

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

June 2017 Newsletter

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

The June Excursion

Date: Saturday June 24, 2017
Time: 8:45 am.
Place: North Gower Client Services Centre
2155 Roger Stevens Drive
North Gower, Ontario



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

Excursion to Wilno

On Saturday, 24 June, we will have an excursion to the Wilno Heritage Village to explore our Polish roots and have lunch at the Polish buffet at Wilno Tavern. We will also visit the Holy Well at St. Patrick.

The village of Wilno is better known as Canada's oldest Polish settlement. Initially settled in 1859, Wilno's rich Polish history is kept alive at the Polish Kashub Heritage Museum, complete with resource library and heritage store. The site offers six different buildings to tour with displays illustrating life at home, on the farm, in town, at church, and in the community.

The cost will be \$30 which includes donations to the Wilno Heritage Museum and the Holy Well. Lunch will be extra. A sign-up sheet was circulated.

The bus will leave the North Gower Client Services Centre at 2155 Roger Stevens Drive at 8:45 a.m.

To signup, if you haven't already, call Owen Cooke (613-489 3962) or Bill Tupper. (613-489-2792)

Saturday, August 12, 2017, North Gower Farmer's Market Heritage Day

Rideau Township Historical Society will have display boards of the villages of Manotick, Kars, and North Gower as well as Burritts Rapids, Carsonby, Pierces Corners, Malakoff and Becketts Landing as seen over the past 150 years. Garry Montgomery will be there with some of his vintage farm motors and equipment. Books will be available for sale.

Come and visit and/or help out if you can - volunteers are always welcome.



A fashion show at the Dickinson House on a recent weekend was one of several successful events. See pages 3 and 4 for more on the events.

.From left to right Diane Riley, Emma Creasey, Barbara Barkley, Stephanie Cameron, Maureen McPhee, Marissa Waddell, Hannah Blaine, Ava Munro, Elaine Eagen, Isabella Stevenson, Abby Martēja, Connor Vreugdenhil-Beauclerc, Sydney Vandewit, and Margaret Rose Cameron.

Photo by Lucien Delean

The May Presentation on the Development of the Exhibit on Vimy Ridge

Speaker: Tony Glen (Director of Exhibitions, Creative Development and Learning at the War Museum)

Brian Earl introduced our speaker, Tony Glen.

Tony, Director of Exhibitions, Creative Development and Learning at the War Museum, filled in for Jim Witham who had to cancel at the last minute. Actually Tony was only a few days from retirement and has since done so. Our thanks to Tony for helping us out on such short notice.

Mr. Glen gave us a fascinating account of how the War Museum, and particularly the current exhibition which focuses on the Battle of Vimy Ridge, has come to reflect the history of our country as it has been shaped by military events.



Tony Glen presenting with the War Museum in the background.

The old War Museum was devoted to a collection of late 19th century souvenirs from Militia units, and memorabilia from WW1 and 2. The present curators of the collections have the objective of making the War Museum a museum of social history, and of making the facts come to life.

The 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge was a stimulus to explore why the battle was such a pivotal event in the history of Canada. Vimy Ridge was actually part of the larger Battle of Arras. That battle was going poorly when the Canadians made a tactical victory in succeeding in taking Vimy Ridge. It was a welcome bit of good news to British General Byng and Canadian General Arthur Currie despite the terrible losses.

At the end of the War, it was decided to honour those Canadians who had lost their lives; 66,000 out of 600,000 who had served out of a Canadian population of seven million. There was a design competition, with twenty finalists. The leader of the Canadian forces, Arthur Currie's first choice was to locate the memorial at Hill 60 in Belgium. However, he was overruled by Prime Minister MacKenzie King. Walter Allward won the honour of designing the memorial.



The Vimy Memorial

One of the best preserved battlefields of WW1, the Vimy Memorial stands majestically over the plain. Within the memorial, four figures represent grieving parents, and the virtues of peace, justice and truth. In the centre of the monument, there is a representation of a torch being passed. In addition, Walter Allward engraved the 11,000 names of men missing in action with no known graves ; men who lost their lives both at Vimy and at other battles.

The War Museum has responded to the challenge of how to remember and commemorate those lost in war. The

3582 soldiers killed at the Battle of Vimy are shown on a simulated battlefield , activated by the observers.

In 1936, for the unveiling of the Memorial at Vimy Ridge, there was a pilgrimage of veterans and family members . It was a time of grieving and healing, and recognition of the contributions. It also promoted a sense of Canadian nationalism, and a wish for peace. During WW2, it became a symbol of the sacrifices that had been made and in its own way, a propaganda tool. Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson quoted Brigadier General Alexander Ross who said that the Battle of Vimy ridge symbolized the birth of a nation.

