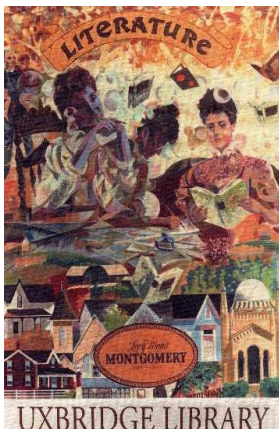


Remembering A Friend of Anne

© by Mary Beth Cavert

I have put off writing this issue of the *Shining Scroll* because it seemed to make the loss of a friend more real and more keen. Almost all of our *Shining Scrolls* have included news about Wilda Clark and events in Uxbridge or nearby Leaskdale Ontario, L. M. Montgomery Macdonald's home from 1910 to 1926. Wilda was our personal friend, especially for Carol Gaboury, Carolyn Collins and me. She was an honorary member of our LMM Literary Society, though she lived hundreds of miles away (we pretended that Minnesota was southern "southern" Ontario). Across the miles, we shared letters, books, articles, pictures and gifts.



Where to start? I chose this title because I have spent years researching the book dedications of L.M. Montgomery and her most intimate circle of friends -- a project I called *To the Friends of Anne*. When I met Wilda Clark, I felt I had most certainly found someone who would have fit into this small circle. So, this is a tribute to Wilda Clark, 88 years young, (who died on December 31, 2000), a friend of Maud Montgomery and everyone else!

Like so many others, I have written up accounts of visits with Wilda and her LMM "tour." Reading Sarah Reidel's article reminded me of the similar experiences so many of us share in traveling to Montgomery's places. For me, the Maud Montgomery "experience" became synonymous with Wilda and Harold Clark and their friend, Elsie Davidson. I treasure the videotape I made of my visits with them because no "memoir" can capture the energy of them all. Uxbridge Township simply does not seem like the same place without Wilda and Harold, who died a few months after his wife.

Harold and Wilda Clark lived in the Uxbridge and Leaskdale area for over 80 years. Harold's family farm was between the two towns and he went to the country school with LMM's sons. Wilda never met the Macdonald family, but as a teacher in the 1930s, she read *Anne of Green Gables* to her students and loved the author and her work. For the last decade, she worked tirelessly to make L.M. Montgomery's Leaskdale home an historic site, and she succeeded.

On my first visit to Ontario, I stayed with the Clarks at 49 Franklin Street and, over a few days, was guided to all the Montgomery places. We watered the flowers that Wilda planted by the small flat unadorned (at that time) marker on the grave of LMM's infant son, Hugh. We went to the Leaskdale Manse, attended church at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church (we sat in the Macdonald pew with Elsie Davidson), and met many neighbors and friends, including the new minister, Rev. Andrew Allison. We drove along the hilly road to the Zephyr church. She took me to the Uxbridge Library, the Uxbridge-Scott Museum, the Friend's Quaker Meeting House and cemetery (her family were Quaker immigrants and she had worked to restore the building).





We drove out to the set of television show "The Road to Avonlea." Wilda bribed the security guard with some of her homegrown strawberries and cream puffs and we were allowed to walk around the "Avonlea" village. She was thrilled, "all aflutter," she said.

Wilda always enjoyed showing her LMM "keepsakes" to visitors. In the 1970s and 80s, she and Harold had traveled all over Canada collecting early editions of Montgomery's books for their grandchildren. She had collections of letters, postcards and articles. She always sent me the latest news on the progress to make the Leaskdale Manse an historic site. In addition to more than 40 letters, she shared copies of her "special" documents: a letter from the Deputy Prime Minister of Canadian Heritage approving the manse as a home of national historic significance, a copy of her address to the Hypatia Club, the booklet she compiled about LMM's time in Leaskdale, and every newspaper article relating to LMM, to name a few.



However, the things I remember with great fondness are their hospitality and being included in the "everyday" parts of Harold and Wilda's lives - sharing meals in their home or going out to a favorite restaurant, making deliveries for Loaves and Fishes, visiting the mayor to lobby for the manse.



Evenings at the Clarks included a walk around the school and favourite TV viewing -- the Toronto Blue Jays and *Road to Avonlea*. Harold and Wilda were such a glowing example of loving companionship. I was swept away when I was there -- enjoying Peter, their bird, Harold's sugar shaker collection, the "Tea for Two" musical teapot, their Green Gables plates and cups, and the cozy upstairs attic guest room with a full moon shining through the window -- poetical!



We always included a visit with the Clark's friend, Elsie Bushby Davidson. I spent an amazing evening and afternoon, full of laughter, when Elsie was invited over to share meals. Elsie and Harold were a mutual admiration society, having lived across the road from each other as children. They told hilarious stories of their school days. Wilda and Elsie talked about the news at the Uxbridge church (critiquing the latest congregational survey), and Elsie's days as LMM's maid and being "celebrities." Listening to these two grand ladies was always an occasion of great fun.



