

**Trust's Endowment Account
Gets a Major Boost**
page 2

**When Careful Planning
Meets the Totally
Unexpected**
page 7

Heritage Day
February 13, 2016
See page 8

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Editorial

Dear friends,

This is a very special issue of *The White Fence*, one with news that helps to ensure our long-term future. But it contains both sad and good news. The sad news is that we have lost a valued friend and contributor; the good news lies in this late friend's legacy to the Tantramar Heritage Trust. The details are described in the articles below written by Al Smith and Paul Bogaard based on their close friendship with Alec R. Purdy over many years. When we began discussions about creating the Tantramar Heritage Trust nearly twenty years ago, we realized that, in order to function properly and effectively, we would depend almost exclusively on whatever grants we could secure but especially the generosity of our friends and members. Well dear friends, you all came through! Over the last (nearly!) twenty years (officially the 20th this fall), we have benefitted from the generosity of federal, provincial and municipal grants but especially from our many valued members, most of whom prefer to remain anonymous. This issue of *The White Fence* is dedicated to one exemplary long-distance friend of the Trust who has recently passed on but left us a very tangible legacy to help ensure our fiscal future. Although we focus this newsletter on the generosity and legacy of Alec Purdy (at right), we thank all our many benefactors who have long supported us in our efforts to illuminate our past. As the saying goes: we could not have



Alec R. Purdy 1945-2015.

done it without you. All of our donors names are all listed on the "donor walls" at the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre and Campbell Carriage Factory in Sackville. Based on that long list of names and the two articles in this newsletter, I can only reach one conclusion: we must be doing something right.

Thank you all!

Peter Hicklin

Trust's Endowment Account Gets a Major Boost

By **Al Smith**

As we start the year 2016 and enter our 20th year as a non-profit charitable organization, it is really nice to be able to announce a highly significant donation that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the Tantramar Heritage Trust (THT). The Trust as an organization has grown very quickly over the past 19 years, now owning and operating two museums highlighting Sackville's rich heritage. These two museums house historical displays and artifacts in six highly significant heritage buildings which, in addition to restoration, require constant maintenance and repair. After opening the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre Museum in September 2006 (the Trust's 10th anniversary as an organization), our planning discussions started to explore how we could ensure the long-term viability of the organization. Thus, in 2008, the Board established a THT Endowment Fund – the idea being that donations to that Fund would be of restricted use and be allowed to grow and eventually invested to accrue returns that could then be used to help offset annual operating expenses.

Despite a significant initial donation of \$5,000.00 to establish that Endowment Fund, that account has grown very slowly over the past seven years. A total of \$10,293.00 was in the fund at the end of fiscal year 2014/15. So it was with great surprise and excitement when the Trust received a letter on November 5,

2015, advising us that the Tantramar Heritage Trust had been named as a beneficiary of the **Alec. R. Purdy Living Trust**. Attached to that letter was a cheque for \$100,000.00! The Trust could not immediately announce this amazing donation as ScotiaBank required 20 business days before they would release the funds. Everything has now been cleared and the funds are safely in the Trust's account and under the watchful eye of our Treasurer, Paul Bogaard. So who was Alec R. Purdy and why would he have so significantly supported the mission of the Tantramar Heritage Trust?

Alec Raymond Purdy (1945-2015) was a great, great grandson of Henry Boultenhouse Purdy (1814-1888) the shipbuilder from Westcock who constructed 19 vessels over the period 1852-1878. Purdy family genealogists have traced the roots of the family back to Francis Purdy born in the mid-16th century (*circa* 1562) in Yorkshire, England. John Purdy, a son of Francis, immigrated to Concord, Massachusetts, around 1632 along

with his wife and their son Francis. Sometime later, Francis moved to Fairfield County, Connecticut, where he married and raised a large family. Over the next hundred years there grew a very large Purdy clan in Fairfield County, CT, as well as in neighboring Westchester, County, NY. During the American Revolution, the Purdy family was divided with loyalties to both sides of the conflict. After 1783, the "Patriot" sections of the family remained in New York while the Loyalist branches (three Purdy brothers: Gabriel, Henry and Gilbert plus an uncle) settled in Nova Scotia including the founding of the community of Westchester in Cumberland County. All three Loyalist Purdy brothers had served in the British army and were rewarded for their loyalty and service by being awarded land grants in Nova Scotia. Henry Purdy settled in Fort Lawrence, Gilbert in Malagash (Remsheg) and Gabriel in Westchester.

