



Heritage Foundation
Newfoundland & Labrador

#003

EVERYTHING WAS WRAPPED in BROWN PAPER

OF Port Blandford

THE *Old Shops*

Edited by
KATHERINE HARVEY
&
TERRA BARRETT



ORAL HISTORY ROADSHOW SERIES

EVERYTHING WAS WRAPPED IN BROWN PAPER

The Old Shops of Port Blandford

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Oral History Roadshow Series #003



Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador
Intangible Cultural Heritage Office
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Layout / design by Jessie Meyer

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Introduction

Thanks to the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland & Labrador, The New Horizons for Seniors and Terra Barrett and Katherine Harvey for rewarding us with the opportunity to document and tell some yarns of our stores from the early days of Port Blandford.

The Port Blandford Heritage Society Inc. held its first public meeting in March of 2013 and committed to researching, preserving and promoting the history of Port Blandford so as to share the knowledge with current and former residents, people interested in the community, and future generations. Our major accomplishment has been the researching and production of twelve storyboards that depict some of our history, the purchasing of a railway speeder and the building of a speeder shed, some work on the town's logging and sawmilling history, working towards memorializing those who served in World War I and World War II, and of course, telling the stories of our shops and stores.

It is difficult to document, with certainty, the shops of Port Blandford. Many families owned stores from the 1920s to our present day gas bars/convenience stores. We have been able to document more than forty stores, some of these changed ownerships several times, some were passed along to family members, and others expanded with a larger, or a second store.

Calvin Efford

VICE-CHAIR

PORT BLANDFORD HERITAGE SOCIETY



Roland Greening and Son Limited. Photo courtesy Sarah Greening.



1998 calendar from Roland Greening and Son Ltd. Photo by Terra Barrett. 2017.

METHODOLOGY

Terra and I arrived in Port Blandford on a sunny afternoon in August 2017. The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, in collaboration with the Port Blandford Heritage Society, had organized an Oral History Night in order to meet locals who remembered the old shops, and to get a sense of who would be best to interview. Fortunately, the community's Green Team, which consisted of Tyler Chatman, Calista Greening, Brittany Holloway, and Jillian Skiffington, had conducted preliminary research and an oral history interview prior to our arrival, so the groundwork had been laid. Over the course of the trip, Terra and I completed half a dozen interviews, collected old photographs, and immersed ourselves in the community's history.

This project is part of the Oral History Roadshow which aims to empower and encourage seniors to showcase their memories through a series of oral history night celebrations. *Everything was Wrapped in Brown Paper: The Old Shops of Port Blandford* developed as a result of several conversations with the Port Blandford Heritage Society. Calvin Efford, Vice-Chair with the Heritage Society, contacted the Heritage Foundation about capturing and preserving memories of the local shops and owners. We decided an oral history event with follow up interviews and background research would be an excellent way to showcase these stories.

According to the locals, there were three main shops in Port Blandford: D. Pelley Limited, Roland Greening and R.E. Powell's. Over the years, a variety of other small convenience stores existed, but they were on a much smaller scale. Shops

METHODOLOGY



Port Blandford community mug up. Photo by Katherine Harvey. 2017.

and stores were a vital part of small communities in rural Newfoundland in the past. They served as a social space where people would meet to chat and gossip. They were often at the heart of communities. This booklet encompasses some of those positive memories of years gone by, and demonstrates the importance of local shops throughout time.

Katherine Harvey

LIST OF *Port Blandford* SHOPS

In addition to the shops outlined throughout this booklet, The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Port Blandford Heritage Society have compiled a more complete list of shops that existed in the community over the years. If you have any information on these places, please contact the Port Blandford Heritage Society.

- Adams Irving (1980s-2000)
- Aquilla & Mary Barnes (1960s)
- Carmichael
- Corner Stop (2000-present)
- Courage
- Davis' Supermarket (c. 1960s)
- Efford's Irving (1980s)
- Ford's (c. 1950)
- Annie Garrett (c. 1936)
- Wanda Garrett (1998-2013)
- Druce and Noah Greening
- Ella and Tom Greening (early 1960s)
- Stella Greening (1960s)
- Roland Greening (1942-1997)
- Hayley's
- Amy Best/Simon Holloway
- Clara Keats
- Bob & Clara Keats
- Elihu Layden
- Gertie Lock (1960s)

LIST OF *Port Blandford* SHOPS

- Edith Matthews (1960s)
- Blanche Mugford (late 1940s-early 1950s)
- Robert Oakley
- Samuel Oakley (c.1920)
- Ted & Dot Parrott (c.1982)
- Andy Peddle
- Annie Peddle (1960s)
- Ida Peddle (1990s - ?)
- Mattie Peddle (1980s)
- D. Pelley Ltd (1920-late 1970s)
- R. E. Powell
- Walter and Eva Reid (late 1940s-early 1950s)
- Rance Rowsell
- R & B Electric (1990 -1994) Rowena & Brian Goodman
- Frank Stares (late 1800s-early 1900s)
- Andrew McCoubrey Stares (c.1906)
- Johnny Stares (pre 1947)
- Ern Stead (pre 1942)
- Frederick Steads (c.1890s)
- Alex Stone
- Joseph Stone (late 1800s-early 1900s)
- James & Clara Troke (c.1936)
- Susie Webber (? - 1960s)
- Gertie White
- Grace White/Mary White (1977-1984)



Information collected by the Port Blandford Heritage Society.
Map layout by Michael Philpott. 2017.

