

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

February 2015 Newsletter

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

The February Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2015
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Orchard View on the Rideau
1145 Bridge Street
Manotick, ON

The vacant lot across the street from Orchard View can be used for parking.



Bring a Friend.
To arrange a ride call
Brian Earl at (613) 692 2371.

The Speaker: ***Alison Cheng***

Alison Cheng is a summer student hired last year by the Dickinson House Committee to do research on the connections between Manotick and Sir John A. MacDonald. She will present her findings at the meeting.

Topic:

Sir John A. MacDonald and the Manotick Connection

Sir John A. MacDonald, Canada's first prime minister, had connections to Manotick. Alison researched these connections by combing through the Ottawa Newspapers, and all other available sources to discover them.

This topic was of particular interest to Bill Tupper who helped to guide Alison's work. This work provides us with a fascinating view of the early days of our village. Come to the meeting and enjoy the new insights you will gain.

This Month

1. The January Meeting
2. The RTHS Executive, 2015
3. News from the Rideau Archives
4. The February Programme
5. Memberships now due.
6. Minutes of the January meeting.
7. Dickinson House dream.

2015 Memberships Now Due

A Reminder: Very-reasonable annual dues for 2015 are now being collected. (\$10 individual; \$15 family) See Membership Director Patricia Pratt at any meeting, or mail your cheques and the form on page 8 to:

RTHS
P.O. Box 56
North Gower, ON
K0A 2T0

Auditor's Report

The auditor's report was to be presented at the February meeting as mentioned at the last meeting. Unfortunately the report will not be finished and will have to be presented in March.



Maureen McPhee found this carousel on sale for \$4,250.00 + HST, setup included. Can you imagine this at Dickinson House? Oh well, it doesn't hurt to dream.

The Annual Bring & Brag **Presentations by RTHS Members**

Article and photos by Lucy Martin

For the first gathering of 2015, twenty-four members turned out at St. Andrew's Church in Kars. On the agenda were the Annual General Meeting and another tried and true tradition, the "Bring and Brag" extravaganza. Here is a summary of what was shared, in order of presentation.

Gary Bagley's great-grandfather (1808-1896) was born in Ireland. In 1823 he came with his family to Canada where he went on to work as a blacksmith in Orillia. In retirement he built a home in Muskoka in the 1860s, which his youngest daughter later turned into a tourist home. That passed out of family hands before burning down in 1982. During the clean-up the current owners found a hidden cache of blacksmith tools, some of which Bagley was able to buy. The tool he brought to share was called an upper swedge, which was used to stamp irregular shapes onto the iron being worked. (The only photo Bagley has of that ancestor shows great-grandfather in his coffin!)



Gary Bagley with the blacksmith's tool he brought to the meeting.

Susan McKellar reminded all that the theme for this year's Heritage Day on Feb 16 is "Main Street at the heart of the community". Three scrapbooks on that topic have been prepared, for Kars, North Gower and Manotick.

In the course of doing that research, a friend (Gail Adams) gave McKellar a compilation of Kars material written by George Bryan in 1996. McKellar shared some of her favorite tidbits, including an evocative description from a walking tour of Kars that dated to 1934, detailing David Kidd's garage:

"You will notice that the gas pumps are pumped up by hand, giving two grades of Shell gasoline. Inside the garage are a couple of 45-gallon drums of coal

oil, which is much in demand for lamps and also coal oil stoves in the summer. The garage is a great meeting place. In the winter a true hot stove league assembles here around a huge, upright stove at the back of the garage. Dave has a drum of used engine oil on the stairway leading to the second floor." (Here McKellar added: "Now this building is still in existence! So it didn't burn down!")

"The stairway being right beside the stove, the old oil is fed to the stove by a pipe which runs into the stove top. When the fire begins to die down, he opens the valve on the pipe and gives it a few shots of oil. The stove glows red and so do the pipes. And all the hot stove leaguers – Johnny James, Wink Lindsay, Jack Butler, Bobby Lewis, Percy Chambers and Joe Martin - have to move back."

McKellar, herself a resident of Kars for over 40 years, thinks it could be fun if more such "walking tour" stories were collected. She hopes long-time residents will consider doing something along those lines with their own memories. McKellar says Kars and Manotick already have a good start, but accounts from North Gower are rather lacking.

Sandy McNiece carried up a medium-sized case that sort of looked like an old typewriter, courtesy of his wife, Rosie. It proved to be a portable (wind-up) phonograph that belonged to his English mother-in-law. It was probably made in/near the 1930s. His mother-in-law had been an R.N. and a WREN and drove an ambulance in the Second World War. She took her phonograph with her everywhere. (It must have been a real moral booster.) Rosie has fond memories of using the same phonograph as a child.

