

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

March 2015 Newsletter

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

The March Meeting

Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2015
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Ottawa Client Services Centre
2155 Roger Steven's Drive
North Gower, Ontario

The Speaker: Gordon Moat

Gordon Moat was born and raised in south eastern Saskatchewan. As a young school boy his interest in the past was nurtured by the discovery of prehistoric artifacts. First was a grooved maul beside the family driveway followed by arrowheads, pottery and bones in local farm fields. He studied archaeology and geology at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon before working with Parks Canada. Louisbourg, York Factory, and Rocky Mountain House were historic sites he worked at. For a number of years he has been working with computers; currently he tests the programs in a payroll system before they go into production. To keep a foot in the past he has taken an interest in old equipment used to spin yarn and weave cloth. He lives near Chesterville with his wife, Barbara, daughter Anna and son Timothy.

Topic: SpinningWheels and More

Gordon is a Parks Canada archaeologist and computer specialist who lives in Chesterville and is interested in old equipment to spin yarn and weave cloth. He will demonstrate spinning sheep's wool on a Victorian wheel and will share his knowledge of spinning wheels and particularly of those made by Horton Row of Kemptville in the 1800s. For more see pages 4 and 5.



This Month

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

1. The February Meeting
2. The March Programme
3. Dickinson House 2015
4. Memberships now due.
5. Minutes of the February meeting.
6. News from the Rideau Archives

Dickinson House Program for 2015

The Dickinson House program for special events this summer is nearing completion. Please find below the program as it now stands. The only question mark is the date for the Meccano set display.

May 16..... Opening Day, Tableware in Times Past Exhibit
May 18..... Queen Victoria's Birthday Celebration
May 23, 1pm..... Victorian Tea
Jun 6..... Dickinson Day & Doors Open Ottawa
Jun 7..... Doors Open Ottawa
Jun 14, 2 pm..... Musical Thoughts Studio Recital
Jun 21, 2pm..... Keyboard Concert: Rowena Pearl
Jun ?..... Meccano Inventions

Jul 4-5 The Village Blacksmith
Jul 12, 2pm Visit by Sir John A. Macdonald
Jul 18-19 Heritage Garden Tours
Aug 2, 2pm..... Concert & Lawn Social: Manotick Brass
Aug 15-16 Domestic Skills: Spinning & Weaving; Wash Day
Sep 4, 7:30pm... Heritage Country Fair: Barn Dance
Sep 5, 10am..... Heritage Country Fair
Oct 10, 11am Harvest Festival
Nov 7, 1pm..... Women's Day Victorian Tea
Nov 11, 14-15 ... Exhibit: Local Heroes in Times of War
Dec 5-6 Heritage Christmas Crafts

It will be a busy and enjoyable season. Come out often and have fun.

Sir John A. MacDonald and the Manotick Connection

Presentations by Alison Cheng

Article and photos by Lucy Martin, painting by Ed Anderson.

This was the second time a monthly RTHS meeting took place at Orchard View on the Rideau's spacious meeting rooms. The meeting was especially well-attended, with 47 members and guests, 9 of whom were Orchard View residents.

The speaker, Alison Cheng, is a 3rd year co-op student at the University of Ottawa. She is currently pursuing an honours bachelor of arts degree, majoring in history with a minor in social sciences of health. In the summer of 2014, Cheng spent a work term conducting research for RTHS's Dickinson House committee. The purpose was to examine connections (real or presumed) between Sir John A. Macdonald, Manotick and the family of Moss Kent Dickinson.



Alison Cheng presenting

Cheng scoured primary and secondary sources seeking evidence that bolstered or debunked an oft-repeated claim that Dickinson House had been an unofficial headquarters for Macdonald campaigns.

Cheng's conclusion? Very likely that was not the case.

But first, a little chronology. Conservative politician Sir John Alexander Macdonald (1815-1891) was Canada's first Prime Minister. He held that position twice, across different decades: 1867-73 and again from 1878 – 1891. (He died in office.)