ROLAND GREENING & SONS LTD. (1942-1997)

Roland Greening started his first store in 1942. The shop was approximately 28' x 30', and was previously owned by Ern Stead who had operated a small store from this location. Roland sold mostly groceries at his shop, and later, he began selling Kerosene and coal. Around Christmas, a small order of dry goods was received as well. He had one cashier working for him at the time.

After ten years of business at this location, Roland had another, larger shop built about 150 feet from the original store on the Main Road. His business expanded, and with this so did the variety of items he sold. He began selling Pepsi and Suncrest products, cigarettes and tobacco, beer, dry goods, hardware, footwear and electrical appliances. At this point he had four cashiers employed at his shop. For a period of time he operated another store, near the present post office, in combination with his main business.

The store was incorporated as Roland Greening & Sons Ltd. in 1985. Roland ran the store until he became ill in 1995. His son, Dexter, and his wife, Sarah, then took over the business which they ran until 1997.

The store was later sold to Wanda Garrett, and became Wanda's Convenience in 1998. She operated this location until 2013.

"[Mr. Greening] started his first store in September of 1942. He started with \$300, and he stocked the store with \$300. So then after that he grew. He had most of his stuff come by railway from T&M Winter Ltd. in St. John's. So that's how they stocked it then, but as time progressed, we ordered from the salesmen that would

ROLAND GREENING & SONS LTD. (1942-1997)



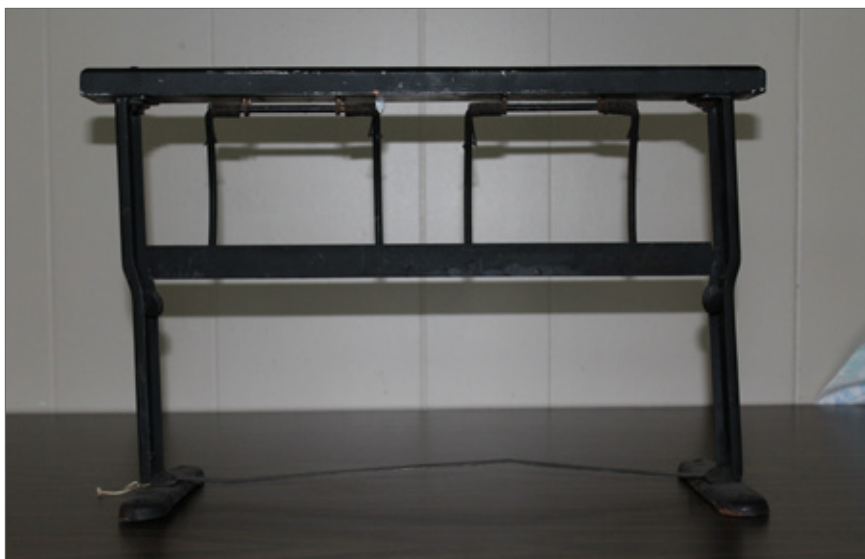
Roland Greening's c. 1964. Photo courtesy Sarah Greening.

come to the store, and the trucks would come and deliver in later years, from different wholesalers.” –***Sarah Greening***

“I remember the inside of Roland Greening’s . . . you went in and there was a counter. Now they didn’t have an upstairs, not that I can ever remember. It was just food . . . There were a few other things there but not like Pelley’s. Pelley’s was the big one.” –***Reginald Penney***

“This artifact I brought in here, that was a rack that the paper roll went on. We had to wrap parcels first when I started at the store. Everything had to be wrapped and tied with a piece

ROLAND GREENING & SONS LTD. (1942-1997)



Paper roll holder from Roland Greening's. Photo by Katherine Harvey. 2017.

of string, and then break off the piece of string. Everything was wrapped in brown paper.” –***Sarah Greening***

“The store is located next to a graveyard. We had one lady that worked, and she would never work on Friday night. She didn’t want to work on Friday night, she didn’t like it there because we were next to the graveyard and she said she used to hear noises . . . knocking noises and stuff.” –***Sarah Greening***

“First when we operated, you’d never hear tell of a break-in. That was out of the question. We never had a break-in until we started selling beer, and we had several then. They would break

ROLAND GREENING & SONS LTD. (1942-1997)

into the warehouse and steal so many dozen beer. But that would be it, they wouldn't wreck stuff. They'd just break the door open somehow and get their beer and that would be it, until the next time." –*Sarah Greening*

"I was sad when we closed. I had been there a long time. I went there in '65 and we closed in '95, that was thirty years. So it was sad when that happened. We would have liked to keep it going but it was just impossible to keep it going. Couldn't afford to be paying clerks, and it was too big to do ourselves." –*Sarah Greening*



Wanda's Convenience. Photo courtesy Sarah Greening.