From a collection of old discs, McNiece played an Arthur Askey war-time comedy routine about the importance of not giving away information.

McNiece also shared an individually autographed photograph of the Beatles. The story goes that Rosie's Dad was a bank manager when a financial backer sought about \$500,000 to fund a movie starring the Fab Four. Rosie's Dad joked he would grant the loan on one condition: a signed photo for his Beatle-mad daughter. McNiece admits it is hard to be certain if the four signatures are genuine, or the handiwork of Neil Aspinall, who started as the band's road manager before becoming their business manager as well. (The Beatles were involved in a number of movies: "A Hard Day's Night", 1964; "Help", 1965; "Magical Mystery Tour", 1967; an animated film "Yellow Submarine", 1968 and a documentary released in 1970, just after their break-up, "Let it Be".)

Owen Cooke began with a souvenir keychain from JR Kyushu Railway Company, in a nod to his personal tradition of bringing something pocket-sized to these events. He continued with slides and information about heritage railways in Japan, including the Umekoji Steam Museum - perhaps the oldest and best known such museum, in Kyoto. It has a roundhouse and turntable and an exhibit hall, with nearly 20 engines, including one that used to pull the Imperial train in the 1930s. There is also a working C-11 steam engine that is displayed nearly every day.

Cooke also talked about the Modern Transportation Museum in Osaka, which displays one of the first *Shinkansen* ("new trunk line") better known to us as "bullet trains", in the zero series, which began use in the early 1960s. Those trains are now on the 700 series. Cooke explained that older railways in Japan were all narrow gauge. The bullet trains run on standard gauge.

Scott Cameron shared First World War military medals and photos relating to his Great-great Uncle Hubert Stamp, a sapper and driver who was killed in that conflict in August of 1917. The British medal for participation in the Great War differs from those used in other commonwealth countries. The British medal's figurine raises her left arm (not the right) and dates the conflict from 1914 to 1919, the formal signing of the armistice at Versailles. Cameron said British participants in the Archangel campaign (to aid the White Russians) were also eligible for that medal.

Barbara Humphreys shared a pair of tiny embroidered wedding shoes, as would have been worn by a bride with bound feet in China. The crippling custom started around the 10th century. Some theorize binding feet began as a way to show off high status - proving a family was wealthy enough to support women who could not even walk. In time the mutilation became a symbol of female beauty in Chinese culture and was adopted by upper - and even middle - classes. The practice was finally stamped out in the early years of the 20th century. This pair of shoes may have been looted from a Chinese palace sometime in the Boxer rebellion (1898-1900). Humphreys reminded the audience that women have been expected to suffer for beauty in many places and times, including our own.

John Palmer shared a flea-market find, a battered book he acquired that was once owned by one "R. T. Little, Richmond". This copy had no title page. Through detective work Palmer concluded it is: *Our Heroes in the Great World War: giving facts and details of Canada's part in the greatest war in history c. 1919* by J.H. De Wolfe.

Looking it up on the Internet, the book is described as having 414 pages, illustrated with many yearbook-style individual photos of officers, nurses, non-commissioned officers and men from Ottawa and vicinity, including their names and what became of them. At the end of his presentation Palmer very magnanimously decided to donate the book to the Rideau Archives, to support efforts to identify and remember local participants in that war.

As sometimes happens at Bring and Brag events, one presentation connects to another. Palmer's father served



Barbara Humphreys presenting the wedding shoes from China.

in the British forces in the First World War and also served in the North Russia ("White Russian") campaign of 1918-1920.

Early in her teaching career, **Ellen Adamsons** took some time to go live in Britain. While there she learned how to make brass rubbings, which was a handy way to combine personal interest in art, history and knights. Adamsons was able to visit historic sites and make brass rubbings, including some of the very oldest effigies of knights in England. (Public access to such rubbing has since been banned, because the activity can damage the source material.)

Adamsons shared a number of representative rubbings including Sir John D'Abernon, the elder (1277) and the younger (1327) and a rubbing showing Lancastrian armor. (Such rubbings are sometimes typed by the garments worn in different eras: surcoat, chain mail, etc.) Some of these memorials are the actual burial site for the persons depicted, some are not. The depictions were made near the time of death making them a valuable primary resources for understanding how people dressed. It was fascinating to look at such beautiful memorial art - depicting real individuals, from so long ago!

