

# The Barry House - A Minnow Lake Historical Landmark

Preserved by Linda Cartier and John Lindsay - Financial Decisions Inc.

## Was Likely to be Torn Down



"The house has **no value**" said the real estate agent, "the value is in the land". This may have been true, in economic terms, as the land was zoned commercial. However, we felt that we could not let this early landmark, the residence of one of the areas **first families**, be destroyed to make way for a parking lot or strip mall.

The property had been identified in the neighbourhood development plan as possible **future park land**, but as the new City of Greater Sudbury was being formed, no action could be taken. Therefore we decided to save the house and use it for our own office space while preserving the original character of the home as much as possible. We advised the city that they have **first option** of obtaining the lakefront portion of the property for park area.

While the house is now occupied by desks and other office equipment we did not move any walls or change any of the rooms. We did remove the many **layers of paint** from the fireplace, baseboards, staircase, window and door casings. We restored the hardwood floors and installed period lighting. We have attempted to create as warm and "homey" a feeling as possible and to capture the charm of this **pioneer** homestead.



We have mounted a plaque near the front door identifying the property as an historic site and have on display in the front entrance area a number of photos of the Barry family and of the area as it was many years past. On this sheet, we have provided you with some of the history of the area, which is indeed quite fascinating. Imagine, a member of the **French nobility** once walked these lands, and his descendants might well still own this property had not fate intervened - the story is on the reverse.



## Barrys developed much of Minnow Lake and New Sudbury

William and Marguerite Barry, shown in a 1940's photo, were both prominent citizens of the Minnow Lake "village". Mr. Barry was reeve of **McKim township** while Mrs. Barry operated the general store and post office.. The Barrys owned much of the land in this area and were responsible for selling of lots and naming streets, not only here but in New Sudbury as well. They donated land for churches and public buildings.

In the early years they would sell a house lot for only \$25.00 with a five dollar down payment. They always extended credit at the **Barry General Store**. Were the times tough? When being interviewed a few years ago, Mrs. Barry remarked that there were "more dinner times than dinners" and that we don't appreciate how well off we are today. The "first" Barry family consisted of seven children and later Mrs. Barry raised over two dozen foster children.

## Family Album



One of the early fences around the property is shown in the photo on the left with some of the kids and little **Midge**, a family favorite. To the right, the boys, Pete, Johnny, Butch and Mickey with Mr. Barry in front of the house before the "bay" window was installed.



(More pictures and history on reverse)

# Minnow Lake - Colourful Historic Past

## In the Beginning it was the Railway and the Sawmill



The year was 1883 and railway construction reached Minnow Lake. That same year a sawmill was constructed on the shores of the lake that would process lumber for almost 30 years. The rich forest that covered this land was devoured by this and similar mills in the area.

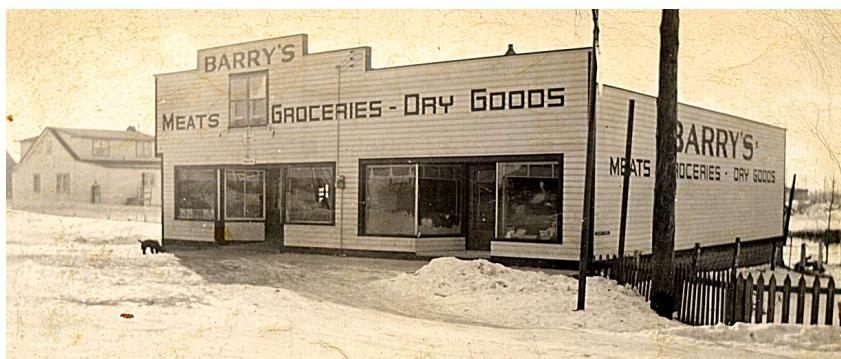
The sawdust, slabs and other residue from this mill formed a peninsula out into Minnow Lake from the site of the mill at the bottom of Downing Street that can still be plainly seen today. Later primitive ore smelting methods would destroy much of the remaining vegetation and deposit heavy minerals into the soil and local water bodies. As apparent in this picture the area was a pretty bleak place around the turn of the last century.

A former railway man William Barry obviously knew that the area held promise as he purchased much of the land around the south end of Minnow Lake down to Ramsey Lake and about a kilometer in each direction.



The woman who was to become Bill Barry's wife was born on a ship to Canada in 1911. Maurerite is shown here (centre, seated) with her family in Toronto when she was just 11 years old. Six years later she was a bride living in Minnow Lake, and would remain her the rest of her life.

Two of the best known landmarks in this area are shown below in a photo from the late 1930's or early 40's. The Barry store, and in the background the Barry residence - both buildings remain - although the store was moved to its present location some time ago.



## French Count first landowner



FRÉDÉRIC ROMANET DU CAILLAUD

His full name was Count Nicholas Julian Frederic Romanet du Caillaud. At one time he owned virtually all of the land in Sudbury east of the train station and Tom Davies Square, including the Floor Mill and Bell Park areas. His property extended along the entire length of the north shore of Ramsey Lake. A world traveler and author of many books the Count cut a dashing figure in the early days of the 1900's in Sudbury with his long beard, swallow tail coat studded with beads, tall hat and high boots. He always carried a cane or long stick. He made an annual trip across the Atlantic to visit Sudbury each Summer, and it was his announced intention to settle here in retirement. He said "Sudbury is a small town with a great future".

Unfortunately on his death in 1919 his family, back in France, let the property go and The Barry's became the second owners of the land he possessed in the Minnow Lake area (then known as Black Lake - part of McKim township). The Count's greatest legacy to Sudbury, besides naming many city streets, is the Grotto of Lourdes Shrine on the hilltop off Van Horne Street erected in 1907 to recognize his wife's cure at the famous Lourdes Shrine in France. The two islands in Minnow Lake are named after the Count, the larger island is Du Caillaud and the smaller Romanet.