

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

April 2010 Newsletter

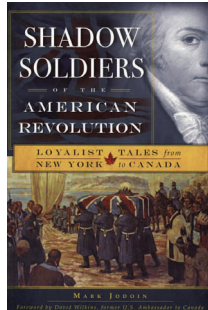
Newsletter Editors: Coral Lindsay and Ron Wilson (rideauarchives@ottawa.ca)

Next Meeting

Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2010
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Rideau Archives
6581 Fourth Line Road (Main Street)
North Gower
Business: Regular Monthly Meeting
Topic: Shadow Soldiers of the American Revolution

*In letting loyalists leave,
we are depriving ourselves
of the best and brightest
men in our country.*

_George Washington



Speaker Mark Jodoin

Subject: *How I Spent My Summer Vacation*

Mark will offer a highly visual presentation entitled "How I Spent My Summer Vacation". It will recount his experiences in 2009 visiting historic sites in Ontario, Quebec and New York State while promoting his book "Shadow Soldiers of the American Revolution: Loyalist Tales from New York to Canada."

Mark has been invited for book signings at heritage events in the locales where many of the protagonists of the book lived and fought.

150th Anniversary of the Mill

Watson's Mill celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2010.

Isabelle Geoffrion and the Watson's Mill Team have announced a year-long celebration to commemorate this anniversary. Stay tuned to their e-news at www.watsonsmill.com and celebrate with them through out the year.



Organizing Committee Web Site
www.manotick150.ca/

Bring a friend

Light refreshments

For a ride call Brian Earl

This Month

1. The Next Meeting
2. The March Meeting
3. Presentation at the Mill Lecture Series by Mark
4. Watson's Mill AGM
5. News from the Rideau Archives

Sorry Maureen

Please note that **Maureen McPhee** is also a member of the Dickinson House Committee. Her name was inadvertently left off the list of members in last months newsletter. In fact Maureen has taken on the job of secretary for the committee. Thanks, Maureen, for acting as secretary.

May Excursion

On Saturday, May 29, 2010 we will gather at the Beechwood Cemetery (<http://www.beechwoodcemetery.com/splashpage.html>) at 10:00 a.m., carpool-

ing from the Manotick area. We will then be treated to a guided tour of the cemetery, viewing graves of prominent Canadians and Canada's National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces. Designated as a National Historic Site by The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 2002, Beechwood is one of only a few cemeteries in the nation to have received this honourable title. We will then have lunch together at the nearby Clock Tower Brew Pub, 422 Mackay St.

(<http://mackay.clocktower.ca/>).

The RTHS March 2010 Meeting

Article by Lucy Martin

The March 17th meeting took place in the Carriage Shed just across the street from the Clapp house. Barbara Humphreys and Winston Spratt teamed up to tell the story of that Manotick landmark. From an audience of 38, seven people signed up as new or returning RTHS members. (Thank you and welcome!)

The Clapp house is the youngest and smallest building in Dickinson Square, on the north-west corner of Clapp Lane and Dickinson Street. The attractive two-story home was



The speakers for the evening were from left to right, Winston Spratt, Barbara Humphreys, and Mark Jodoin.

built in 1924 and was used as a private residence until recently. It was purchased by the City of Ottawa in 2008, to preserve the historic character of the village core. Most recently, it has served as office space for engineers and contractors working on Manotick's sewer project. Future use of the building will be determined by the Manotick Mill Quarter Community Development Corporation.

But what of the house itself, and those who once lived there? RTHS member Barbara Humphreys is a distinguished retired architect and author of several books, including *Legacy in Stone*, *The Rideau Corridor* (1999), in collaboration with photographer Fiona Spalding-Smith.

Humphreys provided a short course on the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement, the Prairie School of architecture, and its most famous proponent, Frank Lloyd Wright. This style favoured a low, sprawling structure, which incorporated nature, when possible. Two storey structures typically included heavy horizontal lines with dormers and windows positioned in groups. (Vertical lines were equated with power, horizontal lines with serenity.) Ottawa architect Francis Sullivan, a student of Wright, was the architect for the Clapp House.

Other common features of that style included full verandas supported by posts and an emphasis on simple de-



Barbara speaking on the architectural features of the Clapp House.

sign and great craftsmanship. Humphreys illustrated that point with a photo detailing subtle patterning in the brick work. Interiors were designed for ease of use, with rooms that flowed together.

In the case of the Clapp House, the grounds were also a star attraction. Spring bulbs and a profusion of perennials drew admirers and wedding parties looking for that perfect backdrop. This love of plants was shared with others when Mrs. Johnston Clapp founded the Manotick Horticulture Society in 1930. Humphreys hopes restoring botanical beauty on the grounds of Clapp House will be part of any future use.

Winston Spratt then continued the story by recalling how his grandparents, Mr & Mrs Johnston Clapp built the house. He grew up hearing more house lore from his mother, Mary Clapp Spratt and his Aunt, Dorothy Clapp, the last owner occupant.

Winston was a self-described wild country lad, happy for the occasional sleep-over in Manotick, or milk & cookies at Aunt Dorothy's "drop-in center".

Spratt's mother told him the 10,000 unique tan bricks imported from Toronto had to be hauled from the train depot in Manotick Station in wagon loads of 300-400 at a time. The finished home consisted of 4 bedrooms and one bath and an attic loft, totally some 1700 square feet. The house boasted three walk-in closets, a rarity for the time. There was a cement cistern with a pump for household use and to irrigate the garden with soft rain water. In 1925 the property taxes were \$17.82.