The direct line to Alec R. Purdy – the subject of this story – is via

Henry Purdy (born c1745 in White Plains, NY – died 1826, Fort Lawrence, NS)
Married – Tamar Kniffen 16 Feb. 1773

- James Purdy (born in White Plains NY, Sept. 12, 1781 – died Wood Point 1861)
Married – Mary Ann Boultenhouse in 1814

- Henry Boultenhouse Purdy (b. Wood Point 28 Dec. 1814 – died 22 Dec. 1888, Westcock)
Married – Dorcas Snowdon 21 March 1837

- Reuben Boultenhouse Purdy (b. Wood Point, 27 Oct. 1841 – died New Westminster BC 1925)

- Belmont Russell Purdy (b. Sackville, 4 Aug. 1880 – d New Westminster, BC 15 June 1943)

- Dwight Walker Purdy (b. New Westminster, BC, 1911 – died 17 Mar. 2009, Edmonton, Alberta)

- Russell Matter Purdy (b. Lethbridge 1943 – died May 24, 2015, Edmonton)

- Alec Raymond Purdy (b. New Westminster, BC 19 Oct. 1945 – died Indio, California 4 Jul. 2015)

Henry Purdy, an officer in the British army who joined the loyalist cause in 1776 and was commissioned in 1780 as a Captain of a Light Infantry Company under Colonel James DeLancey. Henry Purdy (circa 1745-1826) received a grant of 150 acres at Fort Lawrence, Cumberland Co., Nova Scotia, in 1785 and a shared additional grant of 400 acres in 1788. In addition to being a farmer and merchant at Fort Lawrence, he became a Colonel in the Nova Scotia Militia, a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, acted as Town Clerk, was appointed High Sheriff of Cumberland County in 1794 and served as a member of the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly from 1806-1820. Henry Purdy and his wife Tamar Kniffen had a family of nine. Their second son, and fourth oldest child, was James Purdy (1781-1861). James grew up in Fort Lawrence, was active in the local Militia and by *circa* 1810 was the captain of a small trading vessel owned by Bedford Boultenhouse of Wood Point, New Brunswick. That vessel, built in Hillsboro, traded between the ports of Sackville, Dorchester, Saint John and the Passamaquoddy area.

James Purdy was 32 when he married 15-year old Mary Ann Boultenhouse in 1814. It was considered by some Purdy family genealogists to have been a so-called "shotgun wedding" as their first child Henry Boultenhouse Purdy was born on Dec. 28, 1814. The couple had an additional 11 children over the next 23 years. Mary Ann was the daughter of Bedford Boultenhouse (1762-1848), a Loyalist carpenter from New Jersey who

immigrated to Nova Scotia in 1784 and finally settling near Sackville in 1794. Bedford married Charlotte Harper, daughter of Yorkshireman Christopher Harper, and raised a family of six including Christopher Boultenhouse (circa 1802-1876), New Brunswick's most prolific shipbuilder having constructed 60 vessels in his lifetime.

Henry Boultenhouse Purdy married Dorcas Snowdon (1817-1897), granddaughter of Yorkshireman Pickering Snowdon, on March 21, 1837, and raised a family of nine. Henry took over an existing small shipyard at Westcock that was established by John Boultenhouse (brother of Christopher) and his son Bedford. Between 1852 and 1878, Henry Purdy built and launched 19 vessels from his Westcock shipyard. The seafaring traditions of the Purdy family were carried on by his oldest three sons: John, Reuben and James. John and Reuben were both Master Mariners. Reuben (see accompanying photo) went to sea in 1856 at the age of 14 and by the time he reached 19 he was a full-fledged sea captain. James was a shipwright having constructed three vessels at the family yard in Westcock. By 1890, with the end of the era of wooden ships, all three sons had moved out to British Columbia where they worked as sea captains in the Vancouver area.

