



# THE COBALT LODGE

Newsletter of the Cobalt Historical Society

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## President's Report

2021 was a busy season for us. Here are the highlights:

With the support of volunteers and Coleman Township, we made improvements to the trail by clearing brush, upgrading security, and replacing or refreshing old and faded signage. Our next project will be securing the Larose Blacksmith building. Construction of the new bridge over the ONR tracks shook loose the rear wall.

Agnico Eagle, the owner of most of the property on the trail, removed three buildings as part of their reclamation obligations. The "bag house" at the Nipissing High-grade site was demolished, as were two structures on the former Hellens Mill site at the south end of Cobalt Lake.

We've received numerous research requests for historical information. Producers of a TVO series on "boom and bust towns" interviewed Maggie and she has been the primary heritage consultant for the project. The series will air this spring. Our work with the curator of an exhibit at the McMichael Gallery in 2024 is ongoing. As well, we answered numerous queries from people who wanted to know more about their ancestors' time in the area. You can read about one of those stories in this edition.

The pandemic closed many local tourist attractions, but not the trail. For two summers now, we've noticed increased traffic to the sites. In 2021, with the easing of restrictions and knowing people had a pent-up urge to travel and to spend, we produced souvenir puzzles. They are very popular with local residents, visitors, and Cobalt fans across the continent.

This September we actually held an in-person meeting! Town of Cobalt councillor Pat Anderson attended. The most important item on the agenda was the issue of liability insurance for the trail. After a delegation to a Town meeting, Cobalt Council agreed to grant us funds to cover the cost of insurance

premiums. We are very grateful for their show of support.

Regarding the closure of the Right of Way and Townsite Mine while ONR conducts safety assessments: The project was awarded, finally, in September. Late in October, a team from EXP Services Inc. and various Ministry representatives made site visits to visually inspect the area looking for evidence of previous mining activity, identifying/documenting exactly where known hazards are located (if not already documented), etc. No digging or testing was done during this first phase of assessment. In February, EXP conducted additional investigation at the Townsite Headframe and lowered a drone into the sinkhole in order to learn more about the stability of the ground underneath the headframe. EXP will provide recommendations on how to remediate the site in March.

We do not expect these two sites to be open for visitors in 2022, though viewing from a safe distance is an option.

If you have questions or concerns about the ONR assessment project, contact Erin Mullens (ONTC) or Christy Dias RFB Project Manager, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation, Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources & Forestry, 705 945-6750 or email [Christy.Dias@Ontario.ca](mailto:Christy.Dias@Ontario.ca)

### Membership Renewals

Stay current with our website and Facebook page. Thank you for renewing in 2022.

Membership renewal forms are enclosed. I apologize for the late arrival of this newsletter. We experienced a number of technology difficulties and have installed a whole new computer system. The last system was eleven years old, and we have now leap-frogged into a system that should serve for the next ten years. Thank you all for your patience.

## Two New Website Resources

We invite you to visit the “Research” tab on our website where you’ll find two new articles.

The first is about **Arthur Gordon Penman**, an early mining man in Cobalt. The piece is one of a 51-part series *Just Passing Through* written by Allan Stacey for the Northern Ontario Railroad Museum & Heritage Centre in Capreol, for which he retains the copyright. With his permission, we share it with our members.

Stacey writes, “The Canadian Mining Review, and its subsequent iterations, made ferreting out fraudulent mining ventures a major *raison d’etre*. So, how did Arthur Gordon Penman, the subject of this

monograph, become a target of the mining journal?

“On January 26th, 1907, The Cobalt Silver Mountain Mining Company, Limited was incorporated... and Arthur Gordon Penman (1883-1966) was managing director.”

While the Silver Mountain Mining Company never did live up to the early wildcat promotions, Penman managed to do alright for himself. After a failed “mammoth smelting works” project in the Soo, he eventually landed in Jacksonville, Florida as a developer of the “Beaches”.

As Mr. Stacey said, “A long way from the rough and tumble world of Coleman township!”



**Arthur Penman, a pioneer real estate developer of Jacksonville's beaches, stands beside a man-sized tarpon he caught in Jacksonville. Penman once held the record for the largest tarpon ever caught in the St. Johns River, a 7-foot-9-inch, 172-pound fish that he landed in Mill Cove. (Image courtesy of the Beaches Museum & History Park. )**



*YMCA Camp*

**Francis Clyde Boyle Lendrum** is the subject of our second story. His daughter Leslie came to visit us last summer to donate her dad's old mining lamps to the mining museum and the first part of his autobiography to the Cobalt Historical Society.

In the late 1980s, Leslie had suggested that her father write his autobiography.

He took her advice. "The idea many not be uninteresting because I had the privilege of living over a period when knowledge exploded and we got blown all over the country with the force of that explosion. This first effort covers the years before Queen's."

