

**COTTONWOOD MANSION AT DOORS OPEN HALDIMAND COUNTY**  
**September 19<sup>th</sup> Event Features Victorian/Edwardian “Fun”**

**For immediate release, Selkirk, Ontario, Thursday, September 10, 2015**

For additional information, Cottonwood Mansion Museum, 905 776 2538

Haldimand County sites that will be open free to the public, on Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., include Cottonwood Mansion Museum, Selkirk. Victorian and Edwardian sports and entertainment will be added to the usual historical attractions to be found at this restored 1865 country home of William Holmes, Jr., and his second wife, Cynthia Anderson Holmes.

Host for the day is Clayton Lord Spears, who will introduce visitors to the estate. Direct descendants of the Jakob Huber Family, the Mennonites from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, that first settled the area, Jay Hoover and his brother Richard, now Vice President of Cottonwood, will be at the Mansion from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with the book on their family’s history and general information about them..

Known for her love of music and dancing, Cynthia Anderson Holmes and William Holmes (aka Lois and Bruce Gifford of Fisherville), will demonstrate Ballroom Dancing and offer period dancing lessons in the Ballroom from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. All ages are welcome to participate. Members of the Cottonwood Brass Quintet will also be on hand demonstrating instruments from the eras and modern brass instruments.

The Mansion’s collection of antique quilts, a pastime of most women of all classes during these times, will be available for viewing in the Servants Quarters. A display of spinning will also take place. Lillian Holmes, daughter of Cynthia and William, learned to spin with flax during her time at Alma College in St. Thomas, considered appropriate for a lady of her class. Other art work of hers is also in the Helen Smiley Smith Parlour. A collection of period dolls will be available for purchase in the Dining Room along with some plates and other memorabilia from the time and beyond.

Volunteers from 1989 who were part of the original restoration project will be at the Mansion to explain that history to interested visitors. Their stories about the early days are not only fascinating but exceedingly humorous as well.

Visitors will also be able to see the games table in the Petit Parlour, the men’s retiring room. Light refreshments will be available in the Mansion’s kitchen throughout the event, courtesy of President Barbara Held, and volunteer Helen Spears.. At noon., Sadee Kelly, Cottonwood’s youngest volunteer, will open a lemonade stand. And at 2 p.m., a game of croquet, a most popular sport during the Victorian era which is popular even today, will take place hosted by Richard Hoover, Clayton Spears, and other volunteers. A special children’s game is part of this event. Children visiting may also have their photographs taken in a Victorian cutout throughout the day.

For additional information and directions to Cottonwood visit [www.cottonwoodmansion.ca](http://www.cottonwoodmansion.ca), call 905 776 2538, or email [cottonwoodmansion@gmail.com](mailto:cottonwoodmansion@gmail.com).