

# THE PORT HENRY FACT FINDER

Reporting the News and Needs of Port Henry and Surrounding Area  
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## CHAMP DAY, SCACBS RENDEVOUS AND MORIAH STOCK IS ACOMIN'

Mark your calendars in **RED on July 19<sup>th</sup>**! Port Henry's Champ Day, the Lake Champlain Antique and Classic Boat Society's Rendezvous and Moriah Stock will be celebrating jointly on July 19<sup>th</sup> at the Port Henry waterfront, utilizing these adjacent sites: Port Henry Beach, the Pier and the new Port Henry Marina.

For our **SCACBS** visiting mariners, local organizer George Maffey offers the following helpful information. Fact Finder includes this for all others interested in boats and what the SCACBS is all about.

Requested time of arrival is **10:00 – 11:30 am**.

The center main slips will be available for mid-day wood boat tie-ups.

All boat slips are completely inside the break-water and completely protected from lake-wave action.

Boat owners may use marina toilets and washrooms.

Ice is available close-by at Boyea's and possibly at the Campground Manager's office.

A barbeque grill can be made available at the marina should you desire to cook out.

For those who will trailer their wood boat, two ramps are available: The DEC public ramp, and the Marina ramp. Parking is available at both locations.

**Moriah Stock** local bands will begin performing on the Pier at **1 PM**.

Under the **Champ Day** banner, there will be cardboard boat races of boats constructed (by and for the racers) on the beach, right before the races. Craft and food vendors will be setting up at 10 am in Power House Park, located near the DEC boat launch. Norm Wright, the Port Henry Campground manager, has offered to join in the fun by making all the entertainment and food resources of the Campground available to the general public. So a tournament of Horseshoes on Champ Day seems quite probable. A really fun day is planned and all we need is a kindly smile from Ma Nature.

If you would like to participate in Champ Day more than just visiting the fun, offer to be a volunteer. You are very muchly needed. To come aboard. call 546-3161 or 546-7943.

## CELEBRATING TWO NEW BUSINESSES IN MORIAH

Businesses moving in are what Moriah and Port Henry both sorely need and the Moriah Chamber of Commerce was able to celebrate **two** openings, each with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

The first ribbon was cut June 17<sup>th</sup> for Laura Baker's "Baker"y in Mineville. It was the official, though belated, opening. The real physical opening was January 24, 2015! Remember all that weather! The benefit of having a belated opening is that Fact Finder can assure everyone the "Baker"y is doing very well and for very good reasons. Laura is a fine baker, basically and artistically. Just within a week's time I was able to see and sample two of her specially designed cakes - taste excellent! - looks beautiful! Also, we are able to announce a new addition to her menu: a different luncheon specialty sandwich, offered on homemade bread, will be served from 11:00 am-4:30 PM on Wed., Thurs., Fri., and Sat. (but only until 2:00 PM). Sides will be available. If the quality of her luncheon sandwiches is anything like the quality of her baking, Laura better be ready for a lot of luncheon business.

The second ribbon-cutting was on June 20<sup>th</sup> for The Edgemont B&B which will be catering to

the specific needs of the bicycling community. It is in a wonderful and historic house just .07 of a mile off 9N/22 South up Edgemont Road.

The house we see today is not the house that originally stood on this site. Levi Bigelow built a home here in 1876. When G. D. Sherman bought the property in 1900, he had the Bigelow house demolished and built this lovely many roomed, wood paneled home with a wrap-around porch for his mistress, known as Black Sal because she dressed only in black. After about 6 years it was sold to William and Rose Henry. It then passed through two other owners before returning to the Henry family, Earl and Raeburn, in 1925 where they raised prize Jerseys. Between the Jerseys and the Dupont's B&B there was Edgemont Laboratory Glass which distributed its lab-glass products to many diagnostic and analytical companies.

The ribbon-cutting which was held at 4 PM, on the main steps of the B&B, was witnessed by 40-50 people. Pictures were taken for the papers and personal memories. The weather was beautiful. The porch had many comfortable rockers just calling out to be sat in. I responded to the call as did others. Small groups of friends and interested strangers gathered to discuss the house and stories surrounding it as they ate from their filled plates of truly excellent food. There was wine, cookies and a "Baker"y cake decorated with an edible large ribbon which looked just about ready for cutting. Vincent Dupont, circulating among his guests, was the perfect host for this great B&B.

#### FURTHER NOTES ON THE VILLAGE BOARD MEETING OF JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>

An important statement was made during the "Open to the Public" portion of the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, which Fact Finder did not report. This was a conscious omission. Gary Cooke brought to the Board his intensely researched findings, and his equally intense feelings, on the subject of the Town's having collected taxes from Port Henry residents, for many, many years, for services which we do not receive.

Fact Finder withheld reporting on this until the special public meeting, scheduled by the Board, was held on Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The stated facts remained the same, but there was further clarification as Gary used a "blackboard" to visualize his findings with diagramed information and the public entered into dialogue with him.

The outstanding fact is that village residents have been taxed, and paid, for services never rendered. This now means a yearly revenue of over \$300,000 for the Town and a loss for the Village residents of over \$300,000.

