

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

June 2008 Newsletter

Newsletter Editor: Coral Lindsay (rideauarchives@ottawa.ca)

Next Meeting

Instead of the June meeting there will be an excursion to **Upper Canada Village** on 21 June for the opening of the Orange Lodge building which once stood in Kars.

The next **RTHS executive meeting** will be held Wed September 24, 7:30 pm at the home of Mark Jodoin, 535 Echo drive.

The June Excursion

Car pool will be the mode of transportation. The following people are driving and can take others. [See page 5 for times, etc.](#)

Ron Wilson, take 2, 613-692-3009

Coral Lindsay, take 3, 613-489-2029

Mark Jodoin, take 3, 613-292-5451

Owen Cooke, take 3, 613-489-3962

Lucy Martin, be there all day though, take 3, 613-489-4005

Bring a friend

Light refreshments

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

Features This Month

- Last Meeting
- Notable Items this Month
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- Moundbuilders of Eastern North America



Notable Items this Month

1. Dickinson Day & Doors Open.

The RTHS participated in both the Dickinson Day celebration in Manotick and the City of Ottawa Doors Open program. **Members manned the RTHS Booth** in front of Watson's Mill as in other years to familiarize users with the Society and its work.

RTHS volunteers also acted as hosts and hostesses at the **Dickinson House for the two days of Doors Open** after having participated for the past two weeks in preparing the exhibits for three rooms, the Families Room, the Manotick Room and the Dickinson Room. The master touch was having members of the Spratt family (Helen and Dick) and the Watson family (Jack) on site to reminisce about the Mill and growing up in the house.

During the two days 1188 people were counted entering to view the house and the exhibits. The interest level for the visitors was quite high and we received a lot of compliments and wishes for the display to continue in the future.

The event can only be regarded as a huge success.

Notable Items this Month (continued)

2. The Thomson Memorial

On Saturday, May 19, 2008, descendants of John Thomson and his wife Janet McIntosh met at the corner of Lockhead Road and the Third Line Road for a family photo. They were at North Gower and Kars for a burial and memorial service and congregated at the boulder and plaque erected by the RTHS and the City of Ottawa in recognition of this pioneer family. The Packet reporter, Dosi Catroneo, photographed the family and published the story in the June 6 issue.

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The May Meeting

By Lucy Martin

Once again a speaker from our own ranks proved that RTHS members lead very interesting lives. Greg Newton shared the dynamic world of photography with an appreciative audience at last month's meeting at Knox Presbyterian Church in Manotick.

Greg was born to the life and eventually took over the family business, in 1977. His parents Bill and Jean Newton founded the studio in 1940, running it out of their home on Wilbrod Street, while raising their four children. No pocket-sized, mega-pixel marvels of technology back then! The working couple had to contend with heavy equipment and white-hot, single-use flash bulbs.

With a contract to supply the Ottawa Citizen with news photos, at its peak in the 1950's, and to continue the core business of commercial and portrait photography Newman Studios maintained a staff of 20 photographers and technicians. Over its life the studio has chronicled events ranging from

historic to the ordinary, thus preserving a view of Ottawa that jogs memories and recalls the attitudes and hopes of its people.

In 1974 Andy Andrews & Greg Newton formed a partnership to become Andrews-Newton Photographers Ltd. Andrews-Newton Photography continued as a full service photographic business specializing in portrait & commercial photography. They worked out of studios on Sparks St. and O'Connor St. until 1994 when Andy retired.

Greg had plenty of anecdotes to accompany his slide presentation, as well as beautiful banner-sized montages with groupings: celebrities from all fields, statesmen and women, places, accidents and those who put the Ottawa Citizen together, right down to fresh-faced newsboys.

Besides capturing news as it happened, generations of just plain folks were immortalized for posterity in portraits by Newman--possibly you, or your relatives, can be found smiling

over that very studio logo?

Perhaps as many as a half-million images from Newton Photographic (along with later partnerships: Andrews-Hunt and Andrews-Newton Photography) have been donated to the City Archives, preserving a wonderful record of life in the region from the 1940's to recent times.

The Q&A period included some discussion of the history of photography, film versus digital imaging, the challenges of long term-storage and methods of organization for larger collections.

Greg continues in the business. Visit his web site at

<http://www.gregnewtonphotography.com/>

for more information on the company and for contact information. It's a very nice site.

