

The Rideau Township Historical Society

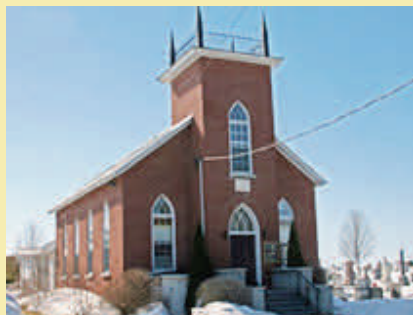
Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

February 2013 Newsletter

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

The February Meeting

Date: February 20, 2013
Time: 7:30 pm
Place: St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
6810 Rideau Valley Drive
South,
Kars, Ontario



This Month

1. February Presentation
2. Your 2013 Board of Directors
3. Robbie Burns
4. The Dickinson House
5. News from the Rideau Archives
6. Margaret Scott

Bring a Friend, Light Refreshments

Your New Board of Directors

President: Brian Sawyer bsawyer_ca@yahoo.com

Past President: Bill Tupper gwtupper@magma.ca

Vice-President and Chair of Dickinson House Committee: Maureen McPhee deculham@rogers.com

Secretary: Susan McKellar susan.mckellar@rogers.com

Treasurer: Colin Wright cjwright@distributel.net

Membership Director: Pat Earl
brian.earl@sympatico.ca

Program Director: Ruth Wright
ruthbrianwright@gmail.com

Speaker: Brian Booth

Brian Booth is a member of the RTHS and has written several books on the history of the area.

Topic: Richard Latham Garlick

Richard Garlick was an early settler in North Gower Township. One of the early entrepreneurs he was from time to time a lumberman, a steamboat operator, a tavern keeper, a landowner, and a nominee for magistrate.

Come and hear about his family background, and his entrepreneurial enterprises perhaps both north and south of the law. A supporter of schools, well connected, and a member of the militia, Garlick was one of those larger than life characters that settled the area and helped to build a functioning society.

Notices

Help Interior painting is progressing well at Dickinson House but more volunteers would be much appreciated. On Mondays, starting at 9:00 am.

Membership 2013 Membership fees are now due. \$10 for a single membership, \$15 for a family membership. Hope to see you at our meeting on February 20th.

Youth Director: vacant

Communications and Digital Applications Director: vacant

Publications Director and Custodian: Jane Anderson
edwardanderson@sympatico.ca

Grants Director: Tom MacDonald tandlmacdonald@rogers.com

Director, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster:
Ron Wilson ron.wilson1@rogers.com

Information on the responsibilities for each director as well as telephone numbers will be available on the RTHS web site shortly..

The January Meeting, Presentation on Robbie Burns

Article and Pictures by Lucy Martin

Robert Burns still inspires marked public devotion centuries after his death. Every January 25th (more or less) in most corners of the world, his admirers gather to partake in boisterous rituals known as Burns Suppers.

There's usually some poetry and song, plus a meal of cock 'o leekie soup, followed by Haggis with mashed neeps and tattlers (turnips and potatoes). Such events may be "dry" - or include an appreciation of good scotch whiskey.



A Robbie Burns Plate

With or without libation, Haggis should ideally be piped in with due ceremony and then slit with a dirk whilst "Address to a Haggis" is recited in good Scots dialect. Dinner is followed by toasts to the bonnie lassies and braw laddies, etc.

Well, we skipped all that! But for our Burns appreciation our own Coral Lindsay shared more about the man who is arguably Scotland's best known poet and best loved cultural champion to an appreciative audience of 41 at Knox Presbyterian Church in Manotick.

Lindsay was greatly impressed by how well-educated Burns was - despite growing up in abject poverty. Never rich in a material sense, he nevertheless managed to create lasting wealth - in terms of poetry, song, fellowship and love. As Lindsay explained, Burns was handsome, intelligent and charming – possibly a genius.

There is more to Burns' life than could be crammed into a short evening talk. As such, this article takes the liberty of including supplemental material to support and expand on Lindsay's points.

According to Wikipedia, when Walter Scott was just 16, the future novelist met Burns, and was greatly impressed by the encounter:

His person was strong and robust; his manners rustic, not clownish, a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity which received part of its effect perhaps from knowledge of his

extraordinary talents... there was a strong expression of shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a dark cast, and literally glowed when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time.