The French traditionally have been more concerned with the greater Battle of Arras. Interestingly, on the walls of our Senate Chamber, there are eight scenes by British war artists from that battle, seldom seen by ordinary Canadians. It is hoped that these paintings may be hung at the War Museum during the upcoming Senate renovations.

Bill Tupper thanked Mr. Glen, and congratulated him upon an excellent representation.



Bill thanking our speaker.



Left to Right: Isabella Stevenson, Barbara Barkley, Abby Marteja, Hannah Blaine, Sydney Vandewit, Maureen McPhee, seated at back unknown, Emma Creasey, Ava Munro. Photo by Lucien Delean



Stephanie Cameron in her period costume for the "Through the Decades" Fashion Show.

Photo by Susan McKellar



Don't forget Melanie Hayes' "Through the Decades" exhibition on the third floor of the house. It brings back a host of memories.

Dickinson House, Big Weekends!

Three notable events for Dickinson House took place on Saturday 03 June, Sunday 04 June and Saturday 10 June. These three were undoubtedly the highlights of the year so far. Saturday 04 June was Dickinson Day. The house was open as usual. The RTHS provided a table at the entrance walkway to the house. Brian Sawyer displayed a number of unique artifacts both from his own collection and from the collection of Dickinson House. He talked, with great enthusiasm, with the many visitors who appeared fascinated with the objects on display. A total of 767 visitors entered Dickinson House that day.

Sunday, 04 June was the Dickinson House "Housewarming". Moss Kent and his family welcomed HM Queen Victoria, The Right Honourable and Lady Agnes McDonald, and Captain William Cowan, the Reeve of North Gower Township to their newly built home in Manotick. Unfortunately, rain prevented the ceremony from being held in front of the house, but a larger audience was present in the tent, where they were enjoying a BBQ lunch. A "Royal Procession" was held. Piper Scott Cameron escorted Her Majesty, the McDonalds, Reeve Cowan and Joseph Currier from the house to the tent. After the appropriate speeches were made, everyone was invited back to Dickinson House for cake. Lady Agnes cut the cake. A total of 753 visitors entered the house that day.

Saturday 10 June saw Dickinson House transformed into a Tea Emporium as various ladies and one gentleman, came for a Victorian Tea and "Through the Decades" Fashion Show. With extra volunteers helping the regular volunteers and summer student staff, a proper tea was served and then those attending were treated to a procession of models dressed in costumes covering the 1860's to the 1960's. As each model entered a room, a narrator commented on the costume and introduced the model. By all reports, a most enjoyable time was had by all.



The "Royal Procession" from the house to the tent



Scott Cameron, Queen Victoria, her escort, Sir. John A and Lady Macdonald.



From Right to Left. Charlotte Dickinson (played by Emma Creasey), George Dickinson (played by Elijah Kim), William Dickinson (played by Stephen Rebel), Lydia Dickinson (played by Yui Williams), Elizabeth Dickinson (played by Rachel McKenzie) HM and Escort, Lady Agnes, Sir John, Moss Kent, and Reeve Cowan (played by Bill Tupper)

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.

The Domestic Life of Jennie McKay

Janet Sarah McKay, known as Jennie, was born on New Year's Eve 1887 in Darling Township, Lanark County to Hugh McKay and Rachel Rintoul. The family moved to Marlborough Township in the late 1890s, and soon thereafter Jennie had shifted to North Gower to begin a career in domestic service.

In 1911 she seems to have started work as a domestic servant for William J. and Gertrude Graham, who had been farming the west half of lot 15 in the third concession of North Gower Township after 1882. Jennie worked part-time from January to March at \$4.00 per month and for the next eight months at \$7.00; she had December off, making an annual wage of \$68.00, plus room and board.

In 1912, her position improved, and she received \$8.00 per month for her full-time work and worked part-time in December as well, making \$80.00 for the year. Graham kept running totals of time she had worked and amounts she owed for expenses incurred on her account – clothing, stamps, fabric and notions, dentist's visits, occasional cash disbursements, and an increasing number of Eaton's purchases.

Deducting these, he paid Jennie the remainder of her wage annually, at the end of each year. In 1913, there were problems. Jennie "went away" on 8 January, paid in full. Returning to work on 7 February, she went away again in April. This time, the Grahams hired Mary Leichney at the same wage on 25 April to replace her, but Jennie again returned to work halfway through May – now at \$10.00 per month, and working full-time throughout the whole year.