As I look over my collection of Wilda gifts -- Leaskdale Manse coffee mugs, her hand-painted porcelain earrings, napkin rings, thimbles, and spoons with flowers and maple leaves, I will be reminded of a talented tireless friend of Anne and champion of Lucy Maud Montgomery. But I don't need any artifacts to remember this kind, good and remarkable person, Wilda Clark.



There are more details of these visits and Montgomery sites in:

"L.M. Montgomery in Ontario," *Shining Scroll*, January 1994.

"Finding Lucy Maud Montgomery in Ontario," *The Avonlea Traditions Chronicle*, Winter 1993.

A Visit To L.M. Montgomery's Ontario

© by Sarah Riedel

This past summer, my family and I visited Ontario to explore the world of L.M. Montgomery. We were delighted to talk with Kindred Spirits who continue to keep Maud's legacy alive.



While snapping a photo of the Leaskdale Manse, in Leaskdale Ontario, I was excited when the current resident of the home invited my family inside. Once inside, her enthusiasm for Montgomery was evident. She happily opened her home to us for a tour of all the rooms. We had a wonderful time discussing Maud's years as mistress of the manse. In Maud's former library, there was a small gift shop. Postcards with a black and white ink rendition of the house, coffee mugs with the manse pictured, and bookmarks are a few of the items for sale.

Though the manse has been declared a national historic site and strides are being taken to make the Manse Museum a reality, the task ahead is tremendous. A major improvement to the manse was slated to begin late this past summer. The white stucco exterior was to be removed, unveiling the original brick. This will make the appearance of the manse much more attractive (and authentic).

There has been talk of making the Presbyterian church into a visitor center. At this point, it is just speculation. But, this would be an ideal location for the flow of tourists that would surely come when the manse is officially open.

In nearby Uxbridge, we enjoyed a visit to the Uxbridge Scott Museum. One of the buildings on site is dedicated to L.M. Montgomery. Through written history and photographs, the museum has done a wonderful job presenting the highlights of Montgomery's life and career. Montgomery enthusiasts will be delighted by a number of artifacts. Though the selection is limited, it is impressive. One display contains postcards written by Maud, and a copy of the 1923 Lord Salisbury Chapter I.O.D.E. (Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire) cookbook. In this cookbook, Maud submitted her recipe for New Moon pudding. Other displayed objects include Ewan's pulpit, and an organ from the church, which Maud frequently played. Another highlight is a breathtaking painted portrait of Maud. Behind the image of Maud, scenes from her life are depicted making an impressive background collage.

The museum also has a section devoted to the *Road To Avonlea* television series. The series was filmed nearby, and a few artifacts were spared from the sets. The signboard from the Avonlea Public school, and the Avonlea Post office are the main attraction.



A trip to Ontario would not be complete without a stop at Bala's Museum with Memories of Lucy Maud Montgomery. Kindred Spirits, Jack and Linda Hutton, welcome you as an old friend. Here you are invited to linger and talk, while enjoying the astounding collection they have gathered. Since our last visit, their inventory has expanded to include many rare items. Most notable, Mary Miles Minter 1919 sheet music from the silent film *Anne of Green Gables*. Another amazing find, Mary Miles Minter books, with photographs from the lost film.

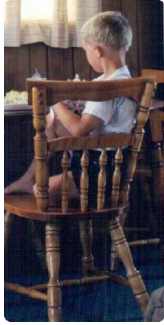
Megan Follows, who portrayed Anne in Kevin Sullivan's *Anne of Green Gables* films, recently toured Bala's museum. Apparently, she was quite impressed. It is interesting to note that Jack and Linda have the boat from the famous sinking scene in *Anne of Green Gables*. Megan told the Huttons that, while shooting the scene, the boat kept sinking too fast! A couple of men had to hold the boat up during filming so they could get the scene completed.

Other interesting stops along the Montgomery trail are her homes at 210 Riverside Drive in Toronto and the manse in Norval. Neither is open to the public, but one can snap a photo and imagine Maud's life there. Norval continues to honor Maud's memory with memorial gardens, and a plaque erected in her honor.

While in Norval we stopped at Crawford's Bakery. The owners published *Aunt Maud's Recipe Book*. Here you can buy a loaf of Aunt Maud's Christmas Cake. It is an old-fashioned fruitcake completely laced with raisins or currants, using Maud's own recipe. If fruitcake is not to your liking, the bakery has plenty of other mouthwatering goodies on hand. We took a couple of treats along with us to savor, while we sat beside the restful waters of the Credit River.

It was wonderful to return to Maud's old haunts, and share my admiration for Montgomery and her work with other kindreds. If you have never been to the southern Ontario sites, I urge you to consider the journey. A score of delightful kindred times await!

