

Woman 'discovers' historic trench

By Susan Corkum-Greek

Lighthouse staff

NORTHWEST - History truly is all around us. That's what Janet Heisler's been saying since discovering the origins of a woodland trench she used to play in as a child growing up in Northwest.

"You have to understand this is something I've been around all my life. So for me it just looked normal," Mrs. Heisler says of the trench running through mostly forested land between Dares and Cantelope Lakes. "It's only when I read these two articles that I clued in."

Those articles, discovered during Mrs. Heisler's ongoing genealogical research, include one taken from a 1922 Progress Enterprise that talks about a miller named Joseph Slaunwhite who had built a deep trench to bring water to his mill in Northwest Range, the former name for what is now Northwest.

A second, collected as part of the Langille family genealogy, speaks of Leopald Langille, a carpenter and joiner, digging a canal to bring water to his house, best known as the Old Cantelope place.

While Mrs. Heisler isn't sure which article to believe in regard to the trench's origin, she says it's clear the structure dates back to at least the early 18th century.

Today, while overgrown, it still stands between eight and 10 feet deep and is also clearly visible on aerial photographs of the community where it runs over a small portion of the Town of Lunenburg water reservoir before crossing onto private property.

A self-described history buff, Mrs. Heisler says she considers the trench a "treasure" and hopes the owners of adjacent properties will never do anything to disturb it. "To think what they must have gone through to build it," she says, shaking her head. Losing it would "certainly be a shame."

(IMAGE MISSING) PLACEHOLDER

Northwest history buff Janet Heisler was amazed to discover a trench she used to play in as a child was once used to run water from Dares to Cantelope Lakes.

<http://www.southshorenw.ca/archives/2000/040500/news/18.html>