The Grahams must have thought highly of her work, since they had quickly dismissed her replacement, but they still felt hurt that Jennie had abandoned them. William Graham wrote only a single complaint throughout all her years of service, and this came at the end of May 1913: "slept all afternoon when I needed her at housecleaning." By 1914, their differences seem to have been resolved, and Jennie was enjoying more freedom: a summer vacation of six days and two and a half days off to attend the Ottawa Fair. Jennie stayed on at that same wage until her

duties with the Grahams were brought to an close, amiably, at the end of 1917.

Not uncommonly for a domestic, Jennie left because she had become "otherwise engaged": she married widower Joseph Smith of Cumberland Township in March 1918.

The details of Jennie's domestic service were recorded by William J. Graham in a notebook also used for cash calculations, stock taking, and a lengthy sermon, along with a list of books he had read in 1915. The notebook came to Rideau Branch with the papers of his son Fred Graham, adding an interesting dimension to the holdings of historical documents on local farms.

Handwritten notebook page showing a ledger of wages and expenses for Jennie McKay in 1913. The page is lined and contains the following entries:

Still due till Dec 1912	(14.20)
	2.00
	12.00
	Dec 4
Went away Jan 8	1.00
	5.00
	12.00
	5.00
	17.00
1913 Paid in full	1913
Came back Feb 7 - sick weeks	2
1/2 month	
Drar	9.00
went away Apr	2.2
Came back May	2.9
Lost 2 months @ 10	5.00
one till 11.00	11.00
June	10.00
	21.00
May 27 lost half day at Mrs Pruthis	2.3
28 slept all afternoon when I needed her at housecleaning	

Notebook of William J. Graham, MGR041-03-005 (RV 106.13)

Stuart Clarkson

Rideau Township Historical Society Minutes
Wednesday, May 17, 2017
Carsonby RA Hall, Carsonby, ON

Vice-President Susan McKellar opened the meeting by welcoming approximately 20 members and guests.

It was moved by Sue Gibson and seconded by Jane Anderson that we approve the minutes of the April meeting as circulated. Carried.

Finance: Financial Director Sue Gibson reported that the GIC has been renewed and that the Insurance premium has been paid. This leaves a total of \$26,517 in the account which includes a \$15,000 GIC, \$209 in petty cash, and \$11,308 in operating cash.

Membership: There was no new report, although it was noted that we would be sending out a reminder notice to members who had not yet renewed for this year.

Program: Susan McKellar talked briefly about the Christmas party and it appeared that most people preferred a catered meal rather than a pot luck event. She asked members to contribute suggestions for music and entertainment. Bill Tupper also welcomed any suggestions for speakers for our monthly programs.

Owen Cooke announced that the bus for the Wilno excursion will be leaving on Saturday, June 24th at 8:45 from the Client Service Centre in North Gower. The cost will be \$30 which includes a donation to the Wilno Heritage Museum and the Holy Well on the return home. Lunch will be extra and a sign-up sheet was circulated. In September we will be hosting, in conjunction with Heritage Ottawa, an all day Saturday Heritage Forum in Kars. This will take the place of our regular meeting. Also, perhaps one meeting will consist of our own members volunteering short presentations on a topic of their choice.

Communication: No new report at this time.

Publications: Jane Anderson had no new report other than there may be a small publication about the life and times of James Currier.

Dickinson House: Brian Earl informed us that Dickinson House will open on May 20th. They have hired 2 summer students and will be hiring 3 more high school students, and we will be the recipient of a \$30,600 Student Grant which will mostly cover this expenditure. On June 3rd DH will participate in Doors Open Ottawa and on June 4th the Gathering in the Square, which will include a cake and DH will welcome some very important guests including Sir John A. MacDonald, Queen Victoria, the Reeve of North Gower Township and also Dickinson family members.

Grants: Confirmation of a \$30,600 Summer Student Grant as previously mentioned.

Youth: No new report.

Brian Earl then introduced our guest speaker, Tony Glen (Director of Exhibitions, Creative Development and Learning at the War Museum), along with his wife Gabrielle. Mr. Glen then gave a slide presentation and very informative talk about the Vimy Ridge exhibition and its theme of Commemoration and Remembrance. Questions and discussion followed.

Dennis Osmond commented on the new Remembrance Park in Manotick which is due to open soon.

Following the meeting's adjournment, a social time was enjoyed along with some delicious refreshments kindly provided by Melanie Hayes, Jane Anderson and Ruth Wright.

If at any time you would be interested in joining the RTHS or making a donation please us the form below. Your address is requested so that we can mail you a receipt.

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, 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: _____

Individual Membership \$10 _____

Life Membership \$100 _____

Family Membership \$15 _____

Donation \$50 _____

(2 adults & school-aged children)

Other Donation \$ _____

Thank you for supporting RTHS!