



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD CEMETERIES SOCIETY  
OF VICTORIA, PUBLISHED SIX TIMES PER YEAR

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## **September-October 2018**

### **DOROTHY AGNES (LONGMAN) SWEET - A CELEBRATION OF LIFE** **A Short Account of A Lively Historian by Mary E. Doody-Jones** **for the Victoria Historical Society, Old Cemeteries Society, and Ross Bay Villa**



Many people in Victoria's historical community will remember Dorothy Sweet, an English retired history teacher who in her later years spent half her year here. The life of this lively person shows a dedication to history. She could often be found in the BC Archives where I first met this cheerful, gifted woman. She died on May 10, 2018 around 7:30 in the morning at Glencairn Care Home, Dorchester, Dorset, UK. Her many contributions included: • Organizing several Cornish Societies in different countries, at least in England, USA and Canada; • Bringing interest to the papers of Poet Laureate Sir John Betjeman in UVic Special

Collections; • Researching all the members of the original Roscoe Family at Ross Bay Villa and giving talks on them; • Establishing that Billy Barker was not Cornish, finding his descendants for the Old Cemeteries Society and giving an account to the Dictionary of National Biography; • Giving many talks in different places on Cornwall and its families. She was born on Nov. 9th, 1922 at Yeovil, Somerset to Charles & Winifred Longman, the second of four daughters and in 1929 the family moved to Swindon, where she was educated. She obtained her BA (Hons) in history in 1944 at the University of Bristol and a Diploma in Education in 1945. As a young teacher she obtained a position at an old grammar school in Newquay, Cornwall, following which she spent thirty-five years teaching history in Cornish schools. Her interest in local history had her joining the Old Cornwall Movement. She introduced local topics into the school curriculum, which culminated in allowing local history within the national examination system. In 1956, she married Cecil Sweet, a Cornishman, at Christchurch, Dorset and this cemented her attachment to her adopted region. Her husband's death in 1980 coincided with her early retirement, by which time she already devoted her leisure to

the founding and running the Cornwall Family History. Her interest in the Cornish people overseas, largely through the influence of Dr. A. C. Todd, resident tutor in Cornwall of the University of Exeter, compelled her to make a lengthy journey to the US to meet Cornishmen or their descendants. There she met Dr. Paul Liddicoat of Wayne State Univ. and this resulted in the Cornish American Heritage Society with Dorothy as one of its founding members. As a loving aunt, she kept in touch with 7 nieces and nephews and had 7 great nephews and nieces. Her nephew Neville Grigg has fond memories of family gatherings at Shawnigan Lake and Teanook Lake on Vancouver Island. Full of energy, she joined groups wherever she was. Truly English, she loved tea, especially drinking tea and reading in bed before breakfast. After 1980, Dorothy made a second home in Victoria and studied at the University of Victoria (UVic) while continuing researching the early Cornish in the province. She travelled back and forth with lists of projects. Here she joined the BC Genealogy Society, Old Cemeteries Society and Victoria Historical Society. She spent six month periods in Australia and New Zealand (1988 and 1994 respectively), researching Cornish in those countries and gave over twenty talks on Cornwall and family history. She contributed articles to family history and local history journals into her 90s. In England, she moved to a house in Dorchester. This last March she went to Glencairn House. In 1990, Dorothy was installed in the Gorsedd of the Bards, an association of poets, writers, artists and others who make a distinguished contribution to Welsh Gaelic language and culture. She wrote an examination which allowed her to wear the blue-hooded robe of the bards. The interpretation of her bardic name, Whylores Dyvresow, as Seekers of the Exiles, perfectly describes the dedication Dorothy has undertaken during her life. This honour meant so much to her that, for her funeral, relatives had the robe, instead of flowers, on the casket, a fitting tribute to her contributions.

### The August 15 Garden Party



Photos by Dawn Goodwin

### Cleaning

Sharon Welsh

Although we started our cleaning bees a bit late in the year we have made good progress. Gravesites in Sections A and X have had moss and debris scraped off, and we were able to join several lengths of garden hose together to connect to water to wash

headstones and tiles. The water was a welcome respite from the sun and high temperatures during July and August.

Our next scheduled cleaning bee will be held on Saturday September 8th and an email will be sent to all members as a reminder.