Alec Raymond Purdy was descended from Master Mariner Reuben Boultenhouse Purdy. Alec was born in New Westminster, British Columbia, on October 19, 1945. His father (Dwight Walker Purdy)



Master Mariner Reuben Boultenhouse Purdy (circa 1870) from the collection of Alec R. Purdy

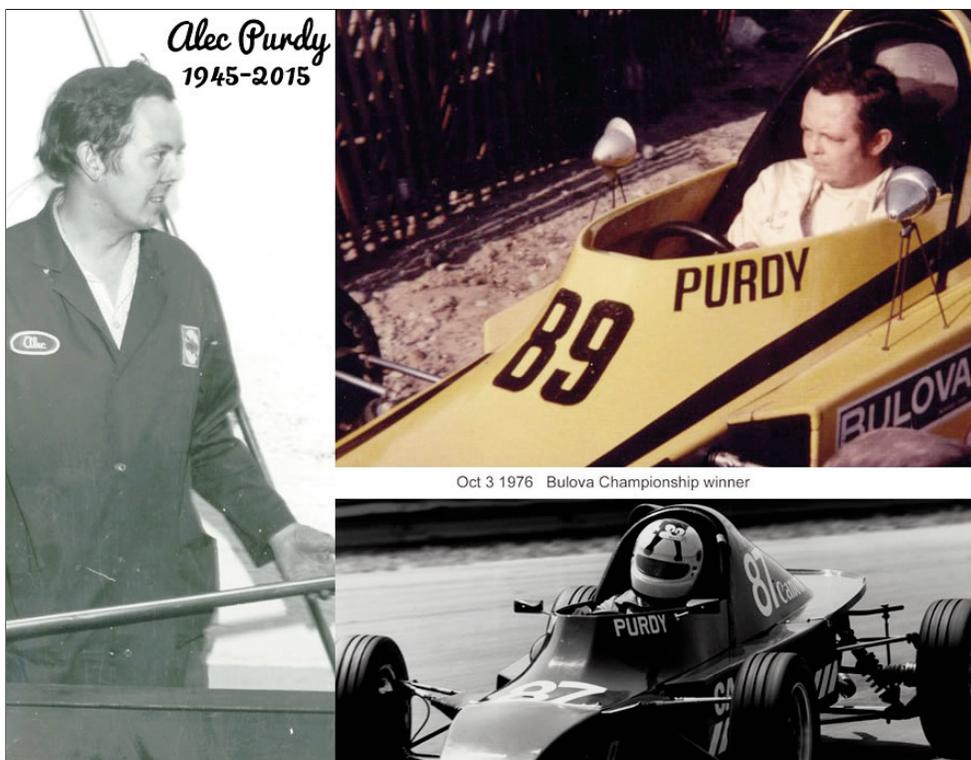
was a professional engineer employed in the sugar industry; the family followed the father's postings to places like the Dominican Republic, Vancouver and Lethbridge. In 1963, Alec returned to Vancouver to attend UBC where he obtained a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1967. His initial employment was with Westinghouse working mainly on gas turbines but, since childhood, had always been interested in racecars. In 1970, he left Westinghouse and moved to Toronto where he purchased a Lotus 61 Formula Ford racecar. In partnership with Brian

Stewart, a successful Canadian driver, they won the 1972 Formula Ford Championship and earned a place in the World Championships in England. Thus began a 42-year involvement in professional motorsports. Purdy's extensive experience in engineering design, fabrication and testing, especially for new car development, made his expertise very sought after by numerous racing teams.

Alec moved to Hanover, Ontario, in 1973 and worked 10 years with Ferret Industries. Working with Fred Wilken at Ferret they designed a brand new racecar incorporating concepts that Alec had been toying with for several years. Alec's incredible mechanical mind combined with his driving experience contributed significantly to the success of Ferret's new Ferret Mk 4 Formula Ford racecar. With Purdy as driver Ferret claimed three Canadian Formula Ford Championships along with many regional titles.

