

Glen Leslie Church Plays Host to a Special Visitor

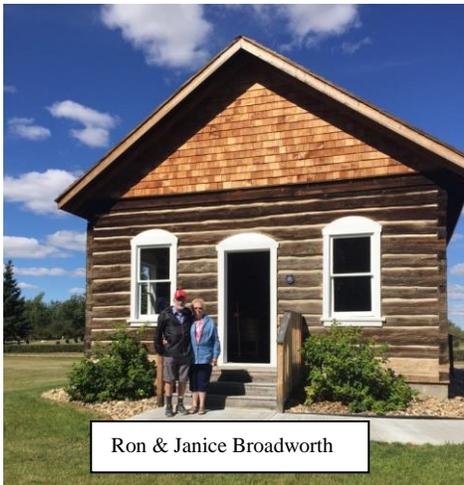


Imagine my surprise in early August 2017 when I arrived home and listened to my phone messages to find that there was one from Janice Broadworth (left) from Bracebridge, Ontario. When I returned the call, she explained that she was the granddaughter of Bruce Leslie and great granddaughter of Thomas Leslie and that she and her husband, Ron, would be flying to Sydney, BC for their son's wedding. As Ron's sister would be driving from Winnipeg to attend the wedding, the three-some decided to take a slight detour on the way home so that Janice could see the area where her ancestors settled. Apparently, Bill Leslie, Ed Leslie's son and Janice's cousin, had sent her the book on the history of the Glen Leslie Church and area. Consequently, Janice thought that should she ever have an opportunity to see the property, she would make every attempt to do so.

As Laurel Reynolds, granddaughter of Norman Leslie, lives in Grande Prairie, she volunteered to act as the tour guide and drove her relatives out to Glen Leslie. Wanda met the group at the Church and gave a brief overview of how Thomas and Margaret Leslie and their three adult sons, Norman, Ed and Bruce arrived at an area east of Grande Prairie and filed on land in such close proximity to each other that the area became known affectionately as "Glen of the Leslie's". The name was shortened over the years to simply Glen Leslie. Bruce Leslie went back to Ontario in 1916 to marry his high-school sweetheart, Carrie Sager. The young couple arrived back to the area and settled in the log cabin that Bruce had built on his homestead quarter of land. Carrie however, was unaccustomed to such a primitive way of life and convinced her husband that life would be better in Ontario. Janice chuckled as she recalled hearing that specific story. Bruce and Carrie left in 1919 and settled in Queensborough where they raised a family of two daughters,



Margaret and Dorothy. Margaret married Roy Rollins and they had two children, **Janice** and Paul.



Janice and her husband as well as Ron's sister, were very impressed with the restoration of the Church and were quite taken with the picture of Janice's great grandparents, Thomas and Margaret Leslie that was on display in the building. It was a very touching moment for her to see the actual adz marks on the logs that would have been made by her great grandfather, grandfather and great uncles.

Laurel went on to describe the wonderful event that occurred in 2015 to celebrate the restoration of the Church and the 100th anniversary of when it had been built.

It was a wonderful afternoon and what lovely people the Leslie descendants are. I feel they left with a new sense of not only who their ancestors were but the struggles they endured to settle this area. It if wasn't for the Glen Leslie Church and Cemetery, the area known as Glen Leslie would simply cease to exist.

I found it to be very interesting that Bill Leslie, Ed's son, sent a book to Bruce Leslie's granddaughter, Janice, and a descendant of Norman Leslie (Laurel) ensured that Janice and Ron had the opportunity to view the Church. The descendants of Thomas and Margaret Leslie, although spread out across Canada, are still very much in tune to their roots in Glen Leslie.

Written by Wanda Zenner – January 2018.

Photos by Laurel Reynolds.