

# The Rideau Township Historical Society

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

## February 2009 Newsletter

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

### Next Meeting

The **next meeting** will be held in the **Carsonby Hall**, 6045 Prince of Wales Drive. The date will be **February 18, 2009 at 7:30 pm.**

### RTHS Bookmarks

Bookmarks listing the programs for 2009 will be available at the February meeting – don't forget to pick up several and give some to your friends and neighbours!

### Speakers

**RTHS members**

### Subjects

- **The annual "bring and brag" session** at which members bring in and present interesting historic artifacts from their personal collections. The artifacts themselves are quite interesting and offer examples of the ingenuity of our ancestors. They also reveal the very broad range of backgrounds and experiences of our RTHS members.



### The Manotick 150th Anniversary

The first activity of the RTHS in support of the 150th anniversary celebrations will be on Heritage Day; Tues-

day February 17, 2009. The RTHS will mount a display in the Ottawa City Hall featuring the history of Manotick. People in period costume will be there to answer questions and give explanations of the display.

Come and enjoy the day. There will be a wide variety of

**Organizing Committee Web Site**

[www.manotick150.ca/](http://www.manotick150.ca/)

**Bring a friend**

**Light refreshments**

**For a ride call Brian Earl  
613-692-2371**

### Features This Month

1. The Manotick 150th.
2. The January meeting.
3. The new RTHS executive.
4. The AGM
5. A peek at the second edition of Dora Stamp's Book
6. News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa Archives.
7. The Period Costume Workshops.

### The New RTHS Executive

The January meeting was the Society AGM. The Nominations Committee presented their slate of candidates, who were elected by acclamation.

**President:**

Mark Jodoin

**Vice President:**

Ron Wilson

**Immediate Past President:**

Jeff Cronin

**Secretary:**

Brian Earl

**Treasurer:**

Brian Killins

**Publications Editor & Custodian:**

Jane Anderson

**Membership Director:**

Owen Cooke

**Communications Editor:**

Coral Lindsay

**Directors at Large:**

Lucy Martin, Susan McKellar

# ***Last Meeting: The AGM, January 2009***

The Carriage Shed, Mill Square, Manotick, January 21, 2009

**Article by Lucy Martin**

Our first RTHS meeting of 2009 looked ahead towards what promises to be a very busy year!

A full-slate of officers was elected, headed by returning president, Mark Jodoin. Former director Ron Wilson has agreed to serve as vice president for 2009. Susan McKeller became the newest director. The executive board is still seeking members interested in future service, as by-laws will require fresh blood for many offices, including that of president, in 2010 and beyond.

Jane Andrews reported that 200 additional copies of Betty Bartlett's Buildings of Old Rideau have been printed and are available for purchase. The publication committee is making good progress toward publishing an updated edition of the late Dora Stamps' book in time for Dickinson Day in June.



**Cam Trueman Presenting**

The evening's first speaker was Cam Trueman, who appeared as 19th century Fort Steele settler, Frederick Norbury. Cam dressed the part for a dramatic explanation of how the intersection of a person with a place can create history and good stories. (Trueman was part of Fort Steele's interpretive program in B.C. before he joined the staff at Watson's Mill.) Cam's demonstration helped the audience imagine the possibilities for such a program this year at Watson's Mill.

Cam described the upcoming Four Corner Youth Interpretation Project at Watson's Mill. Area youth, ages 15-

18, will be encouraged to apply volunteer hours toward developing and presenting historic skits, tours and (eventually) dramatic plays.

It is hoped RTHS will be able to provide financial and practical assistance for the effort, which should raise the profile of community history and could help increase RTHS's membership base. If any of this sounds exciting to you, or a teen in your life, contact Watson's Mill at (613) 692-6455.

Not to be outdone by that exciting multi-year project, Greg Newton spoke about the many ideas being consid-



**Greg Newton Presenting**

ered by the Manotick 150 committee, which he chairs.

Besides Dickinson Days in June, there will be a birthday weekend July 31-Aug 3rd with a very long list of possible activities. From a parade and BBQ, to antiques and art, a trade show and tree planting, family fun and musical guests, it's going to be a very busy year for the community! It's not too soon to get involved as all kinds of help will be needed.

Lastly, congratulations to our own Coral Lindsay, who was designated "Person of the Year" by the Manotick Messenger. Coral was recognized for her many contributions to the community, including the impressive re-opening of Dickinson House in 2009.

## **March Program—March 18 Communities & Archives by Serge Barbe, Community Archivist, City of Ottawa Archives**

Do you have family papers and photographs? Do you belong to an organization that has records? Are you wondering about what should be kept, and where? Serge will talk about the types of records of interest to the City Archives, and how it acquires, preserves and displays them. He will illustrate his talk with fine examples of community documentation held by the Archives, and will answer questions potential donors may have about their own personal material.

# Manotick 150<sup>th</sup>

## *A Peek at the 2nd Edition of Dora Stamp's Manotick Then and Now*

The founding of Manotick village in 1859 has been attributed to the building of the Rideau canal some thirty years earlier, and the construction in 1850 of the bulkhead dam to improve navigation on the main channel.

The private corporation of Dickinson, Currier and Company obtained rights to the water-power at the dam and purchased several acres of land on either side. In 1858 they erected a small stone sawmill east of the bulkhead and in the following year undertook construction of the now historic stone flour and grist mill which was opened officially in February 1860.

Partners Moss Kent Dickinson and Joseph Merrill Currier were prominent Bytown businessmen who had a thriving sawn-lumber operation. Their new "Long Island Milling Enterprises" soon attracted workers from the surrounding communities, many of whom moved with their families to Manotick. Access to the grist mill for island farmers first was by a scow constructed of cedar logs, and later by a temporary wooden bridge near the bulkhead.

