

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

February 2020 Newsletter

The February Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2020
Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place Manotick Place Retirement Community,
1145 Bridge Street,
Manotick ON



2020 Memberships Now Due

A reminder: very reasonable annual dues for 2020 are now being collected. (\$15 individual; \$20 family) See Membership Director Gary Bagley at any meeting, or mail your cheques and the form on page 6 of this newsletter to: RTHS P.O. Box 56 North Gower, ON, K0A 2T0

Renewals and new members are always welcome. Join and enjoy the newsletters, meeting presentations and excursions.

The RTHS Board of Directors for 2020

President: Susan McKellar (acting, 1 year term)
Secretary: Vacant (Ruth Wright acting)
Treasurer: Vacant (Sandy McNiece acting)
Vice President: Vacant
Past President: Sandy McNiece
Membership: Gary Bagley
Program: Dorothy Gray
Communications: Allan Haan
Publications: Vacant
Dickinson House: Brian Earl
Directors at Large: Maureen McPhee, Giulio Maffini, Margot Belanger
Ex-officio: Ruth Mills

Speaker

George Laidlaw

George Laidlaw is a long-time member of the Ottawa Independent Writers Association and an avid historian. His worldwide assignments, travel, research and intense relationships bring an authentic, contemporary air to his remarkable stories.

Subject

The Joys of Canadian History

George's stories are filled with historic facts and intriguing mysteries. Come and enjoy his views on Canadian history.

Rideau Township Historical Society Spring Program February to June 2020

February 19th George Laidlaw, "The Joys of Canadian History" @Manotick Place Retirement Community, 1145 Bridge Street, Manotick, ON

March 18th Michael Whittaker "North Grenville Archeological Society" @Ottawa Client Services Building, 2155 Roger Stevens Drive, North Gower, ON

April 15th "North Gower Book Launch" @Alfred Taylor Community Centre, 2300 Community Way, North Gower, ON

May 20th Mags Gauden "Grandma's Genes (DNA)" Mags Gauden @ St. James' Anglican Church, 1138 Bridge Street, Manotick, ON

The **Board of Directors** on the left was elected at the RTHS Annual Meeting in January of this year. You will notice a number of vacant and acting positions for which we could not find a volunteer. Please consider joining the RTHS and taking on one of these positions. They are both interesting and fun and you will meet a number of people you will be happy to know.

For more information see the [RTHS web site](http://www.rideautownshiphistory.org) and click the link "Contact Officers" for more information on responsibilities and how to contact them.

The Annual Bring & Brag 2020

Article by Giulio Maffini.

Photos by Giulio Maffini, Maureen McPhee, and Owen Cooke

This year's Bring & Brag held at St Andrews Presbyterian Church in Kars was splendid. There were nine presentations and exhibits of personal treasures and their stories. Each presentation was chockablock full interesting insights into the past. The stories told informed and entertained everyone. In this report, a sample.

Chuck Gruchy presented a collection of **Pictures and Stories of his Dad**. Chuck's father came to Canada from the Channel Island of Jersey in the UK in 1901. He joined the railway in 1907 during the era of steam and worked his way up to be a locomotive engineer.



Chuck told stories of the local train stations of the past in the region. He had fond memories of his dad, including letting him ride and park the train in the yards at the end of a run. His Dad had his last run in 1953 and a photo of him and his locomotive commemorating the event was presented.

Allan Haan presented a family heirloom: his Great Grandfather's German Pipe. The pipe was about 200 years old and made of different materials. Some of the parts are beautifully carved. Tassels were attached later adding even more to the distinct character of the pipe. Because of the ceremonial quality of the pipe Allan recalls that he was told it was reserved for use on Sunday's.



Dennis Osmond brought a simple souvenir **Brass Ashtray** and unraveled the story behind its origin and the story.



The cast brass ashtray depicted a triumphal gate in relief which turned out to be of the Menin Gate Memorial. The Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing is a war memorial in Ypres, Belgium, dedicated

to the British and Commonwealth soldiers who were killed

in the Ypres Salient of World War I and whose graves are unknown. The ashtray which was cast from the casings of shells fired during the battle is an example of Trench Art.

Owen Cooke gave a presentation focussed on the story of the phrase **Remember the Maine**. The USS Maine



was a United States Navy ship that sank in Havana Harbor in 1898, contributing to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. It was claimed in newspapers of the time that the ship had been sunk by the Spanish.. The phrase "Remember the Maine! To hell with Spain!" became a rallying cry. Resent research suggest that the destruction



of the ship was due to a boiler malfunction. This was a cautionary tale of how unfounded journalism reporting can impact public attitudes to war.

Melanie Hayes and Scott Cameron brought back to life the era of the **Moustache Cup**. The Moustache Cup design



with a semicircular ledge inside to serve as a guard to keep a moustache dry was invented in the 1860's by Harvey Adams. Adams patented the design and did very well as many famous Pottery houses replicated his design. The end of the era began in the 1930's as the fashion of moustaches declined.



Janice Willis told a story and brought some **Books & References** from the original **Carnegie Library**. Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie offered \$100,000 to the

City of Ottawa to build the library if the City agreed to maintain it. The Library was built and opened in 1906 at the corner of Metcalfe Street and Laurier Avenue West. Janice recounted her memories of the going to the Library from her school on Kent St. Mrs. Jackson an artist neighbour also collected and kept children's books for them to read.

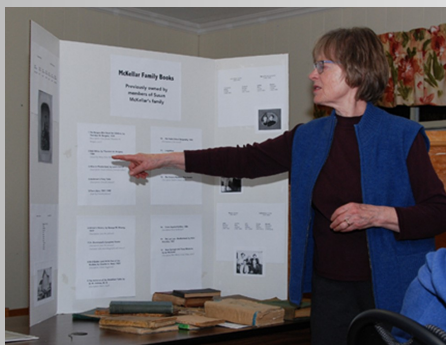
Janice brought some of these remainder books from her past to display. That Carnegie Library was replaced on the same spot by the Main Library in the 1950'.



Dorothy Gray told the story and brought a precious family heirloom the **WWI Silver Cross Medal** awarded to Charles Cameron

her grandfather who fought in WWII. Dorothy's grandmother received the Silver Cross when he died. These medals were sent to the mothers and wives of Canadian soldiers who died on active duty or whose death was consequently attributed to such duty. Unlike most military medals the Silver crosses could be worn by the recipients anytime, even though they were not themselves veterans. Dorothy plans to pass the Silver Cross on to her third cousin who is now only 7 years old. Eventually he will have it as memorabilia of his great, great grandfather.

Susan McKellar presented an exhibit of **Family Books & Photos** which brought to life memories of her childhood. They included a signed volume of Burgess Bird Books for Children, Andersen's Fairy tales, Alice in Wonderland and her father's Farm Diary. The diary was full of entries providing insights into the daily and seasonal life cycle of an Ontario farm during the Second World War and up to 1949.



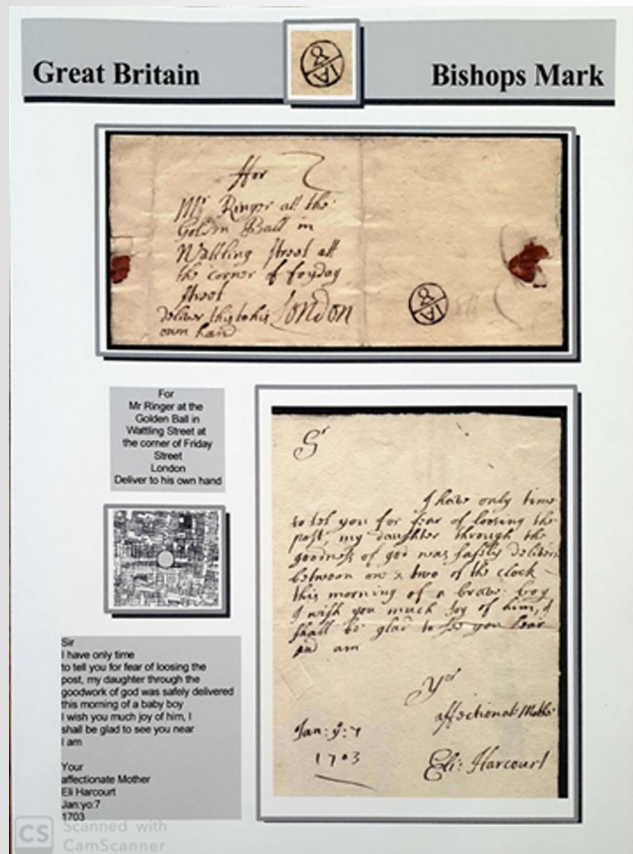
Giulio Maffini – displayed the content and told the story of a **1703 Letter** (317 Years ago and 137 years before the first postage stamp - the Penny Black was issued). Reading old letters brings back to life those who wrote them. In those days only private postal services were available and were paid with a Bishop's Mark handstamp. This letter from Eli Harcourt (The Mother-in-law) to Mr. Ringer (Her Son-in-law) was addressed to the Golden Ball in London, on Watling St on the corner of Friday St. Eli wrote to Mr. Ringer advising him that he was the father of a baby boy.