Long-time Manotick resident **Stu Rogers** shared a song written by his family about 27 years ago, on a drive to Toronto. The Dickinson Ditty is an homage to the simple joys of village life. (It was even made into a recording, as family stocking-stuffers!) Rogers performed it for us, with a sing-along chorus all could join: "...*Can you imagine a place in the universe more fit for living the way we do? I won't trade you ten of your cities for Manotick, or the pleasures it brings!*"

Brian Sawyer told us his mother's first language was Welsh. To honour that heritage he brought a rather old hand-carved wooden spoon. Although that particular spoon was not connected to his family, carving a spoon was once a Welsh courtship ritual for wooing a bride.

One of Sawyer's aunts was an artist. He shared a miniature painted by her, along with ivory "blanks" on which such paintings would be rendered. Though much-used for centuries in all sorts of ordinary things, ivory has recently become a highly problematic artifact. Many countries, including the U.S. and Canada, now prohibit transporting ivory, in an effort to curtail the slaughter of elephants for their tusks. (Be very careful about trying to take anything with ivory across the border.)

Jane Anderson shared a treasured family heirloom – a charming miniature tea set that had belonged to her mother, who was born in 1905. It includes a silver tray with an unusual "tropical" motif. The Andersons are trying to declutter in anticipation of a move. Happily, something this small, and precious, will surely be worth taking along to their next home.

Peter Satterly shared pictures and research he'd compiled on "cottage" gas stations, found in many parts of this region in the 1930s. He had images of gas stations built in that style including: Island Park Drive in Ottawa, Vankleek Hill, Killaloe, Kingston and Toronto.

Here's an explanation on that style in an Ottawa Citizen article from Sept. 2014 by Andrew King:

In the 1920s, curb-side gas pumps downtown were being replaced by drive-in filling stations in the suburbs as more people began to buy cars and move to the outskirts of the city. These new gas stations were created by oil companies who wanted their gas stations to blend into residential neighbourhoods so they built them to resemble the houses that would surround them.

Only a few of these cottage gas stations remain in North America, and the United States recently designated their surviving examples on the National Register of Historic Places.

Ruth Wright brought two long wooden boxes used by her mother to hold jewelry. (Wright's mother was born in 1911.) Ruth also shared a locket with a photo of her parents. The box was a fixture on her mother's dresser. Judging by its vintage and shape, some of the audience guessed it may have originally been a glove box. Wright reminded us all of the importance of getting details from the source, while they are still easily gotten, something she regrets not having done herself in this case.

Val Lister brought two more beauties from her extensive lamp collection, these dating from about 1750. They burned heavy oil (with the consistency of tar!) and were gravity-fed. The larger lamp had a "bulb" in a shape that may have inspired the shape of the electric light bulb to

come. The smaller lamp had a strip of gradation marks beside the clear glass, which could function as an early time-clock, with the level of the fuel indicating how long it had burned. Lister's lamps are always a wonderful peek into the history of lighting.

Brandon Kassis' father recently acquired a house which contained all sorts of stuff, including a "Yashika 44", a twin reflex camera, popular in the late 1950s. The camera still contained film and Brandon impulsively snapped a shot of his younger brother. A cousin was able to develop the (very-old) film. The only shot that turned out was Brandon's. Being a black and white print, the photo has a very classic quality.

Dennis Osmond brought in an old board game that had belonged to his father, who grew up in Bournemouth, England. It was boldly titled "*The new game of British Empire: Trading with the Colonies*". Osmond studied the steamships shown on the game box and board (taking note of how many smokestacks they had, in what placement) to help date the game to about 1911. The activity combined action with education as players raced to move finished goods from England to far-flung colonies and return with raw materials. The Suez Canal was one available route. The Panama Canal was not a choice in this game, as that did not open until 1914.

For an "educational" game, the geography was found wanting in details and quality. In that rendering, Canada was a sparse expanse with almost no cities to speak of - the largest and most important of which was...Winnipeg! Oddly, the map of Australia was quite well detailed, including a boundary change that also dates to 1911.

All in all, the evening was another romp through many attics, with unexpected whimsy and many interesting details.



Dennis Osmond shows "*The new game of British Empire*"; a board game circa 1911.

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

Your RTHS Executive for 2015

Please find below the results of the election of officers of the Rideau Township Historical Society as chosen by the membership at the Annual General Meeting of January 21, 2015. Contact information is also provided.