Between 1984 and 1989, he worked for Ryan Performance Machine in North Carolina as a specialty engine builder. Purdy formed his own company (Ferret Inc.) around 1990 – a company that provided engineering consulting, motorsport parts and services to the general racing community. Throughout the 1990s and over much of 2000-2010, he was associated with numerous professional racing teams. In January, 2013, Greg Rice of the Rice Race Prep team managed to talk Alec Purdy out of retirement to develop new shocks for his racecars and to provide advice on technical matters.

The following quote from Greg Rice well illustrates the tremendous respect that the racing world had for Alec Purdy: "I had the privilege of



1970s photo collage of Alec Purdy with racing cars from the Ferret Industries website: www.ferretindustries.ca.

working with Alec Purdy for 18 months...as I felt that my race preparation business needed a boost of engineering expertise. He came to some of our Pro F1600 and ProF2000 events, provided remote consultation when he could not attend, built our shocks, and applied his "Purdy" touch to our race cars. With Alec leading our group, our team won "Engineer of the Year" in the Pro F1600 Series in 2013. In June of 2013 we won the June Sprints at Road America. In June of 2014, we won at a Pro F1600 race at VIR, and just a month ago, we won another Pro F1600 race at VIR. Although we had not had Alec at the track with us for a year, his shocks, revised front geometry, and engineering foundation were a key part of that success. It is so fitting, that through all of Alec's success in motorsport, his final contribution was in helping a ragtag group of Canadians, with an over-age



Canadian driver, win a Formula Ford race against a bunch of young kids from around the world driving for multi-car mini Indycar teams. It was so cool to work with a Canadian motorsport icon – Alec was brilliant and maintained his sense of humor to the end..."

The photo (above) of Alec Purdy advising the Rice Race Team is from the team's website (www.riceraceprep.com/team/) and is likely the last photo that illustrates his long involvement in motorsports.

Alec Purdy was diagnosed with cancer in 2014 and lost the battle with that dreaded disease in the early morning hours of July 4, 2015. He died at his residence in Indio, California, but was buried in New Westminster, BC, alongside his great grandfather Capt. Reuben Boultenhouse Purdy. Alec was never married and had no children. He was predeceased by his parents and his older brother Russell. Alec R. Purdy was in his 70th year.

So now you know quite a bit about who Alec Purdy was but why would this retired engineer from BC (and California), a motorsports legend, have named the Tantramar Heritage Trust as a beneficiary in his Living Trust? We certainly had no inkling that Alec had intended such an undertaking and the first that we heard of it was from the letter (earlier referred to) from the co-executor of his estate. Alec Purdy was passionate about his family's genealogy and enthusiastically continued the earlier genealogical work that was started by his father.

Alec was certainly well connected historically to the local Purdy, Boultenhouse and Snowdon families and it was in that regard that he initially contacted the Trust office in 2006. He had discovered us on the Internet after we had updated our webpages and posted details of the opening of the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre. Prior to that, Alec had been corresponding with Jim Snowdon sharing genealogical information on the Boultenhouse, Purdy and

Snowdon families. Since his initial contract with the Trust, Alec and I have exchanged more than 50 emails sharing genealogical information on the two families and also a lot about shipbuilding at both the Purdy and Boultenhouse shipyards. In his quest for family information he had visited this area three times and then again in early July 2008 specifically to see the Trust's Boultenhouse Heritage Centre and our displays and information on shipbuilding and shipbuilders.

Although I never actually met Alec he was an extremely important contact for me (via email) in working out the complex interrelationships between the Boultenhouse and Purdy families and also with other early Sackville-area families including Millidge and Botsford. Paul Bogaard also had extensive email contacts with Alec as did one of our summer students, Angela Hersey. Much of our Boultenhouse family information on file in the Resource Centre at the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre (in the Anderson Octagonal House) is attributable to Alec.

In 2008, the Tantramar Heritage Trust published a book entitled *Shipbuilding in Westmorland County, NB 1784-1910*. I co-authored that work along with the principal researcher Dr. Charles Armour. I was in touch with Alec Purdy many times during the preparation of that manuscript and he contributed significantly not only genealogical data but also did copy-editing for me for the accounts on shipbuilders Christopher Boultenhouse and Henry Boultenhouse Purdy. After the book was published in May, 2008, I mailed a copy to Alec in appreciation for his many contributions.