D. PELLEY LTD (1920- C. 1970)



D. Pelley's. Photo by Terra Barrett. 2017.

Daniel Pelley arrived in Port Blandford in 1900 from Trinity Bay. Daniel's son, Bart, who would later take over the Pelley enterprise, was born in 1908. Daniel began building the Pelley empire in 1901 when he established a sawmill at Port Blandford. Between 1906 and 1919 he built four schooners. He established his first store in Southwest in 1920. In 1936, he moved locations. His business later expanded to Benton and Lewisporte.

D. Pelley Ltd. was the largest shop in the community, selling everything from groceries, to dry goods, furniture and lumber. The Pelleys remained a prominent family in the community for many years. D. Pelley Ltd. operated until the 1970s when Bart Pelley passed away.

D. PELLEY LTD (1920- C. 1970)

“Oh it was always neat because when you walked in there was always a counter there, and there was always people like cutting cheese or wrapping up ham or slicing ham. They would have the big sheets of paper, hauling it off, and the roll of string, and they would be wrapping it up and tying it around, or they would be filling up boxes. So you would look around downstairs, and it was all groceries. Then you could go upstairs and wander around by yourself. So if you wanted something, you went downstairs and then somebody went up with you to serve you, or sometimes when you went up there there might be someone up there serving someone else. But it was always kind of nice to go upstairs because you could always poke around and see all kinds of different things, and you could try on high heel shoes then and nobody could see you because you were only young and you weren’t allowed to have them, but you can try them on because there was nobody else up there. So we would all go up and walk around in high heel shoes thinking we were wonderful. Fashion was upstairs. Food downstairs and fashion upstairs.” **-Linda Bennett**

“Joyce, Marie, Ina, Doris, and me [worked at D. Pelley Ltd.] . . . We all kind of served anybody and if they wanted to go upstairs then we went up. And we had to draw up kerosene oil, had to go outdoors in a little place. If anyone wanted kerosene oil we had to go out and draw up a gallon or two, whatever they wanted. Then the store across the road was a place for storing things, and a lot of times we had to go over there. They had furniture and floor covering and even caskets. I used to be afraid to go over there.” **-Patsy Peddle**

D. PELLEY LTD (1920- C. 1970)

“There was a crowd from Bunyan’s Cove and Charlottetown. The men came up for their winter supplies of everything. My first day there was the day they came up. Needless to say I was petrified so I had one man served and partway through the groceries he said, ‘I want to go upstairs my dear.’ And I said, ‘Okay, fine.’ So we were halfway up the stairs and he said, ‘My dear, I want some underwear for my wife.’ Well I said, ‘Okay sir. What size do you want?’ ‘Oh,’ he said, ‘The size that fit miss arse.’ I just about died. So I said, ‘Okay. If I get through this I might make it.’ So we went downstairs, and we still had the groceries because they had a winter’s supply. He was at it and later on my brother came along and he called him by name and he said, ‘You know you’re going to have to hurry up. We close at six.’ Now this was nine o’clock in the morning. So anyway my brother took him out in the back, we had barrels of beef out there and he got his beef for him and he helped me get him situated. I finally got out with the rest at six o’clock.” –*Patsy Peddle*

“Well going into Pelley’s store - it had a character. Sort of old fashioned, the counters and shelves lining the walls and down in the back was an office where the owners seemed to be always in there. The clerks, of course, who worked there, and the face-to-face relationship that you had with the clerks going into the store is much more personal than it is today because you would ask the clerk, or I would anyhow, perhaps if you were looking for something and they would go and get it and put it on the counter and check it out for you. Not with a computer or even a calculator or, I’m not sure what they used then, but I’m sure the brain was used in a different way than it is today by the clerks. And the scales, of course, for weighing things on the counter. Weighing meats and bologna, things like that. So the store itself had a different atmosphere.

D. PELLEY LTD (1920- C. 1970)



D. Pelley Ltd. c. 1940 with Mary Greening, Frank Garrett; & Gertrude "Gertie" Guppy out front. Photo courtesy Pansy Leyden.