Dickinson House was built in 1867 by Moss Kent Dickinson. He moved there as a widower with 5 children in 1870. Dickinson had been the mayor of Ottawa (1864-66) and was elected as a Conservative MP from Russell from 1882-87.

Cheng took us through the complexities of the separate elections for both men, including the personalities and politics of their opponents.

At that time it wasn't unusual to run for parliament from more than one riding in the same election – a detail many found surprising. Indeed, Macdonald ran in both Lennox (Kingston region) and Carleton in 1872. Cheng indicated Lennox was considered a Liberal riding, but that Macdonald had enough family history there to have a fighting chance. Also, Macdonald's main opponent, Lennox incumbent MP Richard Cartwright, had switched parties (from Conservative to Liberal). Cheng said Macdonald wanted to punish that betrayal by winning the riding back.

(Note: At the risk of making a mistaken assumption, I am lumping Lennox together with Kingston. The two areas are adjacent and electoral districts do change. I beg your indulgence for not untangling all that for this article. According to Wikipedia's list of Canadian Prime Ministers by constituency, Macdonald sat as the MP from Kingston for the 1st, 2nd, 5th and 6th terms of his 6 terms. He sat from Carleton for the 4th term. And for Victoria, BC for the 3rd term. Macdonald's term representing Victoria has been described as a "parachute" maneuver to win election anywhere he could, while in disgrace back east over the Pacific Scandal.)

By examining newspapers and other records Cheng sought to establish where Macdonald would have been over the course of the 1882 and 1887 campaign seasons. Taken as a whole, he virtually ignored our entire area in 1882, as confessed in this Macdonald quote from June of that year:

"...I have visited most of the counties in Ontario except Carleton, and in not visiting Carleton, I paid you the greatest compliment, for I knew that you were faithful to the Conservative principles. I knew I was safe in Carleton, so I went into the enemy's country."

Bear in mind that as a sitting prime minister, it would be normal and appropriate to campaign on a larger scale than one's home riding. Despite barely setting foot in Carleton, Macdonald won there and in Lennox (Kingston).

In the election of February 1887, Macdonald once again ran - and won - in two ridings, Kingston and Carleton. In that instance he chose to be the MP for Kingston.

But back to the specifics of Macdonald and Manotick. Cheng finds it most unlikely Dickinson House was any sort of Macdonald campaign headquarters. Macdonald was kept very busy. Although he traveled extensively, Macdonald can't be placed in Manotick with any frequency. Manotick was not easily reached in winter. While Macdonald had certainly known and worked with fellow conservative MP Moss Dickinson, Cheng didn't find indications the two were deeply connected by that period in their lives.

Macdonald did give a well-received campaign speech in Manotick on Feb 10, 1887, in a large hall over a Dickinson lumber mill, after which he had dinner at Dickinson House before returning to Ottawa later that evening.



The meeting was held in the lumber mill (red) across the river from the stone flour mill. (painting by Ed Anderson)

Based on Cheng's research - and the logical conclusions of what she found - she feels Dickinson House did not function as an unofficial Macdonald campaign headquarters. Dickinson House certainly could have served as a source of efforts to support Macdonald's candidacy, but the two are not the same thing.

The post-talk Q&A was varied. Cheng was asked for her sense of the man. Based on her research, Cheng felt Macdonald was clever and witty with a good grasp of human nature and people's need for praise. Another listener wondered how it was possible to stand for parliament in multiple ridings at once. Cheng said that sort of hedging one's bets was common for the period.

Asked what percentage of the eligible population turned out for those elections Cheng put the figure in the 60 percentile range. It was asked if Macdonald considered himself a "liberal conservative" was there an opposite type, the conservative liberal? (Cheng thought not.)

