

## Baysville Public Cemetery

### **The Thomas Brown Family**



**Margaret Brown 1879 - Jan 8, 1900**

**Thomas Brown Jr. 1880 - Jan 8, 1900**

**Jean Brown 1882 - Jan 8, 1900**

This grave stone is almost unreadable now, but it stands as a sad reminder of the perils of the waterways around Baysville - tragically, a recurring story in the history of the village for many families. The Brown family from Nithgrove Road, lost three of their four children in 1900 when the siblings went through the ice and drowned during a skating party. One can almost imagine the laughter and high spirits of this group of young adults that was suddenly silenced forever. Their bodies were recovered from the lake and are buried together here along with their parents, *Thomas 1847 -1921* and *Catherine 1840 - 1913*. William Brown, the eldest child was no longer living at home.



**W.H. Brown 1840-1920 & Elizabeth Brown ?- 1909** One of the earliest settlers to the area, W.H. Brown is generally considered to be the founder of Baysville when he and his wife Elizabeth settled here in 1871, as he was instrumental in much of the development of the village. He opened a sawmill to meet the needs of the settlers who began to populate to the area through the Free Land Grants. He built the first dam, had the village site surveyed, built the first brick house in the village, became the first postmaster (a role his family kept for generations for a total of 103

years), operated a store, built a steamboat and donated land for the cemetery as well as for the school and for each of the three churches. Lena Street in Baysville is named for his daughter and his great-granddaughter Shirley Burton, lives in the original brick house to this day.



**George Fairy 1881-1961** was the youngest son of Thomas and Susan Fairy, for whom '*Fairy Falls*' was named. George had 8 siblings but only George remained in the area, having met and married local girl *Myrtie (Henderson) Fairy 1887-1973*, George purchased the original family farm on Fairy Falls Road but over the years, sold most of his property with the exception of one parcel along the river that one of George's sisters kept and to this day a family member still has the property. George and Myrtie are the only members of the Fairy family buried in Baysville.



**The Findlay Family** - Bill and Betty Findlay had *Findlay's General Store* a busy general store in Baysville. Betty was one of three war brides who found themselves living in the little village of Baysville. She co-founded the first Girl Guide group in Baysville, was a member of the Horticultural Group as well as the "Dramatones". Tragically, in 1957 their 10 year old son, Brian, was swept off the platform of the old Baysville dam. The church bell rang out to summon help from the villagers but the child couldn't be saved.. Bill and Betty are buried with their son.

**Samuel Langmaid Sr. 1816 - 1886 & Eliza (Couch) Langmaid (1819-1893)** travelled from England to Canada in 1869 with dreams of a new life and were one



of the first of 4 families to locate in rural Baysville, where the family farmed along with operating a shoe business. Their son, *John Langmaid 1848-1920* and his wife, *Eliza Jane (Cullen) (1850-1938)* raised ten children in Baysville. John was also a shoe and boot maker and worked alongside his father in Baysville making boots for the river drivers. John formed a band called the *Fife and Drum*, who performed throughout Muskoka and were the pride of Baysville. There are 10 members of the Langmaid family buried in the Baysville cemetery including *Samuel Langmaid Jr.(1855-1934)* who bought up many tracts of land in the Baysville area including the land that is now known as *Langmaid's Island*, and *William Langmaid* who was a well known entrepreneur and the owner of *Langmaid's General Store*. The *Winder, Brown* and *Cole* families are the closest descendants of John and Eliza Langmaid



**Thomas Lea 1868-1905** Sitting rather alone in the Baysville Public Cemetery is the grave of a young doctor, Thomas Lea. This was a sad story as Thomas had contracted tuberculosis, possibly while treating factory workers in England, and already gravely ill, travelled to Canada to visit his parents, Dr. Julian Augustus Lea and mother, Julia, who lived just outside of Baysville. Sadly his father couldn't save him and Thomas died in 1905 and was buried alone in the municipal cemetery leaving his widow and two young daughters (1yr and 4 yrs) in England. Thomas' parents and siblings moved away from the area so Thomas is alone, although there are a number of distant cousins (Roberts), buried in St. Ambrose Anglican Cemetery.