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Coming Events

June

June 7 – 8

Dickinson Days. R.T.H.S. will have a table in front of Watson's Mill for Dickinson Day, June 7. Please help for an hour or two if you can. Call Brian Earl at 613-692-2371.

June 7 – 8

Doors Open at the Archives and at the Dickinson House. More information coming soon.

Doors Open at the Dickinson House. We will have three rooms on the ground floor, i.e. a family room recognizing the Dickinsons, Spratts and Watsons with Mary Clapp Spratt and Helen Spratt Hawkins as well as members of the Watson family.

There will be a Dickinson Room to represent some of Dickinson's enterprises and a Manotick As it Was Room. Visitors may go through the empty second floor if they wish. Hurrah! The furniture has been returned from R.V.C.A.

storage and three of the rooms are being repainted (paint courtesy of Manotick Home Hardware

To volunteer please call Brian Earl 613-692-2371. For a costume please call Coral 613-489-2029.

2009:

June 21

June excursion to Upper Canada Village. Car pool or bus? Dining or picnic? Ten members of the Kars Women's Institute would like to join us for the outing.

Aug 4

Volunteers are needed to attend Colonel By Day at the Ottawa Locks

where the RTHS will have a table. Please call Brian Earl, 613-692-2371, if you would go. The Rideau Canal Festival will also be held there Aug 1-4 this year.

The **Manotick 150th Anniversary** committee, chaired by Peter Peers, Manotick Messenger, is proceeding with plans for 2009 celebrations. Brian Earl represents the RTHS on the Dickinson Square committees.

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News from the Rideau Archives Branch . . .

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).

Doors Open:

The Archives building at North Gower has regularly been a stop on the Doors Open event in Ottawa and was so again this year. It provides an opportunity for people to get a full tour of the premises when staff can devote full time to them.

New Exhibit

A new exhibit has been set up by Shirley Adams to commemorate the history of the Loyal Orange Lodge # 35 in Kars. The hall was located on the main street and had deteriorated but has now found a new home and security on Church Street, Upper Canada Village. The display at the Rideau Archives features photographs from the early 20th Century, regalia from members, the history of the lodge since 1863 and photos of the removal from the site between snowstorms during the winter, 2008. Take time to visit the RTA.

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History of the Archives Building in North Gower

By Betty Bartlett

Presenting our building, compiled from information in the LACAC file, labelled 6581 Fourth Line Rd. (Main St. North Gower)

ITS HISTORY

- 1850 – 1876 – municipal meetings held in James Johnston's Hotel
- 1876 – construction of the North Gower Town Hall
- 1967 – new municipal office built – old building turned over to the Fire Department who added a garage on the north side (later recycled to become the Library)
- 1970's – Fire Department moved elsewhere
- 1979 – designated a Heritage Building
- 1980's – Rideau Township Council decision to restore and maintain the building as a home and study centre for Rideau Township Archives.

1990 – Sept. 15 - official opening after extensive repairs, largely by skilled volunteers.



ITS ARCHITECTURE

The Reasons for Designation state:

“The one storey, brick faced structure is a fine example of a modest type of town hall, interesting architecturally due to its fine proportions, careful detailing and cupola.”

Many features of the original interior have been retained. Note the 12' ceiling, the large windows which provide good daylight, the original pine wainscoting, the maple hardwood flooring with its herringbone pattern, and the coat hooks on the wall by the door which were placed unusually high so that people could sit on the bench below.

The stage was lowered to about 8" to make way for the office, bookshelves, and the vault. Volunteers removed the old wood stove that had been blessed and cursed by generations of councillors and audiences.

ITS IMPORTANCE

Bonnie Abel on p.5 of the Heritage Edition of the Kemptville Advance, February 26, 1992 reports:

Mrs. Muriel Jago (nee Craig), a long time resident of North Gower, who lived in the house next to the Anglican Church in North Gower, recalls in written notes, her memories of events she witnessed that have taken place in the North Gower Town Hall.

“Besides being the Township Office where sittings were held monthly at least, (the Town Hall) was the gathering place for social events in cold weather. Assemblies were frequent and took the form of progressive euchre games until 11 p.m.” “Bags containing coffee or tea were thrown into a copper boiler of steaming hot water. The keeper of both the boiler and the fire fuelled to keep the water hot and ready, was R.A. Craig, who lived next door..”. “After a lunch.. was served, and prizes for first and second euchre standing were awarded, the music begins”.