There were no aisles as you would see in the supermarket type places we have today. Most groceries were in shelves built in the back or on the sides of the store, and in the back there might be some dry goods articles, nails, screws and things like that. Maybe some clothing as well, boots. But Pelley's store certainly had a great influence on Port Blandford over the years because they were the main merchants. You know people - not only living here in Port Blandford but outlining communities relied on Pelley's for whatever they needed. A credit system was certainly used. Not the cash and carry as we have today." ***-Reginald Penney***

"My dear, I was there for a while and the phone rang and I answered the phone and this customer said, 'Have you got any beer cappers down there?' And I said, 'No, I'm sorry.' 'Are you

D. PELLEY LTD (1920- C. 1970)

sure you've got no beer cappers?' 'No I'm sorry.' 'Well now,' she said, 'That's a funny thing because people told me Pelley's had beer cappers in quart bottles.' And I said, 'Oh! You wanted bakeapples.' 'Yes, yes my dear. That's what I wanted.' 'Oh,' I said, 'I'm sorry. We do have bakeapples here.' I was thinking about a beer capper, and then when she said in the bottles, all of a sudden [it clicked]." –*Patsy Peddle*



Viola Greening behind counter at Pelley's c. 1960. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

R.E. POWELLS (1915- ?)



R.E. Powell's. Photo by Terra Barrett. 2017.

Roland Ewart Powell came to Port Blandford as a Game Warden, presumably in the early to mid-1940s. After the death of Johnny Stares in 1947, he married Pearl, Johnny's widow, in June of 1948. Johnny and Pearl's store was attached to their home, which was renamed R.E. Powell after the two were married.

The Powells were general dealers in Port Blandford, supplying groceries, gas, glass, canvas and much more. Like other businesses

R.E. POWELLS (1915- ?)

of their time, supplies were delivered by train, until roads connected Port Blandford to other towns and the goods began to arrive via truck.

Powells was possibly the first business to operate a modern gas pump at Port Blandford, having to start the diesel to pump gas in a manner similar to today. Previous to this, gas and oil were pumped by a manual pump, from a forty-five gallon drum, into containers ranging in size from a gallon to five gallons.

A custom at Powells was that all feminine products were to be wrapped and tied before being placed on the counter.

Although other stores may have cut glass for windows and doors, several people distinctly remember going to Powells for glass to repair a window or to build a new window or door.

One of the deceitful methods to bring additional revenue was to have a piece of wood placed in the bottom of a gallon jug, that was used to measure molasses. Molasses would cover the wood and the customer was not aware of the lesser amount received. Mr. Powell told this story to many people in his later years.

The Powells also operated a small farm and sold vegetables to people in the area. Some of the workers would prepare their lunch at the store. The vegetables were free, however, staff were expected to pay for the meats because the vegetables came from the farm but the meat had to be purchased by the store.

HAYLEY'S

“I remember teenage years more than younger years. Younger years, we stayed with my mother’s sister, and she passed away when I was about twelve. Then after that then I stayed with my other aunt, Aunt Triffie. I remember more those years because I had another cousin, Linda Garrett and Audrey Blandford from Gander, and they used to come to Port Blandford and I’d come. So we would all get together, and we’d all walk down the road when Peddle’s had their store, and Hayley’s had their store and their movie theatre. We’d come and go to the movie at Hayley’s. Well it wasn’t really a theatre it was kind of in their house. It wasn’t a big theatre.” –***Linda Bennett***



Sarah Greening (left) and Linda Bennett (right). Photo by Katherine Harvey. 2017.

DAVIS' SUPERMARKET (1965-?)

“The best thing I liked about them, they were the first store that had the carts, the grocery carts. And people would take a cart



Davis' Supermarket.

DAVIS' SUPERMARKET (1965-?)

and go in and pick up their groceries, and all you had to do was write it in the book.” –*Mary White*



Photo by Terra Barrett. 2017.

MARY'S CONVENIENCE (1977-1984)



Evelyn Penney and Mary White. Photo by Katherine Harvey. 2017.

“The store I had, first it was a restaurant. It was opened in ‘64. Then after the restaurant closed up I turned it into a grocery store and that was back in ‘77. So I had the store until ‘84.” –**Mary White**

“When I had the store, my kids were only small. I remember one little one used to come out and there was a drawer there and they’d pull out the drawer and lie down and go to sleep. But they used to help, when they got bigger, they used to help stack the shelves and that.” –**Mary White**

“I remember when I used to have a pail of salt pork I used to always phone [Evelyn’s] father when I opened a pail of salt pork. He used to come over and get his salt pork. He’d have about ten pounds. He loved his salt pork, didn’t he? He always wanted the thickest piece in the barrell.” –**Mary White & Evelyn Penney**

SUSIE WEBBER'S (? - 1960S)

Susie Webber's is believed to be one of the oldest houses in Port Blandford, most likely built in the early 1900s. In the past, there was a store attached to the house, but it has since been demolished.

Jake Efford remembers rolling a drum of kerosene from the freight shed at Southwest to Susie's store. He was paid twenty cents for his help.