**Alexander 1842-1915 & Maria (Langford) Pretsell 1858-1931** Alexander came from Edinburgh to settle by himself in Baysville in 1873, age 31. He met neighbour, Maria Ann Langford (16 years his junior) whom he married in 1876. He built a locally renowned cabin from huge pine logs as a home for him and his new bride, where they worked the land and raised five boys and three girls in the primitive backwoods three km outside of Baysville. Alexander also built the foundation of Bethune United Church, and was an ordained elder from 1883 until his death in 1915. The cabin that Alexander built was dismantled and moved to a new location but is still standing today, almost 150 years later! There are at least twelve Pretsell family members buried in the Baysville Cemetery.



**The Spongs - First Burial - 1872** - — Baysville Public Cemetery dates back to 1872 when Mr. Spong and his youngest son drowned while crossing the river on a cedar raft. There was no lumber readily available for coffins so a large pine tree was cut down, hewn into slabs and made into two coffins. It was at this time Mr. W.H.Brown donated 2 acres of land for the cemetery, and the father and son were the first burials in Baysville. For decades they were marked with simple wooden crosses, but in 1956 the Baysville Women's Institute erected the monument that still stands today.

**John Rowe 1864-1950 & Alice (nee Jelly) Rowe 1873-1969** In 1883, Alice Jelly's parents, John and Mary Jelly purchased "Baysville House", a well known tourist lodge built in 1876 to accommodate the growing tourist trade in Baysville. When Alice Jelly married John Rowe in 1894 they resided in Baysville, and were active



in the community. John was a stage driver delivering mail and Alice was a member of the Baysville Women's Institute. By 1921 they had nine children. In 1922, John and Alice purchased Baysville House and they operated it until 1946 when John, aged 82, and Alice, aged 73, sold the business, and it was renamed "Lincoln Lodge" by the new owners.



**John Tooke (1828-1915) & Martha Hamer (1836-1919)** John immigrated to Canada with his parents and siblings in 1836. After marrying and starting a family, in 1878, the news of free land grants in Muskoka drew John and Martha and 11 of their 17 children to Hattie's Lake, now known as "Tooke Lake" where John worked as a carpenter and farmed the rough Muskoka land. Many of their children left the area but the lake retained the family name of Tooke (sometimes found spelled as Took) There are five Tooke family members buried in the Baysville Cemetery.



**Daniel Vanclieaf (1841-1903), & Charlotte (Boice) Vanclieaf 1843-1915** along with their family of seven children settled here in 1881. Daniel was a trapper and crafted canoes, snowshoes and moccasins - a trade that his son Jack continued. Tragically, their adult son Henry, drowned in the early 1890s leaving his family of five young children without a father. Henry's body was never found. The descendants of one of Henry's sons, Frederick, make up the seventh generation of Vanclieafs who still live in Baysville today. Daniel & Charlotte Vanclieaf's headstone was damaged and has since been removed, but throughout all three of the cemeteries, you will find approximately thirty Vanclieaf family members. How many Vanclieafs can you find?



**Dan Watson (1908-1989)**, was the oldest of 9 children born to **James (1884-1957) and Verdie (Vanclieaf) (1899-1980) Watson**. At age of 11 he was sent to work in the lumber camp. In the 40s 50s and 60s he was Baysville's only Police Officer. One of his main jobs was checking on cottages and reporting to their owners. A man before his times, he built a boat that was powered by an airplane propeller that would go on water and ice which helped him with his investigating break-ins. He loved to fish and knew where all the hot spots were on each lake.

**Across the Dickie St. from the main cemetery, you'll find St. Ambrose Anglican Cemetery and St. George's Roman Catholic Cemetery. The Anglican Cemetery is on the left hand side, bordered by the river and the Catholic Cemetery is on the right hand side bordered by Carol St. There isn't a sign for St. George's Cemetery, but it is to the right of the stand of large cedar trees.**

### St. Ambrose Anglican Cemetery



**Hazelhurst, Mary d. 1919** Reverend Hazelhurst came to Baysville in 1895 and worked with the growing Anglican congregation in the area to build a new church which was completed in 1901. In 1919, the church burned down and Reverend Hazelhurst's mother, Mrs. Mary Hazelhurst, died from the shock of the loss of their life's work. It was at this time that

the Anglican Church purchased the land for St. Ambrose Anglican Cemetery and Mrs. Hazelhurst was the first person to be interred.