Dorothy Gray presenting her Grandfather's WW1 Silver Cross Medal



A tip of the hat to all those who participated in the Bring & Brag and made it such an enjoyable evening.



Rideau Township Historical Society

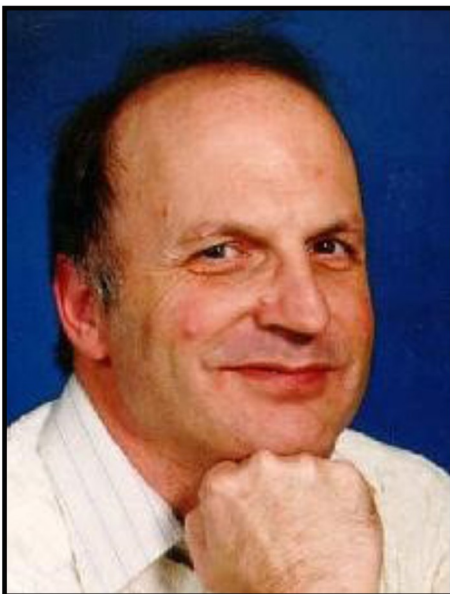
Wednesday, February 19, 2020

7:30 p.m.

Manotick Place Community Living

1145 Bridge Street, Manotick

The Joys of Canadian History



*Photo printed with the permission
of the speaker .*

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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.

Daw's Lament

The Reverend Samuel Daw was one of the Anglican ministers at North Gower in the late nineteenth century. A Newfoundlander by birth, Daw had attended St. Augustine's Missionary College in Canterbury, England, graduating in 1880 and then returning to Canada.

After a time in Beachburg, where he founded St. Augustine's Church, he arrived in 1884 in North Gower. After more than a year, as the winter of 1886 resolved into spring, Daw took up pen and ink and a sheet of hand-made paper. Well used to communicating, he was an eloquent writer. On this occasion, however, he was not recording a sermon but instead a polite but extravagantly worded grievance concerning the Church Street bridge, which was then in the midst of repairs.

Daw was certainly a frequent user of the wooden bridge, as most of the village lay on the other side of it from his home at the rectory on Church Street. While matters were not too bad at the time, he thought, when sleighs with runners could still navigate the bridge, he feared that wheeled buggies would have great difficulties. Work on the approaches had left them "in a most lamentable condition. There is an ascent of about six feet on either side at an angle of about forty-five degrees, and that ascent at such an angle has to be made over immense rocks which almost threaten the destruction of any vehicle passing over it." Furthermore, the contractor had left the removed wooden planking "fair in the middle of the road, so that there is scarcely room for a conveyance to pass through, not to speak of the hideous spectacle which those ruins present especially to a horse anyway afflicted with nervousness."

Council had met at the home of Reeve John Craig on 11 February 1886 specifically to authorize advertising for tenders for repairing the Church Street bridge — and another in Wellington (Kars) — as well as for sourcing the necessary cedar logs and stone to meet the specifications.