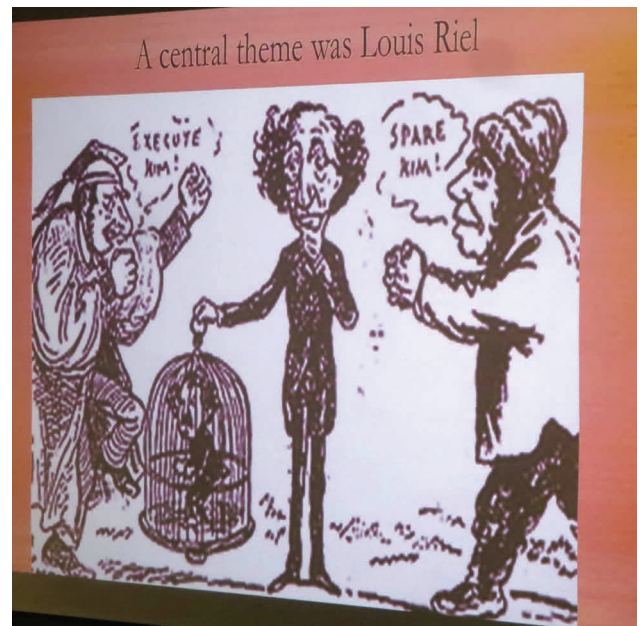
A listener observed that, for many years, if an MP was named to serve as a cabinet minister that person would

have to run again in a by-election. Was that the case in this period of time? Cheng said it was not.

Another listener wanted to know more about what happened to Earncliffe (Macdonald's home at his death in 1891) but that subject was outside the scope of Cheng's research. According to this entry from Canada's Register of Historic Places: "Earncliffe was subsequently occupied by a succession of private owners until it was acquired by the United Kingdom in 1930. Since that date, it has served as the residence of the High Commissioner in Canada."

Lastly, the mechanisms of traveling to and from Manotick for dinner on a winter's evening in February were imagined. Presumably that involved a train to Manotick Station followed by local pick ups (Carriage? Sleigh? Walking?)

Chatting with guests after the presentation, this correspondent had the pleasure of meeting Cheng's mother. Ivy Cheng is originally from Hong Kong and she first came to Canada as a student at the age of 18. Being an adult immigrant myself, we share the experience of watching our children grow up as Canadians, in the country established by leaders like Sir John A. Macdonald. While neither of us foresaw that outcome in our own youth, it's a development we observe now with pleasure and pride!



Alison, in the course of her presentation, showed a cartoon in reference to the enormous decisions MacDonald had to face in his career; in this case what to do about Louis Riel.

Marks on Patented Pendulum Wheels

by Gordon Moat

Reprinted from the *Spinning Wheel Sleuth*, No.87, pp. 5-6.

A very well kept "Victoria" pendulum spinning wheel appeared on the Ottawa Kijiji ads in June 2014 [Fig. 1]. I called to make an appointment to see the wheel and boldly offered to show how to spin on it. The sellers, John and Annie Ruhland, were unable to find any identifying marks, nor could I at that first meeting.

There was no doubt it was made to the specifications and drawings of "The Victoria Spinning Wheel" patented by William J. Lucas, carpenter, and Henry Lyon, yeoman/farmer of London, Middlesex County, Ontario. Dated 23 February 1866, the patent has two numbers, #1988 and #22.

This wheel did have one obvious difference—an after-market board strut or brace screwed on for stability of the T joint at the base of the long leg of the X frame. Alvin Ramer described another Victoria wheel in *SWS Issue, 46* [October 2004, pp. 5-8]. The complete Ramer wheel and a partial wheel of the same model both have two bolts at the T joint, whereas the Ruhland wheel has only one bolt.

Perhaps the Ruhlands' wheel was an earlier model and the Ramer wheel was a later model. The second bolt may have been added to the later model for greater stability, eliminating the need for the brace.

While examining the wheel, the Ruhlands and I noticed the accelerating-pulley axle was reversed from the configuration shown on the patent drawing. We reinstalled the pulley in its proper position, which allowed temporary drive belts to be added. I gave a quick demonstration of spinning on a pendulum wheel. Annie and John were surprised at my request for a chair. Other large wheels they had seen were walking wheels, which required the spinner to stand. The wheel performed beautifully as designed. It was nerve-racking for me, though, having never spun on a pendulum wheel nor on any spindle wheel while seated using a foot pedal for drafting. The wheel was subsequently disassembled for transport to its new home.

Prior to reassembly, we examined the pieces closely and found a mark on the short leg of the X frame in the inset where the horizontal beam for the drive-wheel axle rested. It was difficult to read at just over 1" long

and 1/8" high in the end grain of the wood. One is reminded of owners' names stamped on early woodworking hand tools. At first we did not know which end of the mark was up. Several pairs of eyes were required before my daughter recognized a W, and I spotted a J. The puzzle was solved by looking down on the top of the leg from the spinner's side of the leg. The mark reads "W. J. Lucas" [Fig. 2a]. But why would the mark be in a place hidden from view after the wheel was assembled? Was this an early case of preemptive defense against patent infringement by preserving evidence? Or was it simply a craftsman's habit to include something only he knew about?



Fig. 1

The back side of the long leg facing away from the spinner has four small holes [Fig. 2b]. The holes are not round but rectangular, as small machine-cut nails or brads would make. These may have been to attach a larger identifying label or for another still-unknown purpose.

The nails fastening the wheel rim to each spoke appear to have machine-stamped heads. This would be consistent with the patent approval date of 23 February 1866. There is another mark on the Ruhland wheel discovered inadvertently during a demon-

stration in July. As I was spinning, I happened to glance toward the drive wheel past the long leg of the X frame but was arrested by what I had previously believed to be a scratch in the wood of the long leg. This time the lighting said otherwise, and the same stamp as described earlier was recognized [Fig. 2c]. The wheel is marked in both obvious and hidden areas!

Another partial Victoria pendulum wheel now resides in Manotick, Ontario. It was made and marked by Stephen Martin of nearby North Gower. He made certain anyone looking at the wheel would see his name on a

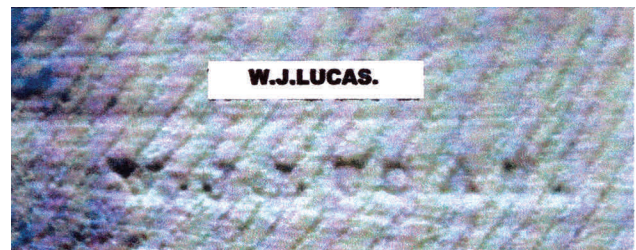


Fig. 2a

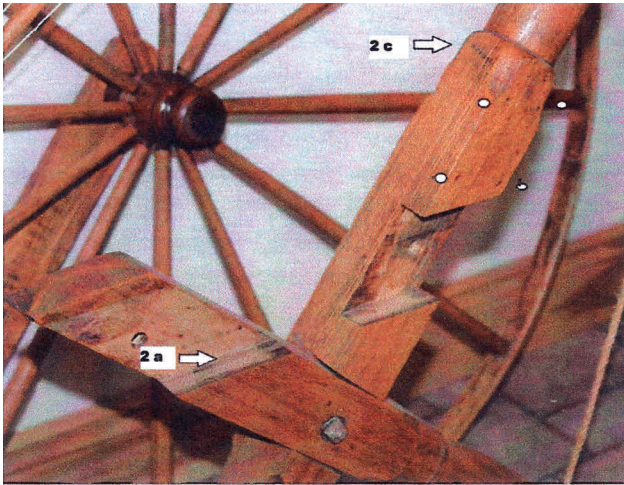


Fig. 2b

paper label affixed to the long leg of the X frame facing the spinner [Fig. 3]. This wheel has not yet been examined for a hidden mark, but it does have only one bolt in the T joint. The fact that Stephen Martin used the patented name "Victoria" on his label suggests either he was very bold in imitating the patent or that he had obtained permission to do so. Manotick is about a six-hour automobile (not horse and buggy) ride today from London in western Ontario where the patentees lived. Mr. Martin was a successful entrepreneur in the Otta-

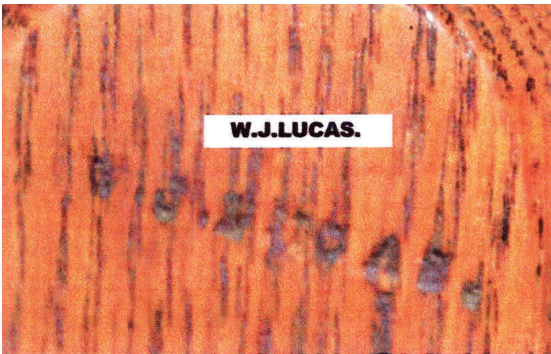


Fig. 2c

wa/North Gower areas, using steam power for his lathes. and several businesses.

American readers may note the similarities of these X-frame pendulum wheels to those patented by Lyman Wight and produced by Justin Wait. Has anyone done research comparing the similarities or possible connections between the wheels and their craftsmen/ patentees from Canada and the United States?

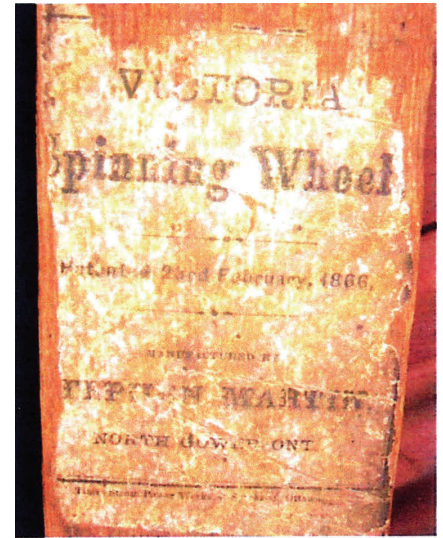


Fig. 3

Wight's first U.S. patent for a pendulum wheel was in 1856, but the X-frame model did not appear until 1864 [see Hilts and Hilts, p. 11]. Lucas and Lyon received their patent in 1866. Wait's advertisements appear in the 1860s showing a spinner seated at the X-frame model.

I hope this inspires you to reexamine your wheels for "hidden" marks that may have long been missed. Marc and Julie Levin had just such an experience. They rescued what they believed to be an unmarked pendulum wheel. After hearing of the locations of the Lucas and Martin marks, they reinspected their wheel and found a dark but legible label, effectively camouflaged by age and dirt. They were thrilled to discover that they had a well-preserved Wait and Buttrick wheel made under license from Lyman Wight's patent. The take-home lesson is to look carefully at your wheel; it may be trying to share more with you than the first impressions.



Watson's Mill on a Winter Night

Lucy Martin took this beautiful picture of Watson's Mill on a winter night. The building is in terrific shape. The Watson's Mill Board of Directors deserves high praise for their work in maintaining the Mill in such good condition.

2015 Memberships Now Due

A Reminder: Very reasonable annual dues for 2015 are now being collected. (\$10 individual; \$15 family) See Membership Director Patricia Pratt at any meeting, or mail your cheques and the form on page 8 to:

RTHS, P.O. Box 56,
North Gower, ON
K0A 2T0

The RTHS gratefully acknowledges the financial support received from the City of Ottawa

News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa Archives

Hours: The Rideau Archives is open every Tuesday from 9:30 am 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.

In June 1926, just over a mile north of North Gower on what was once the Prescott Highway, a new establishment offering light refreshments was announced. Closing each fall, the Colonial Inn reopened in the spring, often having undergone some improvements over the winter.

In 1929, the dining room boasted heat from a newly installed furnace to supplement the charming, though apparently inadequate, fireplace. By 1935, the proprietor, Miss M. Lennan, was billing it as a favourite stop for motorists. Lennan herself described the building on the property as "an old log shack" which she had improved since the 1920s with stucco, plaster, floorboards, cobblestone chimney and fireplace, and finally a new extension.