Robson before



Sinclair before



Brown before



Robson after



Sinclair after



Brown after

## Restoration

### Wilf Bruch

Here are a two examples of restoration work done by our volunteers this summer at Ross Bay Cemetery. The small marker commemorates Charles Harold Leigh who died in 1898 at the age of 5 and his sister Sarah who died as an infant in the same year. This marker has been down and separated from the original grave site for a number of years and now is where it belongs (A29W30). The large cross has been broken and repaired in the past but the repair failed last winter and is now repaired again. This marker commemorates the lives of Laura Maud Beanlands who died in 1903 at age 43 and Michael Lawrence Beanlands who died in 1893 at 1 day old (A54W33).



## Hallowe'en Patrols

Friday, October 27 and Saturday, October 28 & possibly October 31

The patrols are a unique opportunity to experience Ross Bay Cemetery at night and at the same time help to deter vandalism. The patrol dates have not been finalized and an email will be sent out to all members as soon as permission to be in the cemetery at night is granted by the Parks Department.

We do our patrols in two shifts, 8pm to 10pm and 10pm to 12 midnight.

If you are able to help out with this events please phone Gudrun Leys at 250-590-5850 or e-mail [gmleys@gmail.com](mailto:gmleys@gmail.com)

## Ghost Bus Tours

Our 25th annual bus excursion pass some of Victoria's most haunted sites. New route and many new stories. Reserve your seat early. Check the web site [www.discoverthepast.com](http://www.discoverthepast.com)

Dates will be: Oct. 20, 26, 27 and 28

Starting time: 7:00 pm from Oak Bay Marina

Cost \$38 per person. Reservations a must. Tickets will be available online after September 10 from [www.discoverthepast.com](http://www.discoverthepast.com)

Any questions for OCS members can be directed to John Adams at 250-384-6698.

### Family found a 'lost baby'

Re: "A baby long gone, but no longer forgotten," July 15.

Our family had a "lost baby." Thanks to the Victoria Genealogical Society, which holds a guide to the Ross Bay Cemetery interments, and the Victoria Archives, which hold the original ledger, I located this "lost" child while searching for her parents, George and Annie Waites, lifelong residents of Victoria.

No one in the family knew of this first baby, as it was just never mentioned.

Our family members gladly came together to provide a headstone for her, Annie Aileen Waites, four-month-old daughter of this early Victoria family. Our genealogical records now include her name. She would have been my aunt.

Her grandmother and uncle are also buried at this beautiful cemetery. Truly a gem in Victoria.

*Aldyth Hunter  
Victoria*



Letter originally published in the Times - Colonist

## A Tombstone Tourist in Alberta

Wilf Bruch

Have you read Nancy Miller's book "Remember Me as You Pass"? If you have, you will know that there was a real Sam McGee. Of course I'm referring to the "Sam" in Robert Service's poem "The Cremation of Sam McGee".

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There are a few stories about where the name came from and some say that Robert Service met the real Sam McGee in a bank here in Victoria. But I think not. Service started working for The Commercial Bank of Scotland after leaving school in around 1889. Between 1896 and 1903 he roamed the west coast of North America from Mexico to British Columbia. In 1899 he was in Cowichan Bay trying his hand at farming, working as a store clerk and of course writing. Some of his early poems were published in the Colonist in 1900. In 1903 Robert went back to banking. This time it was the Canadian Bank of Commerce in Victoria. After a short time he was transferred to Kamloops and then in 1904 to Whitehorse.

It is here that he met the real Sam McGee (William Samuel McGee 1868-1940). The story goes that the real "Sam" came into the bank and Service, the bank teller, saw McGee's name on a form, talked to McGee about using his name and received permission, which is confirmed by correspondence between McGee and his family. The rest is history!

Here is the Tombstone Tourist part of the story. Last month, July 2018, I had a chance to visit Sam's grave for myself. The real Sam was a hard rock miner in the Yukon from 1898 until 1909 when he and his wife left Whitehorse to work at building roads and other occupations in BC and the Yukon. He retired in 1938 and moved to Beiseker Alberta to live with his daughter. He died in 1940 far from the cold white north. And so it is that Just off Hwy #9 between Beiseker and Drumheller Alberta on Range Road 242, you will find a Seventh Day Adventist Church with a small cemetery to the east of it. There you will find a brass plaque remembering William Samuel McGee.



