

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

June 2019 Newsletter

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

The June Excursion

Date: Saturday, June 15, 2019
Time: 9:00 a.m.

Meet at Client Services Centre,
2155 Roger Stevens Drive,
North Gower, ON



Storytelling in the Square

On June 22, RTHS will be hosting a storytelling event in Dickinson Square which we hope will become an annual event.

Guests will be treated to a very short children's story followed by a musical interlude featuring songs of days gone by.

Gail Anglin, a professional storyteller from Ottawa Story Tellers, will then relate the story of Joseph Currier, including his connection with the village of Manotick. Following a break for refreshments and baked treats, our own Scott Cameron will regale us with tales from Rideau Township's past.

We hope that many RTHS members will come out to enjoy this free inaugural event and support one of the Society's latest initiatives.

For more information on this event see page 5 of this newsletter.

RTHS Excursion to Perth, Ontario

Saturday, June 15, 2019

9:00 a.m. Leave the Client Services Centre, 2155 Roger Stevens Drive, North Gower. Parking available.

10:15 a.m. Arrive in Perth.

10:30 a.m. Meet Susan Code, the Hop on, Hop off Guide.

11:30 a.m. After a morning of sitting, we will have ½ hour to visit shops, etc.

12:00 p.m. Meet at a restaurant for lunch, t.b.a. (Participants will be responsible for the cost of their meals.)

1:00 p.m. Time for a walk in the park or other activities as you wish.

2:00 p.m. Coach will take us to Matheson House for an hour tour of the house and museum.

3:00 p.m. Board the coach for trip back to North Gower.

4:00 p.m. The End of a great day!

The cost of the coach will be borne by the RTHS. Each participant is asked for \$15. to cover the tour guide, the driver, the museum entry fee and other expenses.

As the coach is a 26 passenger vehicle, we will be filling it on a first come first served basis. If you wish to attend there may be seats still available.

To reserve a spot please contact Dorothy Gray at 613-258-7034, or email her at dorothyhgray@gmail.com

A Presentation by the RTHS

On Saturday, May 25, a group from the RTHS gave a presentation to a small but enthusiastic group at the Ottawa Chapter of the Ontario Genealogical Society on our most recent publication, "Rideau Remembers".

Owen Cooke, Stuart Clarkson, Ruth Wright, Dave Bullock and Susan McKellar did a revised version of last November's presentation at the Manotick Legion.

We were able to sell 5 copies of the book. Thanks team.

Professor M. Lindsay Lambert's Magic Lantern Show

Presented by Professor Lambert

Article and Photos by Sue Gibson

In a darkened room with only the glow from an antique projector, the sight of "Professor" Lindsay Lambert, in his turn-of-the-century outfit, created an excited stir throughout the audience. He brilliantly combined his skill as a performer, his love of history, and his expertise in vintage lighting and photography to enchant the audience with sound effects, song, and the patter of the traditional magic lantern projectionist.



"Professor" Lambert delivering the patter.

The magic lantern was the first mass audience communication technology, invented in 1650 by Christiaan Huygens, a Dutch scientist. Many technological developments followed, including limelight that allowed brighter and larger images. By the middle of the nineteenth century, magic lantern shows were drawing audiences around the world. With its early forms of animation, the magic lantern also paved the way for motion pictures, the medium that would eventually eclipse it.

Prior to the 1850s the slides were hand painted and after that time they used photographic slides. The glass slides were encased in a wooden frame that allowed the projectionist to manipulate the slide, by turning a small wheel or lever within the slide to create a moving picture, such as a dancing skeleton, or shifting eyes within a skull. By the late eighteenth century, one of the most popular of the magic lantern shows were "Phantasmagoria" demonstrations, in which ghostly apparitions seemed to appear and vanish in the dark before the viewers' eyes. It was a form of horror theater that used one or more magic lanterns to project frightening images, especially ghosts. Showmen used rear projection, mobile and portable projectors,

smoke, and all kinds of effects to produce a convincing experience for the audience.

"Professor" Lambert drew upon his personal collection of many hundreds of glass slides and thrilled the audience with moving circus slides, including a knife juggler, a dog jumping through a hoop, a lion with moving eyes and mouth, and a twirling acrobat. Each slide was accompanied by a song or sound effects, resulting in resounding applause from the audience.