President	Brian Sawyer	613-692-6300 bsawyer_ca@yahoo.com
Past President	Bill Tupper	613-489-3792 gwtupper@magma.ca
Vice-President	Tom MacDonald	613-692-4197 tandlmacdonald@rogers.com
Secretary	Susan McKellar	613-489-3961 susan.mckellar@rogers.com
Treasurer	David "Sandy" McNiece	613-489-2295 dmcniece@rogers.com
Membership Director	Patricia Pratt	613-489-3067 pwpratt@xplornet.com
Program Directors	Bill Tupper, Owen Cooke, Ruth Wright	613-489-3962 (Owen) gwtupper@magma.ca oacooke@gmail.com ruthbrianwright@gmail.com
Youth Director	Brandon Kassis	613 884-1089 (cell) brandonkassis@rogers.com
Publications Director and Custodian	Jane Anderson	613-692-4147 edwardanderson@sympatico.ca
Grants Director	Angela Beking	613-258-2976 angela.beking@gmail.com
Communications Director	Ron Wilson	613-692-3009 ron.wilson1@rogers.com
Mail pick-up and distribution	Owen Cooke	613-489-3962 oacooke@gmail.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).

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.

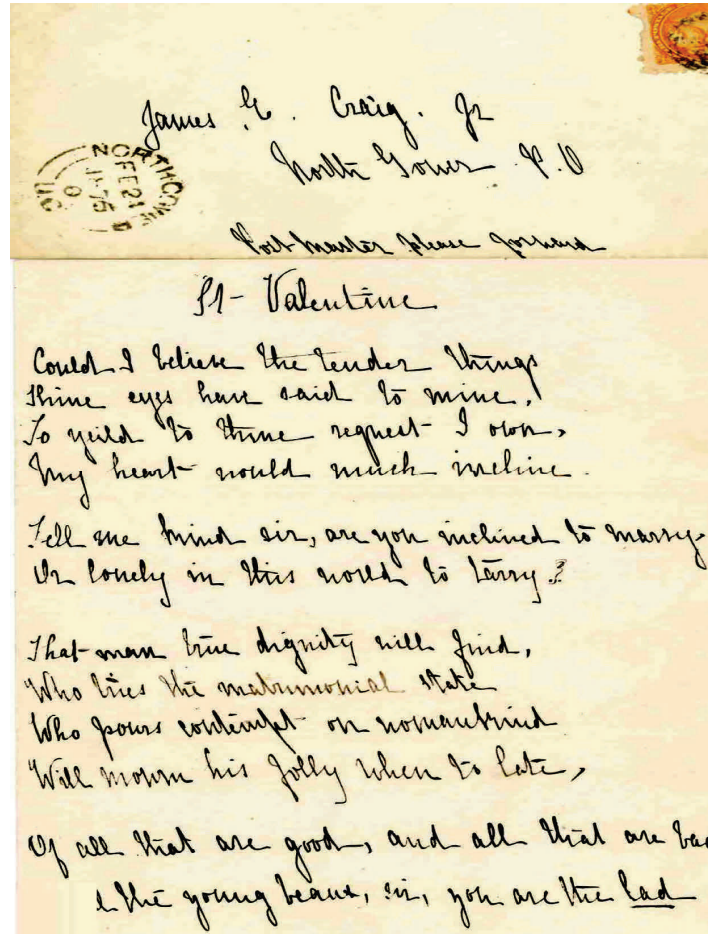
We have not received many valentines at the Rideau Archives yet. The earliest, a plain handwritten poem entitled St. Valentine hinting at possible marriage (MGR075-01-003), was mailed in 1876 to James E. Craig, Junior, of North Gower by an anonymous admirer. Neither its sentiment nor its plainness were in keeping with the trends.

By the 1880s, printed valentine cards became popular, with embossed or perfumed paper, metallic lace, and even plush or satin fabric. The Ottawa Journal, on the eve of Valentine's Day 1886, reminded its readers that "a valentine is a love message, and not a piece of furniture."

At the same time, it became popular to send vinegar valentines, which were funny or spiteful counterparts of the usual sentimental type. Craig, in addition to perhaps recognizing the writing on his sentimental note, might also have recognized the third verse, beginning "That man true dignity will find ..." His valentine had repurposed this verse from a humorous poem named "Panegyric on Woman."

The envelope bears a postmark dated 21 February, and the delay could have stemmed from her uncertainty about her chances. The valentine does not appear, in the end, to have been successful in its aim: James E. Craig, Junior, was married on 19 June 1878 to Grace Clara O'Laughlin – who had very different handwriting.