Burns was also famous (notorious?) as a ladies' man. Lindsay offered up a partial roll call of women Burns loved. (Some on this list responded in kind. Others declined the honour.) Nelly Kilpatrick, Peggy Thompson, Mary Morrison, Anne Rankine, Alison Bagby, Jean Armour (his eventual wife) Betty Paton, Mary Campbell, Anna Park, Jenny Clow and "at least four more".

As Burns biographer DeLancy Ferguson wrote: "it was not so much that he was conspicuously sinful as that he sinned conspicuously."

Burns fathered 15 (acknowledged) children over a not-terribly-long life span, 9 of which were born to Burns and his legal wife, Jean Armour. Sadly, with the high infant mortality rate of that period, only 3 of their children reached adulthood. Poverty, a childhood of grinding physical labour and chronic illness also contributed to Burns dying young, at age 37.



Coral Lindsay presenting Robbie Burns

He must have had a magnetic personality. The website Burns Poetry.com put it this way:

Among those who knew Burns personally, more than one rated his conversation above his poetry. Maria Riddell wrote:

"Many others perhaps may have ascended to prouder heights in the region of Parnassus, but none certainly ever outshone Burns in the charms - the sorcery, I would almost call it, of fascinating conversation, the spontane-

ous eloquence of social argument, or the unstudied poignancy of brilliant repartee."

Surrounded by her own extensive display of Burns memorabilia and books, Lindsay presented a variety show, intermingling the tale of his life with music and song. Scott Cameron rendered some fine piping while his sister Margaret demonstrated impressive twirling (or "flourishing") drum sticks, sans drum.

Lindsay and a chorus line of lovelies drawn from the audience also gave us the well-known song "Comin' through the Rye". Many assume this is a song about cutting through a grain field. But Lindsay theorizes it's about girl watching: an appreciation of the view as the lassies traversed stepping stones across the shallows of the River Rye, holding their skirts high to not get soaked. (This interpretation is supported by <http://sangstories.webs.com/cominthroughtherye.htm>)



A bust of Robbie Burns

A proper appreciation of Burns is enhanced by grasping the context of his times. Scotland had become part of Great Britain under 1707's Act of Union. By 1714, Great Britain was ruled by the House of Hanover (George I, II, III , etc.) Many Scots longed to restore their own House of Stuart and spent nearly 60 years fighting for that cause. A loss at the Battle of Culloden in 1746 crushed those hopes and changed Scotland forever.

The English were fed up with so much rebellion – which was plain treason from their point of view. Jacobites not killed at Culloden faced a "no quarter" retaliation that gave little mercy to age or gender. Even after that turmoil calmed down, Scots faced years of arrest, execution, imprisonment or deportation. Estates were seized and the clan structure was weakened. A way of life was intentionally destroyed. It was not a happy time to be a Scot - though the diaspora that resulted from that defeat (and

land enclosures that followed later) did help populate the colonies with enterprising Scots.

The "Dress Act of 1746" even made it a crime to wear highland apparel an tartans under the following penalties: "For the first offence, shall be liable to be imprisoned for 6 months, and on the second offence, to be transported to any of His Majesty's plantations beyond the seas, there to remain for the space of seven years."

That law was repealed in 1782. In later centuries highland dress became extremely popular, even among British aristocracy. But suppression of Scots culture and political aspirations was the norm during Burns' lifetime (1759 – 1796).

Although Lindsay reports Burns was a lowlander, who did not play the pipes or wear a kilt himself, his steadfast determination to preserve Scottish song, verse and culture was a dangerous endeavor at that time.

As if that wasn't bad enough from the authorities' point of view, Lindsay explained that Burns was also a republican, not a monarchist, and favored reform causes that would improve the lot of ordinary people.

While Burns did write a significant body of his own poetry and lyrics, he is also credited with preserving hundreds of traditional songs and poems by his prolonged effort to collect what he encountered in travels and taverns. Speaking of taverns, Lindsay makes the case that Burns was not a lush, the taverns were where the songs were, or could be heard more easily.

While he is best-known for poetry and song, Burns lead a life of great diversity. He knew enough about flax production to win an award and enough about farming to be a candidate for a newly created Chair of Agriculture in the University of Edinburgh (a position he declined).

Burns knew Latin and French, and was well-versed in philosophy, politics, geography, theology and mathematics. He was a Mason and even a conscientious soldier (what we might call a reservist today) after he joined the Royal Dumfries Volunteers, at a time when many feared invasion from the French.