The property originally consisted of 17 acres that extended to the river, but some land was expropriated to construct Dickinson Street, which now connects with Bridge Street. At one time cattle and horses were kept there in a small barn. Winston also recounts he "pulled his share of weeds" in a large vegetable garden.

Structures are born of wood, brick and mortar, often with era-specific designs worth preserving. Remembering the life and times of the occupants provides the social con-

text. We thank Barbara Humphreys and Winston Spratt for sharing the slice of village history exemplified by the Clapp house.

The Watson's Mill Annual General Meeting

Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. held its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, April 11th. Fifty of its members came to discuss future development, the upcoming year, review the budget and to elect a new slate of directors.

We are pleased to introduce WMMI staff and board members 2010, left to right: Cam Trueman, (Education and Programming Officer), Winston Spratt, Chris Innes, Sonja Vanek, Karlis Adamsons, Isabelle Geoffrion (Mill Manager), Gerry Reasbeck, and Andrew Smith. Absent from the photo are: Bill Schaub, Gail Brooks and Kris Schultz.

The new Board will meet in the near future and assign areas of responsibility for each director..



News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa Archives

Hours: The Archives is open every Tuesday from 9:30 am to 4:30 p.m., and at other times by appointment. (613-489-2926).

The Rideau Branch of the Ottawa Archives continues to receive submissions from people and organizations at an increasing rate. It is interesting to note that some organizations are beginning to submit material in electronic form. In fact one organization is digitizing their back records for their own use and will submit them to us in digital form.

Kars Public School Annual Community Used Book Sale

Kars Public School will be holding a Community Used Book Sale on April 16, 4:30 pm – 8:00 pm and April 17, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

There will be a huge selection of children's & adult books and movies. Delicious baked goods will also be for sale! On Friday, April 16, from 3:30 to 4:30 pm seniors are welcome to come in early and browse for books during our "Seniors' Only" hour. Free coffee, tea and sweets will be served during this time.

Please note, a portion of the proceeds from the book sale will be donated to "Help Lesotho", a Canadian-based charitable organization which helps families in the impoverished country of Lesotho, Africa. For more information, please check out helplesotho.ca.

Presentation on Long Island Village

Mark Jodoin

Article by Lucy Martin

As readers may already know, Stuart and Marguerite Rogers have worked with Cam Trueman of Watson's Mill to establish a lecture series there, on the last Wednesday of each month.

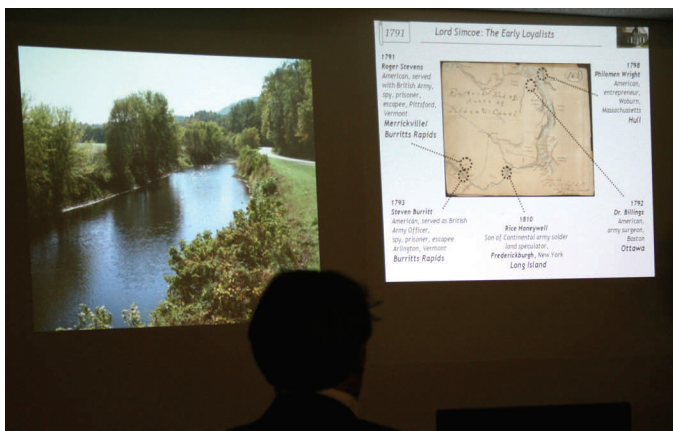
March's presenter was our own Past President Mark Jodoin, speaking about this area's 'lost' community, Long Island Village. Much of Jodoin's interest in this subject was sparked by the ten years he enjoyed living in a stone house built in the 1840s, near the corner of River and Rideau roads. Stu and Marg made a point of passing out lecture fliers in the vicinity where the village once stood (Nichols Island, etc.), which definitely brought more curiosity and long-time knowledge to the full house in attendance.

According to Mark, the village sprung up alongside the construction site of the Long Island locks during the mid-1820s. Initially it was a series of rough cut log structures which housed canal workers and workshops for masons and blacksmiths. It grew considerably after 1832 when the canal was completed. The village became a steamboat provisioning and forwarding centre for local farmers and



churches of Long Island had been disassembled and the businesses had closed and moved south to Manotick. All that remained in the area were farmhouses, scattered families and abandoned cemeteries: the village of Long Island had ceased to exist.

On April 28 at 7 p.m. Mike Taylor will bring listeners a real adventure with "To the North Pole by Nuclear Submarine". Admission is \$5 in support of programs at Watson's Mill. Please note this event has been moved to the basement of the Knox Presbyterian Church, as the Carriage Shed readies for another big book sale beginning in May. The Mill Lecture Series will resume in November of 2010.



Mark is an early adopter of technology to make his presentations more interesting and to deliver increased information content.

by the 1850s boasted a carriage maker, a blacksmith, a hotel and several dozen families. However, the underlying clay base of the Long Island waste weir was responsible for several collapses and near calamities over the decades which forced the Rideau Canal authorities to consider building a dam on the southern portion of the island. Moss Kent Dickinson quickly acquired the water rights, built his grist mill and associated businesses, and Manotick sprung up to replace Long Island village as the regional commercial centre. By the end of the century, the



The Beldon Atlas of Carleton County published in 1879 contains this map of Long Island Village.

The RTHS gratefully acknowledges the financial support received from the City of Ottawa