

# The Rideau Township Historical Society

*Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township*

## April 2018 Newsletter

Newsletter Editor: Ron Wilson (rideauarchives@ottawa.ca)

### ***The April Meeting***

**Date:** Wednesday April 18  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Manotick Place Retirement Community  
1145 Bridge Street  
Manotick, ON



### ***The Spring Programme***

**May** - 3 short segments: Karen & Robin Craig on the Craig family; Owen Cooke, update on Tommy Watterson; Bill Tupper, "William Cowan"

**June** - Excursion to Pinhey's Point and other area destinations

### ***The Dickinson House 2018***

Preparations at Dickinson House are underway for the 2018 Tourist Season. A few applications have been received from prospective student guides. Interviews are scheduled for the week of 16 April.

The house will open on 19 May and remain open daily until Labour Day. A new exhibit, titled "Meadows and Measures" is now in place. Farming and the use of scales for weighing the farm produce are the themes. The program has been set and the brochures should be available within a few weeks.

Highlights include Dickinson Day and Doors Open Ottawa on 2-3 June, a Celtic Tea on 14 July, Art-In-The-Square exhibit and sale on 28 July, a Silver Tea on 22 September and Christmas Tales and Carols on 9 December. The Volunteer Tea held on 28 March was quite successful, however, there is always room for additional volunteers.

### ***Speaker:***

Montreal-born Valerie Knowles is an Ottawa writer who has a B.A. (Honours History) from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, an M.A. (History) from McGill University in Montreal, and a Bachelor of Journalism degree from Carleton University in Ottawa.

In addition to writing for newspapers, magazines, and federal government departments, Valerie has taught history and worked as an archivist. She has published twelve works of non-fiction, four of which are trade books, available online and in stores.

From her Ottawa base, Valerie Knowles continues to write independent non-fiction books and to accept commissioned writing work. Her focus remains on Canadian and Ottawa political and social history. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her husband and two dogs, Katie and Robbie.

### ***Subject:***

Valerie will speak on Ottawa Valley Builders, including

- Hamnett Kirkes Pinhey (1784-1857) was a landed gentleman, a community leader and one of the founders of March Township.
- Cecil Morrison (1890-1979) was one of the founders of Morrison Lamothe Bakery, the capital's largest bakery in the 1960s, a loyal monarchist and a staunch Conservative.
- German-born Trudi Le Caine (1911-1999) was appointed to the Order of Canada thanks to her tireless promotion of the arts in Ottawa. During her years in the capital she helped to launch or promote, or both, many arts organizations, including the National Arts Centre.
- Isabella Preston (1881-1965), "the grand lady of Canadian Horticulture," was a world-famous horticulturist who worked on the Experimental Farm, where she originated 200 hybrids, among them many internationally-acclaimed lily cultivars.



*Dining Room Table in the Dickinson House*

## ***RTHS March Meeting - Three Short Presentations***

***Speakers: Dr. Dennis Osmond, Gary Bagley and Rod Brazier***

***Article by Pat Earl, Photos by Maureen McPhee***

A full house, at the City of Ottawa Client Centre in North Gower, was treated to three gifted speakers, all members of the Rideau Township Historical Society.



**The first speaker, Dr. Dennis Osmond**, spoke on the commemoration of Sappers and Miners who worked on the Rideau Canal at Newboro. The canal, which ran from the Rideau River at the Ottawa end climbing one hundred and sixty kilometers and then descending one hundred and forty kilometers to the Cataraqui River at the Kingston end, passed through wild terrain which

consisted of thin soil and hard rock. These obstacles, plus workers being struck down with malaria, caused contractors to quit. Col. By then hired two hundred labourers and Sappers from the 7th Company Royal Sappers and Miners. After raising the level of Rideau Lake and putting a lock at the south end, these industrious men completed the task at hand. Thirteen Sappers died on the job and were buried in Newboro, but the grave markers were lost over the years

In 2014, it was decided to renovate the local cemetery in Newboro and commemorate the soldiers buried there. Thirty-eight graves were identified by radar and eighty volunteers cleaned the grounds and repaired the plots and stones. One artifact that was found was a British Ordnance Stone used while surveying the canal site in the 1800s.