A fiddler and a piano-player set a lively repertoire for dancers which lasted until three or four a.m. The Town Hall did not then, or now, have its own piano. A piano was donated by one of the villagers for the evening's usage. Mrs. Jago writes that the piano itself was then transported

“carefully by sleigh, and placed on the stage in the afternoon.”

Box Socials, the custom of choosing a dancing partner by buying a box lunch, were followed by a dance at the Town Hall. It was here that Muriel Craig Jago became introduced to village dancing. She writes of one man who was the “village caller for square dances”. “I can vouch for his strong voice – no one could miss what he said.” “He acquired volume from driving a team of mules but he did not use the same language.” “When several sets of squares got going, the old white board floor – liberally sprinkled with boracic acid powder and cornstarch, shook and shivered and was really a lovely floor to dance on because of that vibration.”

Concerts were for fund-raising. At Christmas, “a huge evergreen tree was cut, hauled and set up in one corner of our old hall, by somebody. Somebody, too, set up little tin candleholders and small candles and other decorations.”

“At night, recitations, drills and short plays were presented making sure that each child had a part.” “The National Anthem was sung in unison, the candles lighted, and all the presents distributed by Mr. HO HO HO, who seemed to know a good many of those present.” “Our stage was very nice – not large, but had a real curtain raised and lowered on a roller that often got stuck at one end, and interrupted many a moment of crisis in the story portrayed.” Footlights with mounted reflectors skirted the front of the stage. The same kind of lamps hung along the walls of the hall, and were the essential source of interior lighting in the hall.

Political meetings were regular events. Sir Robert Borden stayed overnight in the village of North Gower. The Honourable Arthur Meighen gave an address to the people of North Gower in the Town Hall, during the early nineteen hundred and twenties. His topic was more of a lecture on the absence of a contribution from British subjects living in Canada towards the upkeep of the British Navy, “our great protector.” “Supper was later served...when Mr. Meighen announced (that) he preferred (only) the dark meat of the turkey.”

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Moundbuilders of Eastern North America

Presentation by Marguerite and Stuart Rogers to the RTHS, Jan 2007

Prior to about 1870's the American Settlers had a tacit respect for the knowledge, skills and achievements of the “Amerinds “. They recognized many of the monuments, standing stones, art works and burial mounds to be similar to those found in their homelands.

As Americans began to “master” nature through technology, this respect for these indigenous peoples began to

fail. Their sites were plundered, desecrated and ploughed under.

Hollywood, popular literature and historical revision took hold. Only recently has our respect and admiration returned for these past civilizations, their culture and their reverence for the natural environment which sustained them.

The purpose of the RTHS presentation was to increase the awareness of these matters and to give an overview and extent of past civilizations, with examples which spread from Tallahassee, to the Lower Mississippi, from farmlands of Iowa and southern Manitoba to the flood plains of Ohio, even into Ontario's Humber Valley and the shores of Rice Lake.

These civilizations, with extensive trade routes across the continent, were sedentary agriculturalist, growing the "Three Sisters" of corn, beans and squash on the rich alluvial soils of the major rivers, providing healthy, well balanced societies.

The Adena peoples built a civilization starting about 500 BC. It collapsed around 1 AD.

The Hopewell (Woodland) culture evolved about 100 BC lasting 500 years.

The Mississippian Civilization existed from about 800 AD-1500 AD when guns, germs steel, horses and greed penetrated into their world and brought about disaster and the ongoing "Trail of Tears". Most major sites (20-30), in the USA, have excellent interpretive museums.

A visit to Cahokia near Collinsville, Illinois is an eye opener, where seeing is believing.

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UPPER CANADA VILLAGE
13740 County Road 2, Morrisburg, Ontario K0C 1X0

SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 2008

Ceremony of Laying a Corner Stone

**ANCIENT BRETHREN
MASONIC LODGE**

2:00 p.m. MASONIC PARADE (1 KM.) TO LODGE
3:00 p.m. LAWN SOCIAL WITH LEMONADE
4:00 p.m. CHURCH SERVICE (SEAT ONE HUNDRED)

Mason & Guest UCV Entrance \$14 per. JW Fund Donation.
Masons Register from 9:30 a.m. Secure Apron Table.
Parade Forms Up at 1:30 p.m. Masons in Aprons.

Everybody Welcome

Poster for the Ceremony at Upper Canada Village for the opening of the Kars Orange Lodge in its new home.

Cornerstone and time capsule at 2:30 pm.

Don't forget to announce you're a friend of a mason for 3\$ off the entrance fee. See poster.