**MacKinnon, Arnold "Ray" MacKinnon 1920-2007 & Rose 1924-2013** Ray met Rose when he was a young soldier stationed in Europe during WWII where he served in the Royal Canadian Army. Rose, like many young women during the war, served in the Land Army in England, working on farms while the men were away at war. It is somewhat ironic that although Rose learned to drive a big tractor, she never learned how to drive a car! Rose was a war bride and the matriarch of a large family of 13 children, dozens of grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren, many of whom still live in the Baysville area today.

**St. George's Roman Catholic Cemetery**

**The Kelly Family**  
**John & Margaret Kelly**

Having acquired land through the Homestead Act of 1868, John and Margaret Kelly made the challenging journey from Ireland and eventually settled in the Baysville area with their four children. John passed away in 1893 but there are no records or grave markers indicating where he and Margaret (death date unknown) were buried.



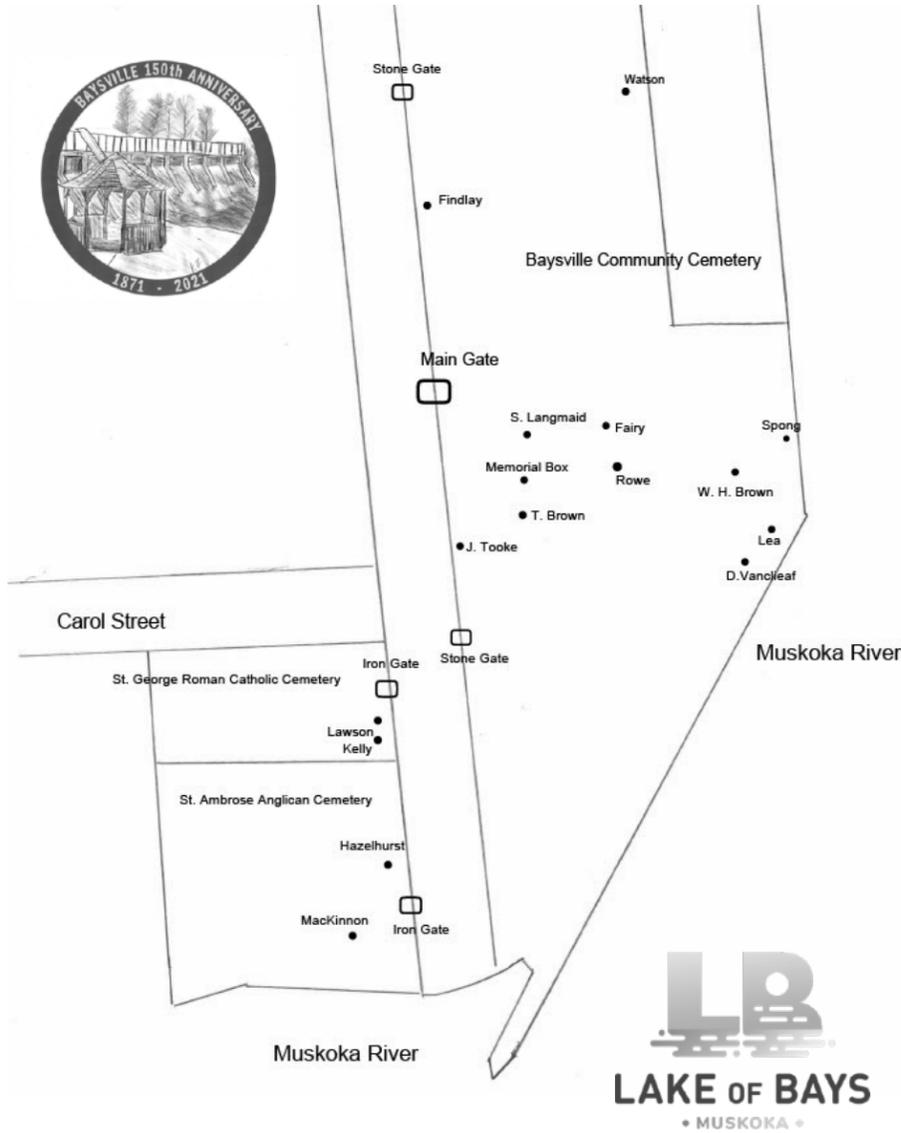
**Kelly, Michael Joseph (1865-1940)**, the youngest of John & Margaret's four children was the only one who remained in Baysville. He married **Sadie Jardean (1870-1960)** in 1891 and they had eight children, seven of whom lived in the Baysville area and, along with their spouses, and in many cases, their children and grandchildren are buried in Baysville. Indeed, it could be said the Michael Kelly branch of the family populated much the Catholic Cemetery (and Baysville) as their extended family includes the **Langmaid, Lawson, Old, Rowe, Walsh** among others. How many graves can you find that are part of this family?