– Stuart Clarkson



Minutes of the Rideau Township Historical Society January Meeting (AGM)

January 21, 2015, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kars, Ont.

Opening: President Brian Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and welcomed the 24 members present. He noted the recent tragic death of member Charles Morton and his wife Ada.

Finance: Sandy McNiece, treasurer, reported on a successful year in 2014, with a balance of revenues over expenditures of about \$3,000. The RTHS bank balance after reserves as of the end of 2014 was approximately \$8,000.

Dickinson House: Maureen McPhee, chair of the Dickinson House committee, reported a successful year at the House, with about 8,000 visitors and 2,000 volunteer hours. She reassured us that it is not currently for sale, contrary to some reports in the press.

Membership: Susan McKellar, membership director, reported a total of 87 members in 2014: 16 life members, 1 complimentary member and 70 paid members. As of the beginning of the meeting there were 48 members so far in 2015: 18 life members, and 30 paid members. Note: several memberships were renewed during the course of the evening.

Publications: Jane Anderson, chair of the Publications Committee, reported on the 2014 publication of The Women of Dickinson House, by Maureen McPhee. Two publications are anticipated for 2015, The Gentlemen of Dickinson House, by Bill Tupper, and Rideau Township and the Great War: Sacrifice and Service, by Owen Cooke and others. And the committee plans to begin the Oral History project in 2015 as well; Jane invited members to participate by interviewing. She also reported \$2,804 in book sales in 2014, with expenditures including \$2,400 for publishing and \$417 for equipment.

Program: Ruth Wright, outgoing program director, reported on plans for future meetings. The February meeting will be held at Orchard View on the Rideau, Manotick, and will feature Alison Cheng talking about her research on Sir John A. MacDonald and his connection to Manotick. In March noted author Charlotte Gray will speak on her latest book, the Massey Murder. Ruth and Susan met with Rick Hagar, principal of Kars on the Rideau Public School, about their plans for an archive and heritage display that will include a memorial to Coral Lindsay; they will explore opportunities for collaboration with the RTHS.

Youth: Brandon Kassis, youth director, reported that the two RTHS awards of merit in history awarded annually have been reduced from \$500 each to \$250. His intention is to use the remaining \$500 to fund school trips to local historical sites in 2015.

Communications: Ron Wilson, communications director, reported that the web site needs updating, and he is working on that.

Nominating Committee: Owen Cooke, member of the committee along with Bill Tupper, chair, and Pat Earl, reported the following nominations, some of which are continuing:

- President Brian Sawyer
- Vice-president Tom MacDonald
- Secretary Susan McKellar
- Treasurer David (Sandy) McNiece
- Publications director Jane Anderson
- Membership director Patricia Pratt
- Communications director Ron Wilson
- Directors at large Angela Beking (grants)
- Youth Brandon Kassis
- Program Bill Tupper (program, assisted by Ruth Wright and Owen Cooke)
- Auditor Philip Didgeon
- Chair, Dickinson House Maureen McPhee

It was noted that the executive agreed at their last meeting that the Chair of the Dickinson House committee should sit on the executive.

Owen called for nominations from the floor three times; having received none, it was moved by Doug Culham and seconded by Val Lister that nominations be closed; carried. It was moved by Marguerite Rodgers and seconded by Doug Culham that the proposed slate be elected by acclamation; carried. Those directors who were present stood and were recognized.

Report from President: Brian Sawyer reported on the activities of the RTHS during 2014, and thanked those who served, particularly Ruth Wright who has completed her term as program director. The February meeting will include an indication of plans for 2015 as well as the auditor's report.

Evening Program: A very interesting Show and Tell program followed, with presentations by many of those present.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:20, and was followed by a social time with refreshments provided by Jane Anderson and Melanie Hayes.

RIDEAU TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2015 MEMBERSHIP

Single: \$10.00 _____ Family: \$15.00 _____ Life Member: \$100.00 _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

I/We prefer to receive notices and news by: e-mail: _____ hard copy by mail: _____

I/We agree that the Executive Committee may use the above personal information for internal Society use. Members' names will not be made available to individuals or organizations outside the Society.

Signature(s): _____

Please submit this form with your cheque payable to **Rideau Township Historical Society**

To: Patricia Pratt, Membership Director
Box 56
North Gower, ON K0A 2T0

Note to New Members:

The Society can no longer afford the increasing cost of embossed plastic name tags. We shall provide a paper tag in a plastic holder. If you would like an embossed name tag, we can provide them for \$5.00.

Please indicate here for an embossed name tag at \$5.00 each: _____. Please show number required and names to be embossed: