

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

February 2017 Newsletter

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

The February Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2017
Time: 7:30p.m.

Place Knox Presbyterian Church
5533 Dickinson Street,
Manotick, ON



The Speaker: Meredith Quaile.

Meredith Quaile did her Ph.D. on the history of Ontario women in the dairy industry.

Subject:

The Role of Women in Agriculture

In February Meredith Quaile will speak on The Role of Women in Agriculture.

Please note that the February meeting will be one week early due to availability of the speaker. The date will be February 8.

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

The RTHS Executive for 2017

- President – David “Sandy” McNiece
- Vice President – Susan McKellar
- Past President - Tom MacDonald
- Secretary – Ruth Wright
- Treasurer – Susan (Sue) Gibson
- Publications Director – Jane Anderson
- Membership Director – Patricia Pratt
- Communications Director – Maureen McPhee
- Youth Director - Brandon Kassis
- Program Directors - Bill Tupper, Owen Cooke
- Chairman, Dickinson House Committee - Brian Earl
- Mail Pickup -- Owen Cooke

The Spring Program, 2017

March:

Hannah Blaine, our student from last summer, will present some results of her research on Joseph Currier, on Wednesday 15 March, at the North Gower Client Service Centre.

April:

On Wednesday 19 April Ruth Stewart-Verger and her mother Donna Stewart, storytellers, will tell us about the Famous Five and the recognition of women as “persons”. This will be at Orchardview on the Rideau, Manotick.

May:

In May our speaker will be Jim Witham, former director of the Canadian War Museum, on how to start and run a museum.

June:

Probably on Saturday, 24 June, we will have an excursion to the Wilno Heritage Village to explore our Polish roots, with a lunch at the Polish buffet at Wilno Tavern.

This Month

1. The February meeting
2. The January presentation
3. The new RTHS Executive
4. News from the Rideau Archives
5. Upcoming Programs
6. Minutes of the January meeting

The January Bring & Brag

Article by Susan McKellar

Photos by Owen Cooke

Once again, RTHS members entertained and dazzled us with wonders and stories! We had a total of 11 talks. And Ron Wilson served as our A/V technician, providing the equipment and wherewithal for slide presentations that accompanied some items.

Dennis Osmond took us back to World War II times in England, and the Red Cross Aid to Russia Fund. This was a fund-raising drive, led by Clementine Churchill, wife of the prime minister, to provide food, hospital/medical supplies, etc., to those in need in Russia following the German invasion. He displayed a couple of "love puppets" that he and a childhood friend made and used in a Christmas pantomime, as well as a notebook with the scripts of the plays which incorporated local experiences with buzz bombs, etc. They did shows at events such as birthday parties and charged admission. He also showed us pictures of Mrs. Churchill, posters, the puppet theatre, and a personalized letter of thanks signed by Mrs. Churchill. Dennis and his friend Tony raised a total of three pounds 5 shillings that they contributed to the cause.



Dennis Osmond shows Sir Winston and Clementine Churchill. She was head of the Aid to Russia Fund. On the table are the hand puppets he and a friend used to raise money for the Fund during the Second World War.

Jan Willis brought an item from the many boxes of material from her mother's house. This was a book belonging to her Aunt Minnie (1905-1974), a teacher living in Roxborough in Montreal who Jan was close to, after many visits that included French lessons. The large book was originally a business ledger from the 1890s that Minnie used as a base for a scrapbook. She inserted many clippings and handwritten entries on a variety of subjects ranging from a floral tribute to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, to God, to poetry.

Owen Cooke presented an interesting slide show entitled "A Dutch Coin and Dejima", and passed around the coin in question which had a coat of arms on one side and

VOC 1790 on the other. The coin was from the United East India Company, a Dutch company chartered in 1602 that was the first company to trade shares publicly. Dejima is an artificial island built in 1634 in the bay of Nagasaki, Japan, in order to accommodate Portuguese Christian missionaries and prevent the spread of their religion. This was the only place where foreign trade was permitted from the 16th to the 19th centuries, and it had a history of 400 years of Dutch trading. They brought in many items including coffee, chocolate, clover, pianos, etc., and traded them for copper, silver, rice, porcelain, lacquerware, etc. Dejima is now a museum with costumed guides who offer tours in English, Japanese, Dutch and French.

Brian Sawyer displayed four different objects. The first two belonged to his aunt who was an artist. Before WWI her job was adding colour to black and white photographs. She also had a business painting and selling miniatures that were painted on ivory. Brian passed around one of these miniatures as well as a box containing small thin pieces of ivory that looked like paper. His third object was a decorative plate, one of a series of seven with characters from Dickens painted on them; this was "Fat Boy". His final item was a silver-handled cane that Brian Earl had borrowed after a leg injury.



Brian Sawyer brought a box of thin sheets of ivory that his relative had used to hand-colour photographs.

Val Lister, long-time collector of lamps, did not disappoint! She showed us the first reference book on lighting that got her started on lamp collecting, as well as another excellent book. She then moved on to showing us various intricate lighting devices. One was used by dentists to tilt a light, another by barbers for singeing a beard. There were taper jacks, used for sealing envelopes. And cigar lighters, whereby a man would light a “spill” from the candle and bring it to the cigar to light it. There was a jeweller’s torch which was used for silver solder, for repairs to fine jewellery.

Eleanor Aass brought a complicated antique tool from her late husband’s family in Norway. The Norwegians liked to drink coffee through a piece of sugar, but they didn’t have sugar cubes long ago, so they processed the sugar so it was solid, then used this tool to cut it into pieces.

Jane Anderson showed us a lovely sign that she and Ed have at their home in Riverside South. It says “Shawbridge Cottage”. She gave us a bit of family background – her maternal great-grandfather, Robert Fulton, immigrated to Canada from Scotland. His daughter, Jane Agnes, married Osborne Shaw of Shawbridge, Quebec. Osborne’s mother, Jane, was widowed and built a house there, both as a home and as a business opportunity to accommodate the railway construction workers. Osborne bought the house and brought his bride, Jane Agnes, to live there. She later received a Scottish inheritance from her maiden aunties and used this to improve the house, putting in plumbing, etc., and gave it the name at that time.

Ruth Wright asked us to guess what her item was, that a neighbor had given to them. I think someone correctly guessed – a mouse-trap! It was an intriguing object that included an enclosure and an attached treadmill. It is a humane trap in that the mouse is not killed, merely captured. But then somehow it has to be released. Ruth has not had the need to use it yet!

Sandy McNiece demonstrated a couple of musical gongs that came from his wife’s relatives in Wales, and that he has in their home now. We were also asked to guess what they were, as it was not obvious. They appeared to

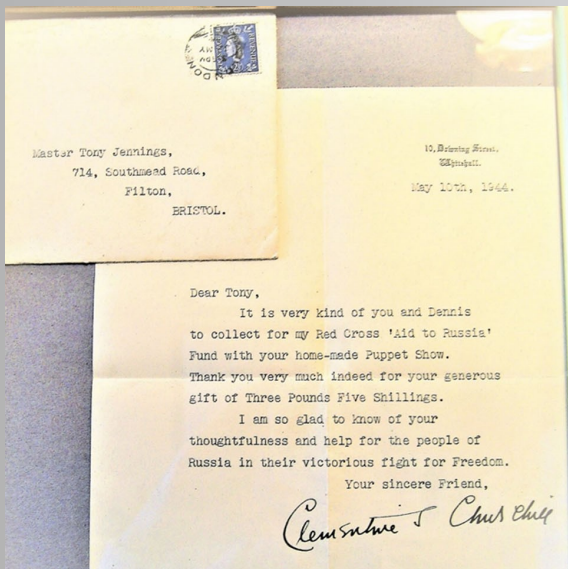


Ruth Wright showed off an humane mouse-trap where the mouse could exercise.

be made of brass, and gave a lovely ring when struck or tapped. One was a large tube, and was made of a gun canister for ammunition. The other consisted of four flat round plates, hung in a wooden frame. They were tops from gun canisters, and each gave a different note.

Susan McKellar has been listening to oral histories of elderly local residents who were interviewed in the 1970s by Georgie Tupper and team. She played a few excerpts from Wilbert Beggs (skating on the creek), Wellington Craig (travelling out west to the grain harvest in 1911) and Hugh L. Craig (never had a car, had a wonderful life). Brian Wright provided some additional details on these gentlemen.

John Palmer finished off the evening with an old French magazine he happened to come across in a bookstore in Chartres, France. It had an article on the landing at Dieppe in 1942, with lots of photos and details. He noted that certain words in the text were blacked out by censors.



On the left is a letter written by Clemence Churchill thanking Tony and Dennis for their contribution to the “Aid to Russia” Fund.

Rideau Township Historical Society

Wednesday, 8 February 2017, at 7:30 p.m.

Knox Presbyterian Church

5533 Dickinson Street, Manotick



William Henry Brownlee Farm, North Gower, 1893

Meredith Quaile

**“Grass and Sunshine into Cream and Butter”
19th and 20th Century Ontario Dairy Objects**

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.

As Usual --Life on the Craig farm, 1877

Among the records of the Craig family held at the Rideau Branch is a fragment of a diary (MGR071-05-005), kept by Robert A. Craig late in the summer of 1877. Although it is only a portion of the original, scarcely more than a dozen pages in length, it captures a view of the world from the perspective not of a farmer but of a younger son still on the farm in his late twenties.

Even this limited view shows that Robert and his brothers maintained a habitual life dominated by daily chores. There was milking before breakfast -- "as usual" -- as well as churning the butter, drawing the wheat, reaping oats, drawing out manure, weaning lambs from the ewes, digging potatoes, and fixing fences. It was clearly a special event when a butcher arrived at the Craig farm from Ottawa to buy cattle, Robert helping him load the white steer and milk cow and calf that he purchased.

Brother Albert accompanied their Da on a trip to Kemptville Fair, and Robert happily joined the Methodist Church's excursion party to the Ogdensburg Show Fair, though he was in the end disappointed to find the stock "not any better than we have at County Show" and the farm implements to be of "no great variety."

His father, James Craig, was a busy man in the Township, but was not so busy that he didn't do his share of the work, cutting the corn in garden and stooping the cow corn. But his Da was frequently at Council or headed into Ottawa, once leaving at 3.00 am to return home shortly after dark. The youngest brother, Rus, was at school -- "as usual" -- and escaped some but not all of the chores. Elder brother Jonathan had bought his own farm -- though he sought his brother's help from time to time. Robert's notes show how often the Craigs helped out their relatives and other close neighbours, helping Tom Craig one day and Robert's uncle Hugh Craig with the thrashing the next.

On Monday 17 September 1877, when Robert was at the village of North Gower, "young Rob[er]t Craig sends down word to village for a crowd of us to go up, as an awful high wind was blowing the fire from a fallow to his buildings when we get half way there it began to rain & When we

get there the danger over, stopped till rain is over & have our suppers." Weekly tasks included Saturday music practice at the church with Albert, James, and Asa and sometimes their sister Sarah as well, with Robert on violin. Saturday too was wash day -- "as usual."

The greater part of Sunday mornings was spent sleeping and reading, but surprisingly church services themselves were a little less routine, sometimes being at 11.00, other times at 3:00 pm or even 5.00 pm. On Sunday 26 August, many parishioners though it was at 3.00 pm instead of 5:00 pm and turned up during Annie O'Loughlin's 2:00 pm bible study session that Robert was attending at the church -- "as usual."

Robert also noted many social visits, often for tea on Sundays. At one time Robert recorded that the Craigs "had a host of people here for dinner." Among the visitors, a few stand out as particularly notable due to their frequency and the attention paid to them by the brothers: "20 August, Tonight the Misses O'Loughlin here ... James, Hugh [ie Hugh S. Craig], Asahel and Albert goes home with them ..." On 4 September, Annie and Ella O'Loughlin were escorted home by James and Robert, and later that month the same two visited Annie when she was feeling unwell. On 18 September, Mrs. O'Loughlin visited for tea with daughter Annie, and that evening Robert was sent to collect Clara and Ella and also the O'Loughlin's neighbour, Dr. Scovil. They play games, and then there was set dancing, though Robert noted that they were "scarce of boys." Robert accompanied the Misses O'Loughlin to a local fair but, finding it so crowded that they were able to see little, they went instead to watch the Richmond and North Gower clubs playing baseball.

James Craig married Clara O'Loughlin the next year, in 1878, and Dr. Scovil's married her sister Ella the year after that, while it was to be six years after Robert's journal entries that Annie married Albert, in 1883. But, along with a brief view of the daily life on the Craig family farm in North Gower Township, Robert's diary presents for us today the frequent visits and deep family interconnections which lay behind those marriages, a fortunate opportunity to breathe life into the genealogical facts.

Stuart Clarkson

[The RTHS gratefully acknowledges the financial support received from the City of Ottawa.](#)

September 1st 1877.
 Sat. 1st of Alb & I (with team, didn't use them) goes to uncle
 Hughes to Thrash. At noon the thrashers had to go to general
 At 1st P.M. Alb & I come home & feed the help out of their hind eyes
 & draw the oats in field behind house at other place, five & boy
 helped us, got it all in at 6 P.M. put reaper in barn; car
 has been finished for this year not sorry to be through with
 Dea at Council, they took 3 or 4 families from ^{this} ^{section} ^{of} ^{the} ^{area} ^{with}
 Tonight fast, Asa, Sara & I go to practice in Church as usual
 Too sleepy & tired to write Diary ^{kept for 3 or 4 days} ^{last} ^{coming} ^{home} ^{had} ^{not} ^{been}
 The weather mostly clear & cool wind in N West.