## The Guardian of Cemetery and His Family

Michael Halleran

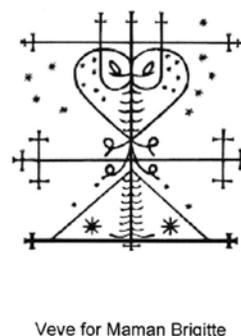
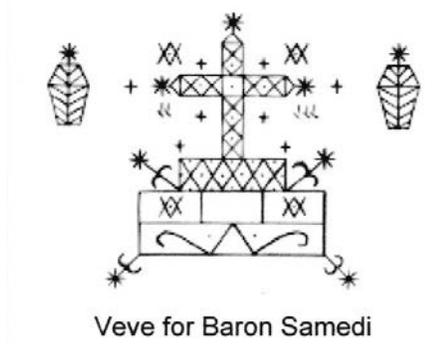
In Haitian Vodou there are two *Lwa* (spirits or deities) and associated *Guédé* (demigods or lesser spirits) associated with death and cemeteries. BARON SAMEDI is the ruler of *Gînê*, the Land of the Dead and guardian of cemeteries. He is frequently and most usually depicted wearing a top hat, formal black suit and dark glasses. He is fond of cigars and glasses of rum. He has great power as the lord of magic, life and death, and if he denies you entrance to *Gînê*, you will not die, no matter the severity of the illness or curse that afflicts you. Page | 6

The Baron does not work alone. He is aided by his wife, MAMAN BRIGITTE, who oddly is said to come from Ireland, rather than Africa or the West Indies. She is usually depicted as having red gold hair and emerald green eyes. It is possible that she had her origin in folklore brought to the West Indies by the Irish rebels sold into slavery in Jamaica and Barbados on the orders of Oliver Cromwell. Like her husband, Maman Brigitte likes her rum, but prefers it infused with Scotch Bonnet chilis. She is the protector of grave markers, with horses, weeping willows, elms and fire sacred to her.

Baron Samedi and Maman Brigitte have an adopted son, GUÉDÉ NIBO. Unlike his parents, Nibo was once a mortal who was murdered. He usually dresses like his father, but with clothes cut in a more foppish style, but he is known to sometimes be depicted wearing drag. His mannerisms and look suggest that he may have been a batty boy (sexually deviant) in life. Like his parents, Nibo is fond of cigars and rum, though sometimes his rum is infused with medicinal herbs rather than his mother's chilis. He is the doorman of the cemetery who is an intermediary between the world of the living and the land of the dead. He guides the dead to *Gînê* and takes particular care of those who have died by violence, and those who have been lost at sea or otherwise have no proper grave.

Since both church and state attempted to suppress belief in Vodou, the *Lwa* were cloaked in Christian garb for public viewing. Baron Samedi masqueraded as St. Andrew or St. Expedite. Maman Brigitte became Mary Magdalene or St. Brigid. They were symbolised by the colours purple and black with the addition of white for Baron Samedi and green for Maman Brigitte and ritual patterns or drawings called *Vévé*.

The Baron and his family are said to sometimes appear in seeming mortal form in cemeteries, which after all, are their homes in late October and early November.

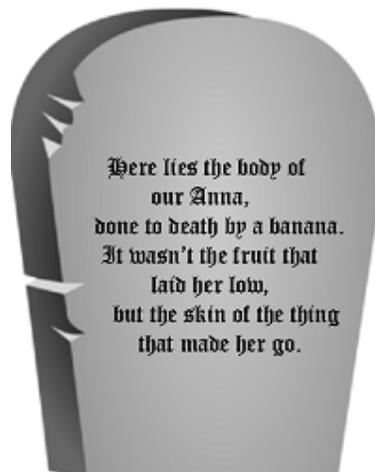




Two banners of Baron Samedi by Claudine Michel photographed by Anne M. Platof for her article *Drapo Vodou: Sacred Standards of Haitian Vodou*

### Tombstone Oddities

Anna Hopewell's grave in Enosburg Falls, Vermont, has an epitaph that sounds like something from a Three Stooges movie:



### Last Words

Aldous Huxley 1894-1963 Author of *Brave New World*

"It is a bit embarrassing to have been concerned with the human problem all one's life and find at the end that one has no more to offer by way of advice than 'Try and be a little kinder.'"