**The Lawson Family**

**Philip Lawson 1926-1933**

**John T. Lawson. & Julia Kelly Lawson (1905-1994)**

Philip was just seven years old when he drowned in the river and was the first burial in St. George's when the property was acquired by his father, John T. Lawson. Philip's mother, **Julia Kelly Lawson (1905-1994)** was the daughter of Michael and Sadie Kelly. When Philip died, "Scotty" Campbell, (who was the grandson of Baysville founder, W.H. Brown) approached Philip's father about the fact that there was no Catholic cemetery in which to bury Philip and that he had a piece of property next to the Anglican cemetery which his family owned. Scotty and Mr. Lawson walked down to the Anglican cemetery where Scotty paced off an area so that Catholics would have a cemetery. The row of trees that still stands today along this line, was planted by Philip's mother Julia.



Map is not to scale and provides only an approximation of the location of the names mentioned in this brochure.

The many flower baskets adorning the graves are part of the Baysville 150 Cemetery Beautification Project - the brainchild of Mrs. S. Burton - and were purchased by friends, relatives, as well as generous strangers to beautify the cemeteries. Many thanks to Season2Season for their assistance in obtaining all of the beautiful flowers and to the township for their support with this project.

**Please adhere to the Township of Lake of Bays Cemetery By-Law Rules:**

- ***All visitors are to respect the deceased and conduct themselves accordingly.***
- ***Children under the age of twelve years are not permitted on the grounds unless accompanied by an adult who shall be responsible for their conduct.***
- ***Pets are not permitted in the cemetery.***
- ***The Township of Lake of Bays and the Baysville 150 Working Group assume no responsibility for injuries while walking through the cemeteries on the self-guided tour.***
- ***Please maintain appropriate social distancing***

***If These Stones Could Talk...***  
***A Self-Guided Walking Tour of Baysville Cemeteries***



For every headstone in the Baysville Public Cemetery, St. Ambrose Anglican Cemetery and St. George Roman Catholic Cemetery, there is a story. One could never memorialize everyone who was part of the fabric of the village - this is a very brief, and in no way complete, glimpse into some of the stories of hardship, friendship, heartache and joy that are part of Baysville's chronicle.

As you wander, you'll find the names of many of the roads, islands, lakes, businesses and streets in and around Baysville that can be traced back to the folks who lived here. Some died very young - sadly often due to the perils of the waterways in the area - and others lived long lives filled with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We have tried to be as accurate as possible, but memories aren't always the same as factual records and much of what is available on the history of Baysville are collections of memories (Ruth Martin Papers, Tweedsmuir W.I., etc.). We encourage you to ponder the lives of those who came before us. Many thanks to the families who shared their stories with us and to our sponsors who assisted with financial support for our various projects.

*Baysville 150 Committee*

**Memorial Box**

This box was erected in 1985 and stands in the centre of the cemetery. It holds the names of folks who passed away but for whom their wooden grave marker had deteriorated beyond repair. Their graves are now unmarked but their names live on in this memorial.