(Note: Burns as soldier is explained by Linda Daly at: <http://www.milwburnsclub.org/contrib/soldier.htm>

Burns as a freemason is detailed by Todd J. Wilkinson at: <http://www.robertburns.org.uk/freemason-robertburns.html>)

All in all, he was certainly a remarkable man.

Post-talk questions ranged from curiosity about the average diet and life-span of that period, to how the many women in Burns' life may have felt about all the other women in his life. (His wife, Jean, did raise at least one of Burns' several illegitimate children. She out-lived Burns by 38 years.)

Speaking from the audience, Ed Anderson shared that growing up in Scotland his school taught Shakespeare, Keats, Wordsworth, etc., but not Burns. He remarked the

language in many Burns works sounds almost foreign to him.

We closed by holding hands whilst singing a Burns-connected song nearly everyone has heard, even if they do not know it as a Burns song: "Auld Lang Syne".

In post-talk conversation, Lindsay remarked that Burns was nearly charged with treason more than once and was perhaps only saved from prosecution by his broad popularity.

Although his life was short and difficult, education, wit, prose and song were egalitarian tools Burns used to craft a meaningful existence.

Lindsay is a retired teacher and school librarian. She's an author and an avid reader who has spend decades studying her own region's heritage. Lindsay summarized her feelings about Burns this way: "Considering he had nothing, I like his personality. He was defeated, but he wouldn't lie down and die. He did not give up."



Singing and dancing in honour of Robbie Burns at the meeting.

Margaret Scott

Margaret Scott, a long-time member of the Historical Society, died last month. She was in her 79th year, and was retired from a long career as a teacher with the Ottawa Public School Board. Margaret was a familiar sight around Manotick and a regular at the monthly meetings of the RTHS. She will be missed. Our condolences to her family and friends.

Watson's Mill Events

The Mill is located at 5525 Dickinson Street, Dickinson Square, Manotick. Free parking on-site.

Web Site: www.watsonsmill.com

Watson's Mill hours of operation: Office hours: weekdays, 10:00-4:00. Watson's Mill: starting Saturday, May 5th: open to visitors daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please visit www.watsonsmill.com for a complete calendar of events. Below are some highlights for the fall.

1. Watson's Mill Art Program: starting Feb. 5th: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Cost per class: \$15/adult, \$10/senior. Group (5+) rates available. At the Carriage Shed. Advance registration required.

Beginning Tuesday February 5th with drawing, and February 7th with watercolour, local artists and soul searchers, Joan Mclean and Shelia King will be sharing their expertise with those who desire to tap into their inner Van Gogh. Art Programs are located in the Carriage Shed community space across the street from Watson's Mill and will run every Tuesday and Thursdays until March 21st. *(continued over)*

To register or for more information: Phone: Melanie at 613-692- 6455; E-mail: Melanie Parker at watsonsmilloffice@rogers.com; Or drop in at our Offices, 5524 Dickinson Street (the Carriage Shed across the street from the Mill)

2. Heritage Day Programming:

Monday, February 18th, 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Free admission. At the Carriage Shed and Dickinson House. Please note: children must be supervised by a parent or guardian.

In the spirit of the day, Watson's Mill has teamed up with the Rideau Township Historical Society (RTHS) to help our visitors discover their own family history by making a family tree.

For those youngsters looking for a little something extra during this day, or for those young at heart, we are also exhibiting a doll and toy exhibit. This exhibit will show our visitors some of the changes to children's pastimes over the years.

Family-Heritage Day is a free event and will be located in the Carriage Shed community space across the street from Watson's Mill.

For more information: Phone: Cam at 613-692- MILL (6455); E-mail: Cam Trueman at watsonsmillprograms@rogers.com

News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa Archives

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

Rideau Township School Files

The Archives holds a wealth of information about the community's education history. The "School Files" are organized by school sections as they were established in the former townships of Marlborough and North Gower. There were 28 sections in all, 17 in Marlborough and 11 in North Gower. The files include class photos, pictures of buildings that have since disappeared, biographical information and photographs of teachers, where they taught,

etc. The "School Files" capture the stories of the one-room schools as well as today's larger institutions, their spirit and their accomplishments.