The first question would seem to be "How could such a thing happen?" Simply, it came about because of how the Village and the Town grew out of the fact that there was a lot of fine iron ore to be mined. They mined it and they prospered - until - it became unprofitable to get to the ore. Why has this inequity continued, because it could, therefore it did. Is there a simple remedy? Yes! The Town has the right to waive these illegal taxes on the Village. Will they waive them? No! That has been made clear. Is the Town just being mean? No! It, as it should, is considering its residents' wellbeing. What is to be done? The answer is now under consideration by both Village and Town Boards.

Although both Town and Village residents have elected their Boards to run these municipalities; Boards need help making important decisions, particularly when the outcome is so crucial to *every person* residing in the Village or the Township.

Armed with educated facts and considering the ultimate results, let yourself be heard! This is the level of government in which your voice has real weight in deciding what your daily life will be, which leads to your future life. For further and in depth information, obtain copies of Gary Cooke's synopsis on the Legality of Moriah Town Tax on Port Henry. Copies were distributed at the two Board meetings. Now copies may be obtained by request from [cowsincommon@hotmail.com](mailto:cowsincommon@hotmail.com) and possibly from the Village Hall office.

## A CAUTIONARY BEFORE YOU SIGN A DISSOLUTION PETITION

It has come to the attention of The Fact Finder, that a petition is being circulated in the Village for signatures requesting that, again, a vote be taken on the possible dissolution of the Village into the Town of Moriah.

The following is a request that villagers ***do not*** sign the petition until they have researched and discovered, for themselves, the facts on the following questions and statements asked and made below. Probably, the best way to understand these life-changing possibilities is to “Google” and read “Port Henry Dissolution.” This study was made by an independent company which was paid \$50,000 with grant money. Voting is expensive, about \$5,000 per vote-day.

Before, considering the specifics concerning Port Henry, question why the State is “gung ho” to abolish all villages? As is said, “Follow the money.” Both the Town and the Village can obtain loans and both can request grants. As one entity the amount of potential money-drain on the State is less than it would be for the two separate entities of Town and Village. Also, there is one less layer of government with which the State must contend. Also ask why the State lowered the percentage of signatures needed, from 60% to just 10% of the voting population, to set in motion the dissolution process?

One of the major changes would be for our Fire Department. Our Village Fire Department is funded by the Board and reports its needs to the Board. The Town of Moriah’s Fire Departments are governed by five elected commissioners, who set tax levies for the fire districts as a Town does not have the authority to run a fire department. If the Village were dissolved, Port Henry could lose its Fire Station or become a specialized station.

All the properties belonging to the Village would become properties of the Town and may be used or sold as the Town Board decides and yet the debts of the Village will remain the responsibility of Village residents only, i.e. the Water Fund debt (according to the Dissolution Plan dated December 22, 2009).

Would there need to be a new Dissolution Plan with the costs it would incur? It has been only five years since the last dissolution vote and yet, as I read through the 2009 Plan, there seems to be many areas which might need re-visiting to up-date the information, i.e. does the Town now have hydrants? It did not in 2009.

What percentage of the Village budget is expended on debt services and what percentage of the Town budget is expended on dept services? In 2009 the Village’s percentage was 27% and the Town’s percentage was 41%. These percentages, of course, can change from year to year.

These are just the tip of the iceberg of questions for which we residents of Port Henry should be asking and requiring answers before we sign any petition which ultimately asks of us to decide whether we irreversibly step off a cliff into an unfamiliar and larger pool of problems or remain with known problems and dedicate our efforts towards continuing to solve our own problems. Look around you! Much, visible and solid progress has been accomplished in the last few years as well as an intangible belief in our ability to progress. This is the true key to real progress, the belief that it ***can*** happen.

## A POSITIVE FOR TWO LIBRARY EVENTS

The Wine and Cheese Tasting Fund Raiser for the Sherman Free Library was a total success! The Library was filled with people, some having to stand as they tasted, and tasted a bit more, from a large selection of wines poured by Evelyn Celotti. Of course there were plenty of lovely cheeses, but there were many other dishes to be tasted and tasted again. There was a low hum of conversation as people moved around to the next friend or new acquaintance and few people left early. It was definitely a two-thumbs-up event!

Fact Finder did not go to the Library Rummage Sale. Its editor does not want to be tempted to buy ***anything***. This editor wants, no – needs - to be rid of “things”! However, Fact Finder

was told it, too, was a success, judged by the steady flow of people visiting the sale.

### A SMALL STORY

The other day rather late I stopped in at the Diner for a bit of lunch. After I had finished my lunch and Don was preparing to close he told me the following little story.

A large group of bikers had come in for lunch and Don began asking where they were from and how did they find out about his Diner. They said they had read about it in a Biker's Magazine. Don was amazed. He had never heard of the magazine, let alone ask for advertising. Free advertising! A light bulb went on! How much free advertising is out there in the subject-specific magazine world? Something the Chamber of Commerce could explore for our area businesses! Progress can occur in strange ways!

Look for the next issue on **Saturday, July 11, 2015** at Mac's, Moriah Pharmacy, Sherman Free Library, George's Restaurant, John Eisenberg's Service Center, Ken and Paula LaDeau's Champlain's Best Wash, Don Foote's "Miss Port Henry" Diner, and TFCU. **NOTE:** The Fact Finder may also be found on-line at [porthenrymoriah.com](http://porthenrymoriah.com). "Fact Finder" is the first item on the third drop-down menu.