Jim Leyden recalls going to Susie's store one day to purchase something for his mother. He was owed a penny, but Susie didn't have the proper change. Jim decided he would ask for a kiss instead of his change.

Edith Clouter remembers buying loose biscuits from a wooden biscuit box at Susie's Shop.



Susie Webber's House. Photo by Terra Barrett. 2017.

FRANK & IDA PEDDLE'S SNACK BAR



Frank and Ida Peddle's Snack Bar. Photo by Terra Barrett. 2017.

“[There were] two operations out of this building – Andy, the father of Frank, operated a hangout with a pool table & games. [He] sold a small amount of convenience items and beer. After his retirement, probably mid 70-years-old, his daughter-in-law, Ida, [and her husband] Frank ran it as a convenience store. This was done out of the right side of the building.” –*Calvin Efford*

“You would go down and buy a bag of chips and a soft drink, or a bar and a soft drink... There was music there. Sometimes there was coke cartons and you could sit down for a while. It was kind of a hang out and everybody went there after supper.” –*Linda Bennett*

EARLY SHOPS

“The first known store at Clode Sound, in the late 1880s/early 1890s, was believed to be owned by the railway and run by a man named Carmichael. It was thought to be located in the present day wharf area. In the early 1890s, two other small stores, one owned by Joseph Stone, formally from Catalina and the other by Frank Stares, formally from Portland, B.B. operated in the same general area. Fred Stead operated a store in the mid /late 1890s until his death from a sawmill accident in 1899. These stores carried basic items such as flour, sugar, and nails. The method of payment was mostly on credit, paying their bills in the fall and spring, or when the railway compensated the workers.

In 1903, Clode Sound was renamed Port Blandford and the next reference to a store is in 1906, when on Oct.11th a wedding party was held at the store of Mr. A.M. Stares.

In 1908, Lovell’s Gazetteer of British North America has the population of Port Blandford as 300 people with 2 stores.

The 1911, McAlpine’s Maritime and Newfoundland Gazetteer records Port Blandford as a post and money order village in Bonavista district, with 4 stores.” –*Calvin Efford*

“Mr. William Mitchell died suddenly at age 70. In 1892, he was a storekeeper headquartered at Clode Sound.” –*The Evening Telegram, April 4, 1917*

“Fire totally destroyed the hotel and store owned by Mr. S.R. Oakley at Port Blandford (under management by Mr. J.R. Courage).” – *The Evening Telegram, March 20, 1922*

COMMUNITY SHOPS

“Right by the corner of School Road, Frank and Ida Peddle, they used to have a snack bar there. We used to go down there in the nighttime. I can remember going to Roland Greening’s store, and I can remember I used to love to go to Pelley’s store when we came down because they had upstairs, and you could go upstairs and they would have all the shoes. You could try on shoes, and it was really fun to go to Pelley’s. That was one of my favourite stores. We didn’t go to Powell’s store a whole lot, but I can remember the store that Sid and Edith Matthews had up in southwest. I don’t really know what the name of the store was but the nickname of the store that everybody used to call it was the Big Six. They used to have just a little convenience store where you could buy little candies and chips and soft drinks and things like that. I can’t remember that one a whole lot. I can remember that one a little bit. But Pelley’s was the big store I remember most.” **–Linda Bennett**

“[In 1971 there was] D. Pelley Limited. Pelley’s store which was the biggest store, the main one. They carried groceries, dried good, odds and ends. Just a bit of everything I guess. And there was Roland Greening’s, Ida Peddle’s, Mary White’s, Stella Greening’s. There may have been a couple of smaller ones that I just can’t recall right now but these were the main ones. So probably six or seven.” **–Reginald Penney**

“I can remember Frank and them had that take out or the snack bar, and I remember Powell’s and Pelley’s and Roland Greening’s. Oh, and Gertie Lock used to have a store on the top of Lock’s Hill and I can remember going in there a few times. I’m sure there were more than that but those are the only ones I can remember.” **–Linda Bennett**

COMMUNITY SHOPS

“Sometimes people would have a little store that would be attached to the house that they lived in. I guess you would call it convenience stores today. There are two or three that stand out here that weren’t stand alone stores they were attached to the house that the person owned.” –***Reginald Penney***

“Ida Peddle’s, that was one that stands out. From a teaching point of view, I remember that the school that I taught in, Roland Greening’s store was not far from the school. So back then there wasn’t the structure that there is today with meals in school, so very often at recess time students would run down to the store and come back with their junk food or whatever they wanted to buy for recess. The rules weren’t quite the same as where students could go and couldn’t go like you would have now. It was a much more relaxed atmosphere.” –***Reginald Penney***



Josie Pardy & Joyce Clouter c. 1960. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

