could they find, for the tragedy of this young man haunted everybody's mind.

And mother's heart was broken, for her son she'd see no more, until God links that broken chain over on the Other Shore, until God links that broken chain over on the Golden Shore.

Ronald Garfield Penney drowned on January 15, 1983, at the age of 25 years.

A Parent's Tragedy

Written by Stella Kippenhuck

A community in Labrador known as Charlottetown,
Suffered from a tragedy of a little boy who
drowned,
He was only four years old when his life was taken away,
They found him floating in the water out in
Charlottetown Bay.

A Mom and Dad sits heartbroken in a lonely home today,
Grieving for their little boy, death has taken away,
Never again will they feel his touch
or hear him call their name,
All they have left is precious memories and hearts that's
filled with pain.

Nicky was their pride and joy, oh how they loved him so,
He'll always be with them in their hearts
no matter where they go,
Oh what they'd give to hear him speak,
to call their name or cry,
Just to clean up after him would bring them so much joy.

They sit and think how it used to be and than they ask God
why,

somewhere, in the pattern of
God's plan,
So we must believe and trust in Him and hope some day to
understand.

His memory is their keepsake, with which they will never
part,
God has him in His keeping, they have him in their hearts,
So they'll cherish those precious memories
of their darling little boy,
While they're waiting to be united in the sweet, sweet bye and bye.

Nicholas Dempster died at age 4 years old.

*Suffer the little children, and forbid them not,
to come unto me:
for of such is the kingdom of heaven.
Matthew 19:14*

All That's Required

Written by: Sherry Penney

To some I can't seem to do much,
to more I can't make it on my own.

They think I'm nobody but I'm
myself and that's all that's required.

I may not be famous, I may not
go far, I make plans, I have
dreams, but I'm
myself and that's all that's required.

I have friends and family, I try to
understand and give words of
encouragement when I can, but I'm
myself and that's all that's required.

I do not have to pretend or make
believe I'm something I'm not, I can
tell you how I feel because I'm
myself and that's all that's required.

I would ask of you if I can that you
would accept me with no faults of my
own, I am special because I'm
myself and that's all that's required.

*I Would especially like to encourage all adult
learners to be yourself
because that is "All That's Required".*