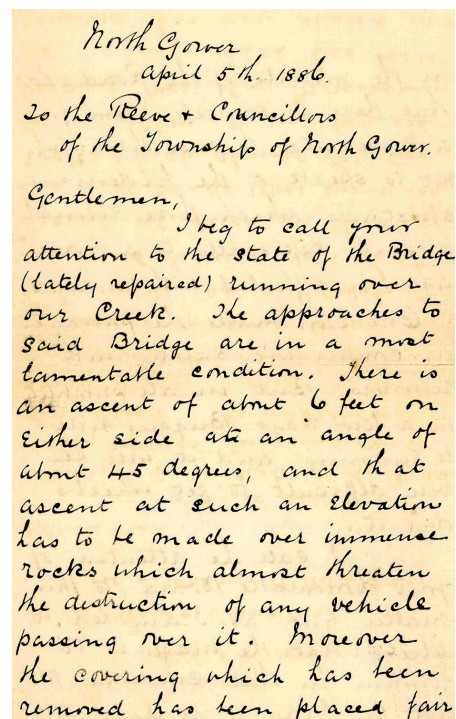
Council met again on 22 February to open the bids. James Crawford's tender of \$100 for the Church Street bridge repairs was accepted with an order to complete the job by 15 March or earlier, with approaches to be done by 1 July or sooner. Councillors Robert Wallace and James Craig and Reeve John Craig were to serve as overseers.

From Daw's description, it seems that Crawford, while maybe untidy in his work, had not exceeded the con-

straints imposed by Council. But Daw was not impressed. He had heard "that the bridge is to remain in that condition till late in May or at least till it suits the contractor's convenience to compete the job ..." He hoped Council would "see fit as soon after your meeting as possible to make the Bridge more passible."

Daw here shows he was aware of an impending Council meeting, which indeed did take place on 6 April. His letter, written just the day before, was delivered by hand with no stamp to the clerk, evidently to make sure that Council had received it before their meeting [and it remains among the records of Clerk James E. Craig at Rideau Branch]. Council did not record any discussions regarding the bridge at that or any later meeting until Council approved on 19 June that the reeve should authorize the payment of the balance of Crawford's contract for the bridge work, amounting to forty-three dollars.

One must assume, though, with no subsequent word from Daw among the clerk's records, that Crawford cleaned up the "hideous spectacle" adequately enough to please the reverend gentleman. Samuel Daw was minister for several more years at North Gower, where sons Alexander F. Daw and Herbert B. Daw (who numbers among Rideau's First World War dead) were born. Then he proceeded to posts in Belleville and finally Hamilton, where he was elevated to canon and later served as chaplain to the 129th Battalion in the First World War.



North Gower
April 5th 1886.
To the Reeve + Councillors
of the Township of North Gower.
Gentlemen,
I beg to call your attention to the state of the Bridge (lately repaired) running over our Creek. The approaches to said Bridge are in a most lamentable condition. There is an ascent of about 6 feet on either side at an angle of about 45 degrees, and that ascent at such an elevation has to be made over immense rocks which almost threaten the destruction of any vehicle passing over it. Moreover the covering which has been removed has been placed fair

Sign me up as a member of RTHS



Rideau Township
Historical Society

Members of the Society enjoy:

- Monthly meetings featuring engaging presentations, followed by refreshments
- Group excursions to historical points of interest in Eastern Ont.
- Local books published by the Society and a monthly newsletter
- Opportunities to participate and contribute as volunteers

For more information visit www.rideautownshiphistory.org,
[facebook.com/rideautownshiphistory](https://www.facebook.com/rideautownshiphistory), and twitter.com/RideauTpHS.
Please send this form with a cheque for membership dues payable to:
Rideau Township Historical Society, Box 56, North Gower, ON, K0A 2T0.
A tax receipt will be issued for all membership dues and donations.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City & Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Date: _____

Individual Membership \$15 _____

Life Membership \$100 _____

Family Membership \$20 _____
(2 adults & school-aged children)

Donation \$50 _____

Other Donation \$ _____

Thank you for supporting RTHS!