SHOPS AS COMMUNITY HELPERS

“If [Roland Greening’s] ran out of butter or milk, just send up to the other store and they’d lend us one until we got our shipment in. It was good.” –*Sarah Greening*

“Mr. Bart Pelley, he was the owner and operator, although he had his office manager, who was a sweetheart, Aunt Lossie. They were the kindest people ever. I remember when I was about ten, my dad had to go into the sanitarium in St. John’s, he had tuberculosis, and it was just mom and I, my brother hadn’t been born then and my sister was in the hospital . . . so when my dad went into the sanitarium he was in there eleven months. And at that time there was no welfare, you couldn’t run out and get welfare every two weeks. So it was just Mom and I, and with the relatives we had and Mr. Bart Pelley, we survived. My mom said, many times, that we would have starved to death if it wasn’t for Mr. Pelley.” –*Sarah Greening*



Employee’s of D. Pelley Ltd. Back row, left to right: Marie Greening (White), Lossie Harris, Ina Harris (Hoskins). Front row, left to right – Patsy Peddle (Greening), Joyce Clouter (Adams), Doris Peddle. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

THINGS WE SOLD

“We had to cut our own cheese. There was a big round cheese cutter for cutting with. The blade came down in the middle and we had to cut off whatever cheese we wanted and then we would wrap it in wax paper and weigh it up and then that would be ready. When we got ready then we would mark it in the book for whoever wanted it.” **–Patsy Peddle**

“Apples, I suppose and oranges. Maybe bananas as time went on. I’m not sure about any other [fruit]. Grapes maybe. But certainly not the variety that you would have in the super-market now.” **–Reginald Penney**

“You could buy some types of clothing, footwear, and paint. Some building supplies, hardware, [and] some basic necessities. Plumbing supplies. Pelley’s in particular. Electrical, things like that. As time went on these things increased, the amount you could buy like that because there wasn’t as much need for it back years ago.” **–Reginald Penney**

“We used to have to skin the cheese, the big round one. It used to be into a cabinet, and you’d have this big cleaver, come down and cut out the piece like you want right? And we had these big slabs of bacon. Bacon was in long slabs. We used to put that into a cutter and slice it off. And we’d do that with our ham. One would be cutting it and the other would be packing it in wax paper and wrapping it up, putting it on the tray and carrying it in the fridge.” **–Viola Greening & Joyce Clouter**

“I can remember Mr. Greening ordering in fresh salmon, that was a big thing then. When he’d have fresh salmon in, people would

THINGS WE SOLD



Carnation milk and brown paper roll. Colin Greening and Jackson Greening. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

THINGS WE SOLD



Weight Scales that were used at D. Pelley's. Photo by Katherine Harvey. 2017.

THINGS WE SOLD

have their orders in. 'I need two pound, I need three pound.' I used to hate those days. We used to have to cut up the salmon, weigh it and wrap it up." **–Sarah Greening**

"In the early days, [Mr. Greening] used to sell coal. Because everybody burned coal in their stoves, along with their wood." **–Sarah Greening**

"We used to have to weigh up coconut, everything like that we'd have to put in little bags and weigh it. Walnuts, cherries . . . anybody wanted a pound you'd put it in until you got to the pound and if you went over the pound you'd have to take it out." **–Viola Greening & Joyce Clouter**

"Basically everything [was sold at Roland Greening's], except then there was no frozen foods because there was no fridges. No electricity in Port Blandford at that time. So it was mostly canned foods. They did sell bologna and cheese. I remember the bologna used to come in boxes and it was packed in salt. They had dried goods, basic things, towels, face cloths, cup towels and underwear for women and men and children. Babies clothes." **–Evelyn Penney**

"[Pelley's] used to sell kerosene oil, and that's one of the things that I hated to do. Mom would give me this can about that high. I'd have to walk, you know, where the hill is, down over the hill. I'd have to walk from my house, out over the hill and up to Pelley's, bring down a can of kerosene oil for the lamps. That was a vivid memory for me of Pelley's store. They also had delivery but mom wouldn't send up just to get a can of oil, I had to go do it." **–Sarah Greening**

THINGS WE SOLD

“There might have been powdered milk, but you couldn’t buy fresh milk. Bought that from the farmers then. There was no fresh milk. Now in the later years that I worked there there were of course, but not back in the beginning. There was canned milk, that’s how we fed all our babies. Carnation.” –*Sarah Greening*



Viola Greening (left) and Joyce Clouter (right). Photo by Katherine Harvey. 2017.

STORE HOURS



Josie Pardy c. 1960. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

“[Roland Greening’s was] usually 9-5. And they’d open probably on a Friday night . . . we never opened on Sundays because Mr. Greening was kind of a religious man. He didn’t want that. So we still worked Monday to Saturday. Saturday we were open. But that was it.” –***Sarah Greening***

“You worked 9am - 6pm on weekdays, and 9am - 9pm on Saturdays.” –***Joyce Clouter***

RECEIVING PRODUCTS



Warren Miles c. 1960. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

“In the beginning, when Mr. Greening started, he used to have his supplies come up from the station. He used to order it from St. John’s, it would come by train, and he would have to go up to the station with horse and cart, and bring it to the store.”