"Professor" Lambert's keen interest and knowledge of history was demonstrated in the narrative that accompanied his early photographic slides of indigenous people, buffalo herds, Queen Victoria, and landmarks such as the Chaudière Falls. He explained that magic lanterns brought the world to the people. It was used extensively as a newsreel, a travelogue to encourage immigration, a lecture device to promote causes such as temperance and missionary societies, and by churches.

The presentation was followed by an enthusiastic question and answer period. He told the audience he purchased the magic lantern in 1982 from a local antique shop, even though it required some refurbishment. The evening ended with a demonstration of the "magic" levers and wheels on the slides. It truly was a magical evening!



"Professor" Lambert's magic lantern is a beautifully crafted instrument. It was an early step towards the moving pictures of today.

The 2019 Season at Dickinson House. Off to a Good Start

It has been a very busy last week in May for the students and volunteers at Dickinson House. On Wednesday, May 29, a group of 70 Chinese seniors visited and toured through the House. On Friday morning, May 31, a group of 52 United Empire Loyalists was conducted on a tour, followed by 18 French-speaking seniors. On Friday afternoon we were honoured by a visit by Her Honour, the

Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. She was greeted in front of Watson's Mill by George and Elizabeth Dickinson (a.k.a. Brian Earl of RTHS and Elaine Eagen of Watson's Mill). Her Honour then entered the mill for formal introductions and a tour of the facility. After that she walked through the Manotick Remembrance Park with officials from the Legion, ending her stroll with a visit to Dickinson House.



The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell (centre) was greeted by the Board and staff of Watson's Mill, members of the RTHS Dickinson House Committee, summer staff and special guests.

In the house she was welcomed by Brian Earl, Chair of the Dickinson House Committee and introduced to the committee members. Bill Tupper talked about the parlour, then Brian introduced Her Honour to the Dickinson Family, making reference to their portraits. Maureen welcomed our honoured guest to the Dining Room and provided more information on Moss Kent Dickinson's varied career. On the second floor, Her Honour met Hailey Judd-Lunt

and Cameron Hill, two of the summer students, who gave her a tour of the bedrooms and the sitting room. Melanie Hayes very capably handled the tour of the Special Exhibit, "Getting It Done - Heritage Tools for Everyday Tasks." At the conclusion of the visit, after Her Honour signed the guest book, she was presented with a gift of the two books about the Dickinsons, a post card and a note card.



RTHS volunteers in the Dickinson Days parade were joined by members of Steampunk Ottawa, invited by RTHS volunteer Andrew Ryerson. Scott Cameron played the bagpipes and a very light-hearted time was had by all.

Dickinson House had a float in the Dickinson Days Parade on Friday night. Bill Tupper provided the trailer and his son Dave drove the tractor. Scott Cameron played the bagpipes. Volunteers and students either rode the float or walked beside and handed out candy to the children along the route.

Saturday, June 1st was Dickinson Day, combined with Doors Open Ottawa on both June 1 and 2. A total of 492 visitors walked through the house on Saturday and 403 on Sunday. There was no time to give formal tours, so our volunteers and students just answered questions and kept an eye on the artifacts. We were assisted by five Doors Open volunteers. Many thanks to all who helped out on those very busy days.

On the right our Doors Open volunteer Subashini Pon-nambalam, along with Maureen McPhee and our newest Dickinson House volunteer, Josephine Norton (centre).



Its Summer, Finally!

The days we have been wishing for in the last; few months are finally here. Flowers and trees are popping up and leafing out and farm tractors are busy in the fields.

However, some things are over for the season.

For example, this is the last newsletter until September. Monthly meetings are also cancelled for July and August

although a meeting can be held at the call of the chair if necessary.

The RTHS web site will be available and maintained throughout the summer so information will be posted there.

The Dickinson House is open of course. so drop by and see us and the new additions and renovations

The Rideau Branch of the City of Ottawa Archives will be open Tuesdays as usual.

Dickinson House Museum presents

Storytelling in the Square

JUNE 22, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

*FREE
Admission*

*Seating &
Refreshments
Provided*

Tales of Historic Rideau Township



Ottawa

**Join us in historic Dickinson Square
for an entertaining and informative afternoon
as experienced storytellers spin yarns
of yesteryear in word and song**

*Featured Storyteller Gail Anglin is an
accomplished singer and musician, as well as
a founding member of Ottawa Storytellers.*



Dickinson House Museum, 1127 Mill St., Manotick

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.