Please help us identify by name the students in the picture below who were in Mr. Roland Gregoire's Grade 6 class at Kars Public School in 1969. Send your email answers to the following address:

rideauarchives@ottawa.ca



Minutes of the Rideau Township Historical Society

Annual General Meeting

January 16, 2013 Knox Presbyterian Church, Manotick

Opening: The Rideau Township Historical Society met at Knox Presbyterian Church, 6633 Dickson Street, Manotick, Ontario, for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and a program on Scottish heritage with Coral Lindsay. There were about 40 members and guests present. Maureen McPhee, Vice- President, chaired the meeting in the absence of the Society President, Bill Tupper.

Minutes: It was moved by Bill Adams and seconded by Ron Wilson that the minutes of the November 21, 2012 meeting as published in the December Newsletter be approved. Carried.

Membership: Patricia Earl reported that as of Dec. 31, 2012 there were 11 life members, 3 complimentary members and 101 paid members. Memberships for 2013 were being taken during the meeting and towards the end of the evening there were 25 members paid up for 2013.

Communications and Digital Applications: Ron Wilson reported that the web site was up to date and the January Newsletter had been distributed.

Publications: Ron Wilson reported in the absence of director Ellen Adamsons that the book on Cheese Factories was about half-way to the final draft and the team was hoping to finish it by the end of March. The oral history project under Ellen is underway but could use additional support.

Program: Ruth Wright, program co-ordinator, noted that the Feb 20th meeting would be in Kars at St. Andrew's church with a talk by Brian Booth on Richard Garlick.

Dickinson House (DH): Maureen reported that due to the longer hours in 2012 DH had 6,000 visitors compared to 4,000 in the previous year. She reported a worrying fact about the zoning changes and the prospect that DH could be sold. However the DH Committee will be meeting Jan 21st to plan the 2013 season. They are also applying for student funding and advertising for students at Carleton and U of Ottawa for the 2013 summer season. It was noted that there will be a volunteer crew assembling to paint the walls at DH on Mondays 9 am to 3pm using some of the funds donated to DH over the summer to purchase paint.

Grants: Tom MacDonald, Grants Director, reported that a Provincial Grant of approximately \$1,000 had been received and two City of Ottawa grants had been applied for.

Youth: Cam Trueman, the Youth Director, was not present but Maureen reported on the two student funding applications under the DH report above.

Nominations and Elections: The Chair then turned the meeting over to Owen Cooke. The Nominating Committee of Lucy Martin, Marguerite Rogers and Owen Cooke nominated the following persons for the executive of RTHS for 2013. All have expressed their willingness to serve:

President: Brian Sawyer

Past President: Bill Tupper

Vice President: Maureen McPhee

Secretary: Susan McKellar

Treasurer: Colin Wright

Publications Editor and Custodian: Jane Anderson

Membership Director: Pat Earl

Communications Director: No candidate had been nominated for this position and Owen asked for volunteers. There were none forthcoming from those at the meeting.

Three Directors: Tom MacDonald, Ruth Wright, Ron Wilson

The Chair called for further nominations from the floor. Not receiving any, he declared the nominations closed. Moved by Brian Sawyer, seconded by Tom MacDonald, that those nominated be declared acclaimed. Carried. A vote of confidence for the outgoing board was declared.

The new President, Brian Sawyer, then took the Chair. He thanked the members of the outgoing executive for their efforts especially members of the previous executive who were standing down. The Chair then asked that the Finance report be given.

Finance: The Treasurer Colin Wright announced that the bank balance was \$14,684.86 at the end of December with \$66.39 to balance the books. Colin reported that the books were currently with the auditors. This balance was the opening balance for the proposed budget for 2013 that had been circulated prior to the meeting as well as being available as a hard copy at the meeting.

Acceptance of the financial report including the 2013 budget was moved by Sandra Wilson and seconded by Ron Wilson. Carried.

Announcements

Stu Rogers announced that there would be a meeting at the Carriage Shed in Manotick Wednesday Jan 30th at 7pm for a discussion of the public opposition against the huge quarry that had been proposed in SW Ontario in Wellington Co. He suggested interested parties might google "mega quarry" for more information. For more information call Stu at 613 692 3802

Evening Program: Ruth Wright then introduced Coral Lindsay who presented her talk on Robbie Burns with assistance from Scott and Margaret Cameron, piper and drummer. We sang several songs, accompanied on the piano by Pat Earl. We learned many facts about this fascinating and very well loved Scottish poet, farmer, inventor and above all "lover".

Adjournment: The presentation ended at 9pm and Ruth thanked Coral for her displays and entertaining talk. The meeting then continued with informal discussion and Scottish refreshments organized by Melanie Hayes.