Dr. Osmond had in his possession a list of the thirteen Sappers who died, where they were from and what their occupations were before coming to Canada. Causes of deaths were also listed, most being of natural causes and two deaths by black powder explosions.



An unveiling ceremony of a memorial stone was held at the cemetery on July 19, 2017. Dr. and Mrs. Osmond were in attendance along with politicians, military members, legionnaires and musicians.

Pictures of canal maps, workmen on the canal

and Sappers in uniform completed Dr. Osmond's presentation.

**Our second speaker was Gary Bagley**, membership director of the RTHS. Gary is a genealogist with the Sir Guy Carleton Branch of United Empire Loyalists. His job is to verify application forms for those who say they are descendants of U.E.L. folks.

Loyalists were settlers who came to the United States. They were known to be loyal to the crown and were zealous respecters of law and order. Later in the late 1700s, they left the thirteen colonies and moved to Canada settling in Ontario and the eastern areas where they would be behind British lines. Most were given land grants of two hundred acres.

Folks today who want to be known as descendants of Empire Loyalists have to go through a rigorous procedure of paper work before attaining U.E. (unity of Empire) status. Gary's job is to vet each application, many which are hard to prove. If approved, the person receives a U.E. certificate. Some of these folks later take part in re-enactments portraying their ancestors.



**The last speaker of the evening was Rod Brazier** who spoke on Railways in Muskoka. Rod's interest in this RR system was peaked when he was asked to write a 1500 word article on RRs in Muskoka. He soon found he had much more to say and in the end a book was published in May 2017.

Muskoka is an area in Ontario that stretches from Algonquin Park to Georgian Bay, first surveyed by David Thompson in 1837. In 1853, Muskoka got its first colonization road and settlers arrived the following year. In 1865, Alexander Peter Cockbourn toured the shores of Muskoka and determined to build a steamship by the next year. This he did and the Winona made its maiden voyage the following summer.

Cockbourn, a jack of all trades, was involved in transportation, commerce, tourism, settlement and government in the Muskoka area. The Northern Railway of Canada at the time extended only as far as Barrie, so in 1869, Cockbourn along with ten other men got a charter to build a railway from Couchiching to Bracebridge, as a ploy to en-



courage the CNR to extend their line to Muskoka. As a result, they received a promise that there would be a Simcoe & Muskoka line built. After much discussion on how to connect with the transcontinental RR, in 1872 with Cockbourn as a federal representative, the CPR was incorporated and the railway reached Washago. By 1875, a railway line had been built as far as Gravenhurst, and for the next ten years nothing more was done. Between 1875 and 1908 twelve RR charters were slated for Muskoka but of these only three were built. Money to build these

lines came from Britain and once war began, money stopped, as did RR construction. Cars soon appeared on the scene and a highways act was passed in 1919. Muskoka became a popular tourist destination but few folks traveled by rail. Consequently by 1953 there were no trains going to Muskoka and in 1979 the train station was demolished.

[Click here](#) to see Rod Brazier's slide presentation.

## ***Fashion Show at Russell Meadows Retirement Community***

On Wednesday, 21 March a team from Dickinson House organized and participated in a Fashion Show at the Russell Meadows Retirement Community. The team consisted of Maureen McPhee, Melanie Hayes, Stephanie Cameron, Barbara Barkley, Pat and Brian Earl. Also helping and modelling several outfits was Elaine Egan from Watson's Mill.

Several ladies and one gentleman from the residence acted as models. Costumes were loaned by Barbara Barkley, Melanie Hayes, Maureen McPhee, Stephanie Cameron, Jane Anderson and Watson's Mill. Elaine, Barbara, Maureen and Stephanie also participated as models.

Activity before lunch consisted of matching dresses to models. After lunch the show itself took place, to the delight of many residents who dropped in to enjoy the fun. Melanie provided the narrative while Pat and Brian provided period appropriate music on piano and trumpet. As evident in the pictures, a very enjoyable time was had by all.



*Lucia was the belle of the Confederation Ball in her 1860s silk gown with maple leaves formed from sequins.*



*The group who put on the fashion show at the Russell Meadows Retirement Community. With all the period dresses it was a very colourful event.*



*Judy modelled a reproduction 1871 bustle dress made by Barbara Barkley.*

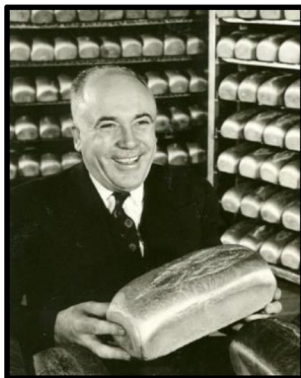
# Rideau Township Historical Society

Wednesday, April 18, 2018, at 7:30 p.m.

Manotick Place Retirement Community

(formerly Orchardview Lodge)

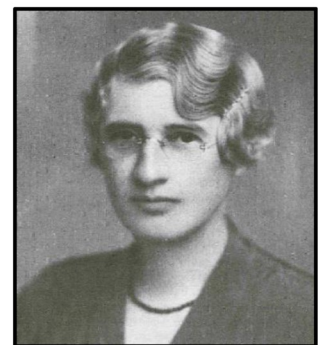
1145 Bridge Street, Manotick



Cecil Morrison



Trudi LeCaine



Isabella Preston



Hamnet Pinhey

**OTTAWA VALLEY BUILDERS**

**Valerie Knowles**

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



NORTH GRENVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Thomas D'Arcy McGee

*Dr. David Shanahan explores whether, after 150 years, we are any closer to solving the mystery of the assassination of this key Father of Confederation.*

11  
Apr

7:00 pm, Court House  
15 Water St., Kemptville

[www.northgrenvillehistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.northgrenvillehistoricalsociety.ca)

*As always all are welcome. Doors open at 7:00 pm at the Court House, 15 Water Street, next to the Library, in Kemptville. Our speaker, Dr. David Shanahan, will begin his remarks at 7:30 pm. Please see the attached poster for details. Refreshments before and after the presentation.*

## *News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa Archives*

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

**Resources and Services of the Rideau Township Branch of the City of Ottawa Archives:** a monthly feature in this newsletter, celebrating the services and holdings preserved in your community's archives resource centre.

### *Lost Place-names of Marlborough Township*

Recent discussions among the volunteers at Rideau Branch brought up two geographic names in Marlborough Township, Seven Mile Bush and Duke's Hall, which have long since fallen out of use. The Branch holds no archival records relating directly to either of these places. The Reading Room does, however, hold at least a single library record, the Diamond Jubilee publication of Holy Trinity Church, North Gower published in 1939, mentioning both.

Neither place, it seems, indicated a settlement of people, though both were places visited weekly in the 1870s by Church of England minister Rev. A.J. O'Loughlin. He held services mid-week at Seven Mile Bush and Duke's Hall as part of his five-point charge that also included Sunday services at Kars, North Gower, and Manotick.

There was a school house in the Seven Mile Bush area, too, from information related by the Kemptville Advance on the death in 1907 of Robert Acton, formerly a teacher there. Seven Mile Bush, according to information from

the first volume of the Tweedsmuir History of North Gower, lay on the old Long Island Road between Pierce's Corners and the Rideau River and was named for the wooded area.

The Bush proper might have extended down as far as Donnelly Drive, given the informal name for the turn in Fourth Line Road as it sweeps from south to west, becoming Donnelly Drive, heading toward the bottom end of the Bush: Seven service for various community needs, including O'Loughlin's Anglican services and as Orange Lodge meetings as late as Mile Bend. Duke's Hall, on the other hand, was named not after a natural feature in the south end of Marlborough Township but instead after a building in the north, put to 1897.

It seems likely that this hall was the one shown on the Belden Atlas at Lot 3 Concession 7 in Marlborough, beside Lot 2, where William Duke was mentioned as owner. That property had been in the Duke family since 1830, when Sergeant Duke received the grant and emigrated from Ireland with his family. One might assume that the Dukes also needed the hall for their own family gatherings, since one of Sergeant Duke's daughters, Fanny, had, at her death, ninety grandchildren.