Celebrating the Indigenous Heritage of the Rideau Township Area

When Abraham Pratt headed down what is now O'Neil Road in Marlborough Township to wrap up his enumeration job for first census of the Province of Canada early in the spring of 1852, he was at the far reaches of the Marlborough Forest. After leaving the Gorman family's shanty and before arriving at the Hanrahans' stone house, he came to a hut. Residing within were two Indigenous families, whose names he wrote down as Eanius Saquepete and his wife Judye, with children John, Mary, Keanthe, and Oick, and another man whom Pratt called "Par Indian", with his wife Nancy.

Pratt, who presumably spoke only English, may have had a difficult time explaining his purpose to the inhabitants, who likely spoke only French beyond their traditional languages, but he was able to record that all had been born in Quebec and followed the Roman Catholic faith. Jean-Guy Paquin, a researcher who hosts the extremely helpful Weskarini.ca website, has suggested that the first man may have been Ignace Sakokehte, who lived at the mission at Kanasatake near Lac des Deux Montagnes, Quebec (now Oka, Quebec) and was recorded there as late as the 1891 census.

Whether or not this identification is correct, it remains unclear if Saquepete ever returned to Marlborough Township after his 1852 visit by Pratt, and this group may have been among the last Indigenous people to live on winter hunting grounds in Marlborough Township.

It is difficult to comprehend that, by the time of that census, it had been just sixty years since surveyor Theodore de Pencier had arrived in Marlborough to map it for the British government for intended settlement. He recorded in his diary that, on 14 October 1791, two Indigenous men from Lac des Deux Montagnes warned him that these lands had not been purchased from them.

An Indigenous family who lived more recently in the area also had connections with Oka: Mary Jane Bonspiel, daughter of Gabriel Bonspiel and his wife Elizabeth, was born there in February 1889. She married Peter William Day of Akwesasne in nearby Hogsburg, New York in 1907. The couple lived for a time in Hintonburgh, where they had a number of children. Sometime during the First World

War, the Days moved to North Gower, and by the 1921 census they lived there with their six children, with another soon to follow.

Tragedy struck the young family in 1927, however, when Peter was helping to re-roof William Craig's barn, just north of the village of North Gower at Lot 19, Concession 4. Shifting himself off a beam to prepare for work upon the arrival of more building materials, the scaffolding upon which he landed gave way, and he fell to the ground, with a log landing on his chest. Craig ran to fetch Dr. Blair, but it was too late. Day was buried in Rideau Vale Cemetery, Kars.

In honour of National Indigenous History Month, and in the spirit of the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Rideau Branch recognizes the importance of discovering the history of Indigenous lives and culture in the Rideau Township area.

Article by Stuart Clarkson

WORKMAN KILLED NORTH GOWER

Peter William Day Died Instantly When Crushed Beneath Heavy Timber This Morning.

Special to The Evening Citizen.

NORTH GOWER, Ont., Sept. 9—Crushed beneath a log which fell upon him when the scaffold onto which he had jumped from a height above collapsed, Peter William Day, an Indian, aged about 40 years, was instantly killed here this morning.

Mr. Day, who had been engaged by Jack Baldry, a contractor here, to assist in re-roofing a barn belonging to Mr. William Craig, was sitting on a beam above the scaffold with his feet about eight inches above the board, waiting for material to arrive.

As soon as he saw the material approaching, Mr. Day jumped from his position on the beam and landed on the scaffold, which collapsed under his weight, letting him fall ten feet to the floor of the barn, while one of the logs near the top of the wall fell and landed across his chest, crushing it badly.

Picked up by Mr. F. A. Mather, Mr. Day was carried out of the barn, and laid on the ground. Mr. Craig rushed over to Dr. Blair's house, which is a short distance away, and brought the doctor over. Upon making an examination, Dr. Blair found that the man was dead. He then summoned Dr. R. C. Chanonhouse, of Richmond, coroner for Carleton County, who decided that death was accidental and that an inquest would be unnecessary.

The deceased had resided at North Gower for the last twenty years and was well-known in the district. He leaves, besides his widow, seven small children.

As yet funeral arrangements have not been completed.

Ottawa Citizen, 9 September 1927, p. 3

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