TEA WITH LUELLA Carolyn Collins



LMM's granddaughter, Luella Macdonald Veijalainen, hosted an afternoon tea on PEI this summer. Luella was visiting the Island with her young grandson, Erik. They had rented a cottage near Stanley Bridge (known as "Carmody" to Anne-fans) and invited several Island friends to join them for home-made ginger cordial, tea sandwiches (including peanut butter and jelly in honour of Erik!), lemon tarts, and other refreshments made from LMM's recipes. Carolyn Collins, Jennie Macneill, and some of Luella's neighbors donned hats (required!) and brought their favourite "fancy" teacups for the event.

Luella and Erik went to the Cavendish Church where Luella's grandparents first met 98 years ago. During this visit, they discovered that a small fire had started, probably because of preparations for repainting. With the aid of Jennie Macneill, help was summoned and the fire was extinguished before much damage was done.

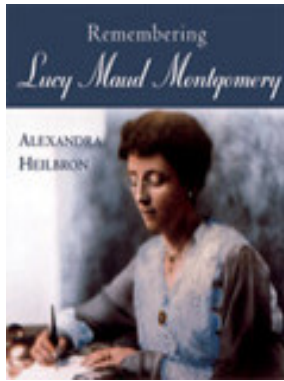
LMM devotees will have read about Luella in LMM's journals. She was LMM's son Chester's first-born child. Luella is a very outgoing, friendly woman with a delightful sense of humour and a love for opera and travel.

The University of Prince Edward Island and the L.M. Montgomery Institute will be hosting the **LMM Conference on June 20 - 23, 2002, "L.M. Montgomery and Life-Writing."** Carolyn Collins will be presenting on the topic: *L.M. Montgomery as Illustrator of her Journals, Letters and Fiction: How the Author's Island Scrapbooks Expand Our Understanding of her Life and Work.* Some of the other many presentations are:



'A rare and perfect friendship': L.M. Montgomery and Frederica Campbell MacFarlane
Ghosts of the Past: The Home in L.M. Montgomery's *Journals*
The Secret Diary of Maud Montgomery Aged 29 1/4
The Re-Creation of Childhood, the *Emily* Novels, and L.M. Montgomery's *Journals*
'The refuge of my sick spirit': Montgomery, Depression, and Life-Writing
A Burden and a Blessing: Community and Women in Montgomery's *Journals*
Analyzing Montgomery's Concept of Career Through Public and Private Writings
Writing Between Lives: Dialogues Between Lucy Maud Montgomery and Her Readers
Art, Artifice, or Artifact?: Intersections of Fiction, Photograph, and Life Writing
The Performance Anxiety of L.M. Montgomery
Writing About Writing *Anne*
The Religious Dimension of L.M. Montgomery's Life-Writing
Writing the Life of the Single Woman: Spinsters and Old Maids in the Works of L.M. Montgomery
Through the Looking Glass: Montgomery and the Beauty Myth

NEW BOOKS

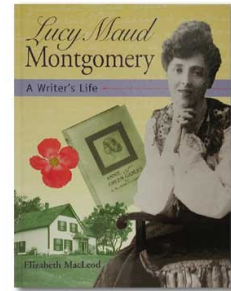


Remembering Lucy Maud Montgomery
By Alexandra Heilbron
Dundurn Press, 2001

This book is a collection of reminiscences by the people who met or knew LMM between 1919 and 1940. There are interviews with her "nieces," adults who were children in her church and women who were employed as her maids. One of the most fascinating interviews is with Luella Macdonald Veijalainen. As Heilbron describes the Macdonald lineage, Luella is the oldest of LMM's four grandchildren, born to one of her two sons, and the only one who remembers her grandmother. Luella's grandson is the only biologically related descendent of LMM.

Lucy Maud Montgomery, A Writer's Life
By Elizabeth MacLeod
Kids Can Press, 2001.
A biography for ages 8 - 12

This is a helpful children's biography of LMM with many excellent reproductions of family photographs and Montgomery artifacts.



LMMLS MEETINGS 2000-2001

Our members gathered four times last season, beginning with a dinner meeting last fall at Sydney's Restaurant in Minneapolis. This was a chance for members (new and old) to renew friendships and catch up on news from each other, Prince Edward Island, and LMM-related items.

In December, Carolyn Collins hosted a holiday tea at her home. Carolyn presented a short program on two new short stories by LMM that had been discovered -- "The Mirror" and "The Punishment of Billy." The publishing details of both stories had been unknown until this time. Copies of the stories were made available to members.

Chris Faust invited the group to her St. Paul home for our third meeting in March. Chris treated us to a beautiful afternoon tea with many delicious homemade treats. Chris then presented a program on doll collecting and let us explore her extensive doll and book collection.



Our final meeting of the year was held at the home of Christy Woster in Zimmerman. Christy, her son, daughters Anne and Emily, and mother, Penny Shreck, were on hand to welcome the crowd. Christy's impressive collection of LMM and PEI-related materials was displayed and discussed. A bountiful afternoon tea was served in Christy's antique-filled dining room.

Thanks to all who hosted our group this year so graciously!

*Photos credits for this issue: Bala - Sarah Reidel,
Woster book collection, Erik and Luella - Carolyn Collins,
all others from the collection of Mary Beth Cavert*

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