Village plans were drawn up and registered in 1862. The name Manotick was chosen from the Indian word for "island in a river".

Original street names commemorated the founders' families and former owners of the village properties. Elizabeth (now Dickinson) and Anne Streets were the Christian names of Mrs. Dickinson and Mrs. Currier. Richard Street on the island and Tighe, Catherine and John Streets on the mainland presumably honoured Richard Tighe, his wife Catherine, and a brother, John Tighe. The other island street, Arthur, was the name of an early settler Arthur McKeown who was granted Crown land in the vicinity in 1850 and later operated a ferry across the Canal.

The ferry service was taken over by Mr. Dickinson who also built a large wharf on the west side of the canal as a stop for vessels of The Dickinson Forwarding Line.

By 1864 when Manotick Post Office was established the village population had passed the 100 mark and the community was served by 2 hotels, 2 blacksmiths, 3 wagon-makers, a cooper, and 2 general stores - one in the original building on the Dickinson House site, which housed the first Post Office.

...from the Manotick Messenger, May 31, 1989

*Note that Dora's book is being republished by the RTHS as a contribution to Manotick's 150th Anniversary celebrations.*



Born on June 1, 1822 in Denmark, New York, **Moss Kent Dickinson was descended from the Mayflower Pilgrims**. After coming to Canada and at the age of 22, Moss started his own business and in 10 years became known as "**King of the Rideau**" with **16 steamers and 60 barges**



Mr. Harry Lindsay was postmaster in Manotick for 49 years. Here he is standing in front of the post Office when it was in the Lindsay (& McCaffrey later) general store at 5546 Main Street.

## Want a Costume for the Manotick 150<sup>th</sup> ?

If anyone is interested in acquiring a period costume for the Manotick 150th there is a local source. Rosemary Hayes is a seamstress with skills in making vintage reproductions. She can be contacted at [rmmhayes@hotmail.com](mailto:rmmhayes@hotmail.com) or by telephone at (613) 485-1822. Rosemary advertises reasonable rates and a variety of patterns, including a small selection of menswear.

# **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 Reference Library at Rideau Archives**

The Reference Library at Rideau Archives is a supplement to our manuscript collections. It enables researchers to examine a wide variety of historical questions relating both to Canadian and local history. Anyone may use the collection, but it is not a lending library: it is for research use at the Archives. The collection is small, but it is strong in Canadian military history, local history of eastern Ontario and genealogies of local families.

### **A Sample of the Types of Books and Manuscripts in the Library**

- Anderson, Allan. Remembering the Farm; Memories of Farming, Ranching, and Rural Life in Canada. 1977.630.971 An
- Armstrong, John Griffith. The Halifax Explosion and the Royal Canadian Navy; Inquiry and Intrigue. 2002.971.622 Ar
- Barrett, Jane. Daughter of the Regiment. 1977.813 Bar
- Barrett, Jane. Woman of Ireland. 1976.813 Ba
- Beamish, Richard J. The Boy's Book of Lindbergh; the Lone Eagle. 1928. Vault - Box 211.3

*The **full list of these books** runs to five pages. It can be found on the RTHS Web Site [www.rideautownshiphistory.org](http://www.rideautownshiphistory.org) under the menu item "Archives News"*

## **Presentations Promote Continuing Interest in Period Costumes** **by Lucy Martin**

RTHS members joined others interested in period dress at a January 28 lecture and February 7 workshop presented by Edwina Sutherland of Edwina Richards Studios. Both events were offered by Watson's Mill in support of Manotick's 150 anniversary year.

1800's. The lecture was followed by a demonstration of how one would wear the corset, crinoline hoop frame and wide skirt associated with the period. Sandy Trueman served as a lovely model who managed to make a corset look nearly comfortable.



Attendees had to brave a typical January snowstorm to arrive at the first evening lecture. They were rewarded by an engaging slide show on fashions of the last half of the



The Saturday afternoon workshop featured a rack of modern clothes that could be tweaked into an old-fashioned look, with minimum of fuss or expense.

**Useful Tips:**

- \* Consider Value Village, thrift stores, garage sales or forgotten items in your own closet for clothes that will work. (Old bridesmaid dresses can live again!)
- \* Think 'outside the box'. For skirts or petticoats that require yardage, consider re-purposing duvet covers, sheets or curtains. Adornment and accessories can also come from a wide variety of sources for decorating collars, sleeves, shawls or summer parasols. The odd bit of lace, embroidery, or old linens can add a nice touch. Creativity makes it fun!
- \* Men get off easy: suspenders on some high-wasted pants, with a cotton long sleeved shirt--perhaps with a vest and a brimmed hat--creates a passable townsman of 1859.
- \* The library and the Internet contain a wealth of resources on period fashions, as well as modern groups that offer ideas, patterns and other help for period dressing.

Saturday's workshop then broke up into a hands-on session devoted to the all-important female headgear of the day, bonnets. Respectable bonnets are not readily found



today. But modern straw or wide-brimmed hats can be cut to attain a bonnet-brim profile and then re-shaped to look the part. Armed with scissors, a hot iron, ribbons, flowers and feathers, some lovely hats were produced Saturday afternoon in relatively short order.

There is continued interest in making period costumes and putting them to good use. An informal group is developing ways to further that goal for the Manotick 150th (and beyond?). If you would like to get dressed-up, or participate to some degree with ideas or donations, please contact RTHS member Katherine Killins at 692-1462.

Warm thanks to Edwina Sutherland for sharing her expertise and suggestions.

***The New RTHS Web Site is available.***

After a long and tortuous journey the new version of the RTHS Web Site is available on a server operated by Bluehost.com. Be warned however that it has a lot of pictures and will therefore be slow for low speed users. The URL for access is <http://www.rideautownshiphistory.org>.

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