–Sarah Greening

“Of course, all those stores depended on trucks that would come from larger centres to supply them with their groceries and things they needed to sell in store, and you don’t see as much of that today. Different trucks that would drive from Conception Bay or wherever to supply the stores. Stop to the store and drop off whatever they needed in terms of groceries keep them stocked I suppose.” **–Reginald Penney**

“National Wholesalers in Corner Brook was a big dry goods supplier that we used to buy from. And there were several in St. John’s. And Atlantic groceries, in the last few years, were our sole supplier of groceries.” **–Sarah Greening**

HOME DELIVERY

“[In 1971] Pelley’s still had a man who used to deliver groceries to people’s homes. They would phone in their order and he would drive around in his truck and drop off their groceries. I suppose seniors more so than other people but yeah that was still done.” –**Reginald Penney**

“[People] would buy their groceries once a week, and if they ran out they’d be coming to get more. We used to take orders, pack orders, and then the delivery men would deliver it to their door. They wouldn’t come to the store. Lots of times they wouldn’t come to the store. They’d phone in their order, and we’d go pack the order. Then the guy who was on delivery would take it to their house.” –**Viola Greening & Joyce Clouter**

“[Pelley’s] had a delivery man. My brother Jackson Greening and there was Ron Holloway and Alfred Tucker. That wasn’t all the same time but on different years.” –**Patsy Peddle**



Jackson Greening c. 1960.
Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

CREDIT SYSTEM



Irene Pardy & Viola Greening c. 1960. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

“Usually people would come to us when they were on the unemployment in the Winter and had no money, so we would charge to them, which they couldn’t do in Clarenville. Then in the springtime when they’d go back to work, they’d go back to Clarenville and get their groceries again.” –***Sarah Greening***

CREDIT SYSTEM

“We had to write it all down in a bill book. There was a cash register but these people had their winter supply and then they came in the spring and paid for it. You could ring in a sale on it and that was it. The bills went out on the end of each month. The bill would be sent out for them to pay for it.” –*Patsy Peddle*

“People would come get their groceries, and we would charge it up to them in a bill book like this. And when they get their cheque or whatever in two weeks time, or a month’s time, sometimes we’d extend it to a month, usually a month. Then they’d come pay for their month’s groceries and then they’d order up again.” –*Sarah Greening*

“[When we had problems getting money from people] we’d just say that they couldn’t have anything else. Mr. Greening, he was a very kind man, and like he went to his grave and there’s still people that own him money. But that’s just - you forget about that after a period of time. There’s just no way to get the money and that’s it. But usually most of them, when they knew they had to come back and get other things they might pay \$100 or \$200, and finally they would pay off their bill. Most people.” –*Sarah Greening*

“Most general/convenience stores opened ‘charge’ accounts for customers. At the end of the month these were totaled and put on a statement manually. As cash registers were only used for cash sales, such things as sales tax had to be taken from these books, all added together along with any sales tax on the cash register. That would be the remittance to government for taxes for that year.” –*Sarah Greening*

SHOP OWNERS

“Roland Greening, the man who owned the store, was the first mayor of the town when I got involved [in municipal politics] and after he stepped down after one term then I took his place as mayor but I remember him quite well. So he was not only a merchant but he was involved in the municipal part for a while too.” –*Reginald Penney*



Roland Greening in front of his parent's house c. 1960. Photo courtesy Sarah Greening.

SHOP OWNERS

[Mr. Pelley] was a good man, easy to get along with. I don't think he ever charged interest to anybody. He kept people supplied all winter long and they'd pay like in the spring when they get work, and he never charged interest or anything. He was good to everyone in Port Blandford, even outside of Port Blandford, like Charlottetown and Bunyan's Cove." *–Evelyn Penney & Mary White*



Bart Pelley standing on his father, Dan Pelley's, shoulders. Photo courtesy Pansy Leyden.

SERVICE



Reginald Penney. Photo by Terra Barrett. 2017.