The Lendrum family name may be familiar to you. Francis was born in 1916 to *Cobalt Daily Nugget* reporter Frank Lendrum and Ellener (née Boyle). The family lived at 164 Lang Street.

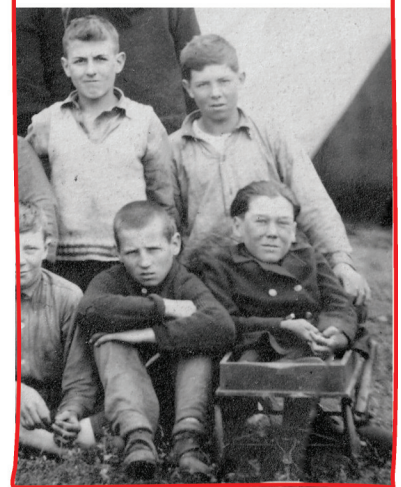
Besides detailing his early education, including years at the Haileybury Mining School, Lendrum does a great job at condensing the Cobalt story as well as providing important detail for the family genealogist. Those who are working on their family tree will find references to surnames Boyle, Lendrum, and McAuley, and place names from Ireland, Scotland, Eastern and Northern Ontario.

Lendrum describes his earliest memories of living on Lang Street and playing with his second cousin and childhood friend, Garfield, son of Jim Price.

"Garfield was an only child and a cripple having been born with spina bifida." [His] father built him a flat platform on casters which he used to get around. Later, when he became a teenager, he was given a wheelchair which he could propel himself by means of steering bar that he pumped back and forth. With my teenage help, Garfield and I travelled miles over unpaved roads as he and I explored the country around Cobalt. His parents would have had fits if they had known where we had been."

The Price family moved to Timmins and operated a boarding house at 3 Elm Street South. Garfield died there in 1939.

It is a pity that Lendrum was unable to complete the next chapters of his story. Judging from the outline included at the end of the first part, he certainly "lived a life and then some."



# The Puzzles that are making us famous (and some money):



*Giachino's, Coniagas Shaft House #4 circa 1945 as a grocery store.*



*The Iconic Right of Way Mine  
Photo by Charles Dumaresq.*



*Right of Way Mine Reflections  
Photo by Sue Nielsen.*



*Oblin's Cash & Carry  
circa 1945 on Lang Street.*



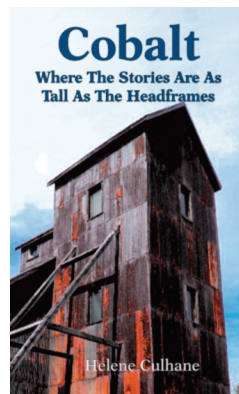
*Ontario Northland Railway  
Station Cobalt 1945.*



*Cobalt Public School  
Photo circa 1955*



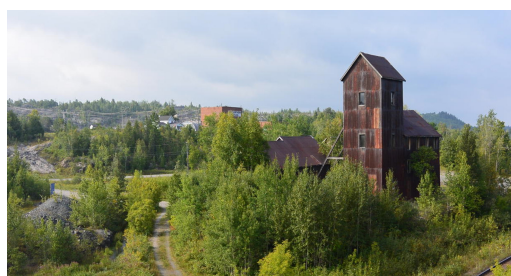
*Silver Miller Mine  
Photograph circa 1950*



*COBALT Where The Stories  
Are As Tall As The Headframes  
by Helene Culhane*

Cobalters interviewed share why they wouldn't live anywhere else. Part of the Cobalt centennial celebrations- with some additions.

**Submissions** for the Newsletter are most welcome and needed. So if you have some piece of history to share please let us know. Send them to [chs@heritagesilvertrail.ca](mailto:chs@heritagesilvertrail.ca)

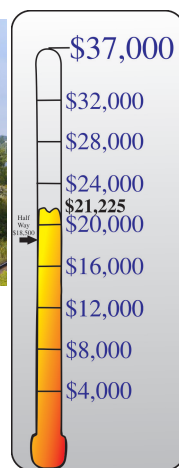


## Fund Raising Update

We are over half-way to our goal for the roof repairs with **\$21,225** in donations. Yes, we continue...

Donations by mail are fine or you could send us an Interac e-transfer from your bank using this email address: [chs@heritagesilvertrail.ca](mailto:chs@heritagesilvertrail.ca)

Together is the way it works. Thank you.



## The Legend of Caroline Maben Flower, Lady Prospector of the Porcupine

by Maggie Wilson  
Caroline Maben Flower, a wealthy New York socialite in 1906, most certainly read the news of the fabulous riches in Northern Ontario. When she arrived in Cobalt, Caroline noted how the men made their fortunes at mining. Never one to let roadblocks stop her, she shouldered a pickaxe and set out to build a mine. Just as she did with her musical career, Caroline promoted herself and built a brand. In Cobalt, and later in the gold fields of the Porcupine, she traded on one notable asset: the fact that she was the only woman in the mining game.