Henry Boultenhouse Purdy's three sons John, Reuben and James all migrated out to the Vancouver area. I had been in touch with Alec on several occasions asking him to consider writing up an article on those three sons for an issue of *The White Fence* newsletter. Alec did agree to do that and I know that he had researched material in Vancouver but unfortunately never got a chance to write up the article.

My last email correspondence with Alec was in June, 2013. I had no idea that he had been diagnosed with cancer in 2014 nor that he had passed away in July, 2015. Until researching this article I did not know that he was a famous racecar designer and driver. I do know from his emails that he was deeply appreciative of the work that the Trust was doing here in Sackville. Since receiving the letter and cheque from his estate last November we have been in touch, via email, with the estate's co-executors. They have told us that his earlier connections with the Tantramar Heritage Trust meant a lot to him and that it brought great pleasure to him to include the Trust in his will. Alec established the Alec R. Purdy Living Trust that is dedicated to the Purdy family genealogy. The Board of Directors of the Tantramar Heritage Trust are deeply moved by his kindness and generosity but also saddened to realize that he is no longer with us.

Alec R. Purdy obviously believed strongly in the work of the Tantramar Heritage Trust. There is an old saying that "we must understand our past in order to pioneer the future". The mission of the Trust is preserving the past for the future and now that our Endowment Fund is a viable entity in the organization's long-term

sustainability we are all very much relieved. This does not mean that we need to back off on fund-raising as we are very hopeful that this donation will be a stimulus to others to consider contributing via donation or estate planning. Continuing our annual fundraising as well as building the Endowment Fund will be necessary for many more years to come.

Thanks to Alec's passion for delving into the past, and his willingness to share his research, we know much more about the early history of the Boultenhouse family. His extremely generous donation via The Alec R. Purdy Living Trust will ensure that the contributions of this family, that so influenced Sackville's economic and social development for most of the 19th century, are forever remembered.

Thank you Alec Purdy – may you rest in peace dear friend.

Sources

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- Boultenhouse and Purdy family information by Jim Snowdon – unpublished manuscript on file at the Resource Centre at the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre
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- Email correspondence from co-executors (Ann Lahey and Mike Purdy)
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- Obituary of Alec R. Purdy published in the *Burnaby Now and New West Record* Sept. 23, 2015
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www.thefreelibrary.com/A+family+divided+by+the+American+Revolution%3A+S
- Rice Race team website: www.riceraceprep.com/team/
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http://longislandgenealogy.com/Surname_Pages/purdy.htm
- Al Smith's Purdy family tree on ancestry.ca

When Careful Planning Meets the Totally Unexpected

**By Paul Bogaard, Treasurer
Tantramar Heritage Trust**

Careful planning refers to the financial plans that have for several years allowed the Tantramar Heritage Trust to accumulate almost a million dollars worth of capital assets (buildings and artifacts). These efforts culminated in the Capital Campaign for 2015 and 2016 which represented our best-laid plans for retiring a \$40,000 bank loan still outstanding. You will have received these campaign documents from our Capital Campaign committee chair and former Trust president Geoff Martin which also included a financial summary. These dollar figures were re-printed in *The White Fence* #69 in October 2015.

The plan centered upon a wonderfully generous offer to match dollar for dollar whatever we raised in donations to meet the 2015 loan payment to ScotiaBank. By the end of 2015, the target of \$10,000 was raised by our membership for this purpose, matched by an additional \$10,000 from an anonymous donor...and the payment for 2015 was met! According to the plan, we had only one more payment of \$20,000 left to be paid by Dec. of 2016.

This seemed to us something like a rainbow of good fortune and promise for the future...until parting clouds revealed what awaited us at the end of our rainbow!

The totally unexpected bequest from the Living Trust of Alec R. Purdy arrived in a rather standard business envelope but one that also contained a

cheque for \$100,000 U.S.! As Al Smith explains in the preceding article: while we had known Alec and engaged with him in many email conversations, no one had anticipated his passing, nor his bequest, nor the amount involved. Now what to do?

Well, ScotiaBank clarified some things immediately: don't count your chickens before they could confirm through Wells Fargo in California that there really was a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. And that took several weeks. On the other hand, being patient was likely to pay off since the Canadian dollar was weakening against the US dollar and, as this extraordinary legacy from Mr. Purdy was in US dollars, it was likely to grow even larger.

So the Board of Directors of the Heritage Trust agreed on some things right away: first, assuming this unexpected bequest was going to become reality, its principal use should be to build up our Endowment. Secondly, that if we could find a way to do so, we should pay off the remaining loan as soon as possible. That would eliminate all remaining debt from our past projects (which, however careful the planning, become a millstone around one's corporate neck) and relieve us of any further interest payments. And thirdly, since we face each year the challenge of paying for expenses (like summer employment) months in advance of the grants we are gratefully awarded being actually received, it would be most helpful to alleviate this annual cash-flow problem.

Before Christmas, ScotiaBank confirmed that the funds from the Alec Purdy Living Trust were secured and at our disposal. We arranged, with their help, to convert just enough of these US \$ to fully retire our bank loan. The Trust is now completely debt free! And the remainder (still worth more than \$100,000 in Canadian dollars) is sitting in a US \$ Account waiting for the day when we take full advantage of the exchange rate... which is still improving.

In effect, the Trust has paid off the loan a year in advance by borrowing against the funds destined to become our greatly enhanced Endowment. With that in mind, we have already approached the donor who had made the generous offer (and who prefers to remain anonymous) to match dollar for dollar whatever we raised to help, through 2015 and through 2016, the two final payments on this loan. The 2015 plan was met and carried through and this donor has agreed to continue this challenge: if we can raise up to \$10,000 during 2016, that will be matched by an additional \$10,000, and these two amounts can then be used to "pay back" what was "borrowed" from the bequest, to be invested in our Endowment.

Happily, this now becomes the Trust's adjusted plan: place \$100,000 in Canadian dollars into our Endowment Account before this fiscal year is over and pay off the remaining loan (which has now been done) with the expectation that this amount will be raised in the 2016 campaign and added back

into the Endowment. Finally, whatever amount remains through the exchange from US to Canadian dollars be used to alleviate our annual cash-flow challenge. And, of course, our auditors will review all this and report on what has been done at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the spring.

To be clear: “Endowment” means that the Trust has a special account at the bank and any monies placed there will be held there, and invested, instead of being spent to meet immediate expenses. However, the interest (or any other earnings) from the funds in this account may be spent each year to meet on-going expenses. But the “principal” will be held in this account, ensuring that the Trust has some resources available to

it over many years to come. This is assured by maintaining this special account, according to a policy established by the Board of Directors, which follows the guidelines for charitable organizations handling “endowed” funds and commits the organization to this long-term use.

In a small way, the Trust had already anticipated this special arrangement by setting up the account and carefully considering the proper use of such funds. It was an initial donation by our friend and generous contributor, Pauline Spatz, who made this possible some years back. And each year since, some donors have chosen to specify that their donation, or a portion of it, be directed to our Endowment.

At just over \$10,000, we have learned how to properly handle these special funds even though the annual earnings from such an amount are not very significant. With the Purdy bequest, we can now be assured of a much more significant Endowment with earnings large enough to be woven into each year’s budget of expenditures, and for years to come.

By attending our objectives to preserve the Tantramar’s past, we have been granted the means to help us ensure meeting these objectives well into the future. We ask that each of you continue to find ways of helping us meet these worthy objectives.

Heritage Day – Saturday, February 13

MORNING

Tantramar High School

20th Annual Heritage Breakfast (7:30–10:30 am)

The day will begin with our popular Heritage Breakfast at the TRHS Cafeteria featuring eggs, bacon, sausage, beans, toast, juice, tea and coffee. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$4 for children to age 10 and can be purchased in advance from Trust members, at the office at the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre, or at the door that morning.

Tickets can be purchased in advance from Trust members, at the office at the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre or at the door that morning.

AFTERNOON

Anderson Octagonal House Boultenhouse Heritage Centre 27 Queens Road, Sackville, NB

Guest Speakers (1:30–3 pm)

Details still to be confirmed. Check the Trust website at heritage.tantramar.com. Reception with light refreshments to follow.