“For the most part the clerks would pick up the items that a person wanted to buy and lay them on the counter and check them out. [In] ‘71 there may have been a little bit of self serve depending on what you were looking for I guess. No shopping carts. I don’t remember any shopping carts.” –***Reginald Penney***

“[Greening’s was] about the same as Pelley’s but on a smaller scale. The counter, and the scales, and well they had freezers then for the frozen food items and ice cream and things like that. You still had to deal with the clerks face-to-face. I think you could maybe pick up some of your things yourself in that store but most of the stores were generally the same character type thing. It was personal. That’s the thing I think that stands out the most is the personal atmosphere that you had with the clerks and that. If you went in you might have a chat about something else that was going on besides picking up your grocery items. I’m sure there were lots of bits and pieces of gossip exchanged.” –***Reginald Penney***

CUSTOMERS



Patsy Peddle and Joyce Clouter c. 1960. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

“Usually [people] would come to the same store. Pelley’s had their customers, we had ours. And like where people lived closer would be where they would go.” –***Sarah Greening***

“Fred Higgins, every Saturday morning, he’d be down, wouldn’t he? With his big list. Come stand up and say, ‘will you pack it?’ And [you’d] ring it in and he’d pay for it and it would go up on delivery . . . and Reg Peddle, you’d always know what time he was coming. Certain people like that you could almost set your clock for when they’d come.” –***Joyce Clouter***

CHRISTMAS TIME

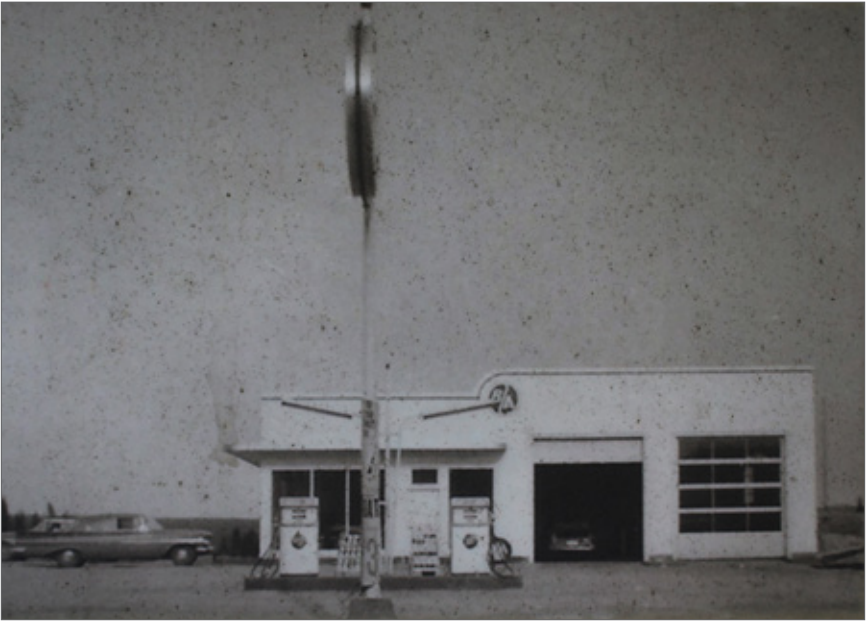
“Christmas was a big thing. We had a big shipment of Christmas toys and things. And that went pretty well for a long period of time until we got our Walmarts and different places in Clarendville.” –*Sarah Greening*

“It used to be a bit busier at Christmas time. And that’s the time you’d get your grapes, we always had the barrel apples, but grapes was a specialty for Christmas.” –*Evelyn Penney & Mary White*



Front left to right: Patsy Peddle, Josie Pardy, Joyce Clouter. Back left to right: Irene Pardy, Viola Greening. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.

TODAY



Don Blackmores Service Station and Restaurant c. 1960.

“Well you get served faster now in stores, because back years ago you had to write everything down in a bill book. But now you just go fast through the computerized stuff. But everything is cash now, debit or credit card.” ***–Evelyn Penney and Mary White***

“We don’t have any stores now except for a couple of convenience and gas stores that operate basically on the TCH.” ***–Reginald Penney***

SPECIAL *Thanks*

- Linda Bennett
- Tyler Chatman
- Joyce Clouter
- Calvin Efford
- Calista Greening
- Sarah Greening
- Viola Greening
- Brittany Holloway
- Patsy Peddle
- Evelyn Penney
- Reginald Penney
- Port Blandford Heritage Society
- Jillian Skiffington
- Mary White

Lossie Harris c. 1960. Photo courtesy Joyce Clouter.





Heritage Foundation

Newfoundland & Labrador

The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador is a nonprofit organization which was established in 1984 to stimulate an understanding of and an appreciation for the architectural heritage of the province. The Foundation, an invaluable source of information for historic restoration, supports and contributes to the preservation and restoration of buildings of architectural or historical significance. The Heritage Foundation also has an educational role and undertakes or sponsors events, publications and other projects designed to promote the value of our built heritage. The Heritage Foundation is also involved in work designed to safeguard and sustain the intangible cultural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador for present and future generations everywhere, as a vital part of the identities of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and as a valuable collection of unique knowledge and customs. This is achieved through policies that celebrate, record, disseminate, and promote our living heritage.



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Newfoundland
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The Oral History Roadshow is a project to empower and encourage seniors to showcase their memories through a series of public oral history night celebrations, with funding provided through New Horizons for Seniors.

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