Diary of Robert A. Craig, 1877 (MGR071-05-005)

Rideau Township Historical Society Minutes

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2017

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kars, ON

President Tom McDonald opened the meeting by welcoming 23 members and guests. Moved by Tom MacDonald that we adopt the minutes of the November meeting as published in the Newsletter. Seconded by Susan McKellar. Carried.

Tom McDonald read a note from Linda Lee Lindsay thanking the association for their tribute at Dickinson House to her mother, Coral Lindsay.

Finance: Sandy McNiece reported that we had another good year financially, with receipts totalling \$58,041 and expenditures of \$58,800 with a deficit of approximately \$800. This was mostly due to student fees for Dickinson House being higher than expected. We had a beginning bank balance of \$22,160 and closing bank balance of \$21,433. The annual report was available for those who wished to see it. The yearly financial statement will be approved after examination by a financial consultant.

Membership: Director Patricia Pratt was on hand to receive renewal and/or new memberships for the year.

Program: Director Owen Cooke reported that we had 10 meetings in 2016. The presentation by Maureen McTeer in May had the best attendance, and there were 2 excursions, one in June to Bell House and the Diefenbunker and one in September to the Parliament Buildings. He then outlined the upcoming meetings. On February 8th (note – one week earlier than usual) Meredith Quaille will speak on The Role of Women in the Dairy Industry, to be held at Knox Presbyterian Church in Manotick. March will be a presentation at the North Gower Client Service Centre of research on Joseph Currier by summer student Hannah Blaine. In April mother & daughter team Ruth Stewart Verger and Donna Verger will converse on The Famous Five Women. At the May meeting Jim Witham will speak on how to start and run a Museum and June will feature an excursion to the Polish Museum in Wilno.

Communications: Director Maureen McPhee reported that all was proceeding well in this department and to let her know if there was anything new to display or present on Facebook or Twitter. She also would welcome volunteers to do the monthly write-ups for our meetings to add to the existing roster of people.

Publications: Jane Anderson reported that we had sales this year amounting to \$1205. We have received a grant of \$2500 from the Ontario Genealogical Society to be used for the publication of the Rideau Memorial Book due out this November. Another 100 copies of 'Manotick Then and Now' is being reprinted. The research for the book on the History of North Gower is being done for future publication. Oral history expenses amounted to \$797, and interviews have been conducted this year with Nye Samuels, Richard McDonald, Mary Armstrong and Don Beckett, and one to be scheduled with Barbara Humphries in the near future.

Dickinson House: Maureen McPhee reported that Ottawa is retaining ownership of Dickinson House and ongoing talks with Scott Moffatt will solidify the involvement of RTHS in this building. The schedule for next year is being set up. June 4th will feature a Dickinson housewarming to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the construction of DH. The 3rd floor exhibit by Melanie Hayes will feature a "Walk Through the Decades", and there will be a Tea and Fashion Show centered around the same theme.

Grants: The Application for the City of Ottawa grant has been submitted, and student grant applications are also being prepared for submission.

Youth: RTHS will provide a \$500 history scholarships for South Carleton High School and St. Mark High School.

Slate of Officers for 2017:

Brian Sawyer presented the following slate of officers for 2017, noting that the offices of President, Treasurer, and Secretary will be for a 3 year term, the others 1 year:

- President – David (Sandy) McNiece
- Past President – Tom McDonald
- Secretary – Ruth Wright
- Treasurer – Sue Gibson
- Vice President – Susan McKellar
- Membership – Patricia Pratt
- Program – Bill Tupper and Owen Cooke
- Communications – Maureen McPhee
- Publications – Jane Anderson
- Dickinson House – Brian Earl
- Youth – Brandon Kassis

Assistant Positions (no vote): Web site & Newsletter – Ron Wilson

Financial Examiner – Paul Downay

The position of Grants Director has not been filled, but the preparation and submission of grants are undertaken by various other directors.

After asking for other nominations and calling 3 times for any objections, it was moved by Ron Wilson that we accept this slate of officers, seconded by Maureen McPhee. Carried.

Tom McDonald asked for any interested members to volunteer to assist with various 2017 activities throughout the year.

We then proceeded to have a very enjoyable and informative "Bring & Brag" session.

Following this, Tom MacDonald thanked those who brought their treasures to share. He also thanked Melanie Hayes for the goodies we were to enjoy and also those who assisted him throughout the year. The meeting was adjourned.