Due to the impact of the Second World War, she was forced to give up the place, including the six acres she had allowed to lie uncultivated for some time. In 1946, recently discharged Captain Stanley Stevenson obtained the property through the Soldiers' Settlement and Veterans' Land Act. Despite his previous job as manager of the Lord Elgin Hotel branch restaurant.

Stevenson had the idea of developing the place not as a dining establishment but as a market garden. After initial preparations, Stevenson planted a grove of fruit trees, totalling 200 trees by 1949, along with one acre of onions, three of potatoes, a half-acre of raspberry canes, and 20 hogs. It is as a fruit farm, of course, that the Colonial Inn is currently known, and the Rideau Archives has recently acquired records of the fruit business there (MGR185),

FORM 1 THE FARM PRODUCTS MARKETING ACT PRODUCER'S QUARTERLY REPORT			
For the Period July 15, 1965 to Oct. 31, 1965 (.....)		Feb. 1, 19..... to April 30, 19..... (.....)	
Nov. 1, 19..... to Jan. 31, 19..... (.....)		May 1, 19..... to July 14, 19..... (.....)	
Name and Address of Producer PLEASE PRINT			
Name of Orchard <i>Colonial Inn Farm</i>			
1. SALES	Name and Address of Buyer (Attach separate list if necessary)	No. of Pounds	Amount of Licence Fee
Apples sold for:			\$.....
(a) PROCESSING			\$.....
4 cents for each 100 lbs.			\$.....
		Total	\$.....
(b) PRODUCTION OF JUICE			\$.....
2 cents for each 100 lbs.			\$.....
		Total	\$.....

This form related to "The Farm Products Marketing Act" shows licence fees of \$12.66 for the sale of 16,881 pounds of something by the fruit farm.

comprised of three volumes of purchasing records spanning the years from 1963 to 1998.

The records show that, in 1965, almost half of the farm's apple sales were made at their market stand, along with bulk orders by Rhiza Meadows of Manotick, Bonell Fruit and Vegetables of Spencerville, G. Scharfe of Kars, and Carsonby Gardens.

The Rideau Archives is open each Tuesday.

Stuart Clarkson

Special Treat for the April Meeting

Charlotte Gray will be speaking about her latest book: She is an award winning historian and author. The book is:

The Massey Murder:

A Maid, Her Master and the Trial that Shocked a Nation

In February, 1915, six months into the world's greatest conflict, Toronto became gripped with a local drama: a British maid, Carrie Davies, shot and killed her employer, a member of the prominent Massey family. Reported on the front pages of the city's six newspapers, the case quickly became a national story eclipsing war coverage. The trial and its extraordinary outcome are chronicled in Charlotte Gray's engaging book.

All are welcome to come and hear Charlotte talk about this compelling event.

The time and venue are:

Wednesday, April 15

7:30 p.m.

**Manotick United Church
5567 Manotick Main St**



PHOTO: VAL BERG-IMAGING



Gordon Moat spinning with a walking wheel

Minutes of the Rideau Township Historical Society February Meeting

February 17, 2015, Orchard View on the Rideau, Manotick, Ont.

Opening: President Brian Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and welcomed the 46 people present, especially the 9 Orchard View residents.

Minutes: Moved by Brian Earl, seconded by Maureen McPhee, that the January minutes as contained in the February newsletter be approved; carried.

Finance: In the absence of the treasurer there was no report.

Dickinson House: Maureen McPhee, chair of the Dickinson House committee, reported the committee is working on the program for 2015.

Program: Owen Cooke reported on plans for future meetings. Gordon Moat will speak on Walking Wheels at the March 18 meeting in the Client Service Centre, North Gower. In April noted author Charlotte Gray will speak on her latest book, the Massey Murder.

Publications: In the absence of Jane Anderson, chair of the Publications Committee, there was no report.

Communications: Ron Wilson, communications director, reported that the web site is now up to date.

Membership: In the absence of the Membership Director, Patricia Pratt, there was no report. However Susan McKellar, previous membership director, was available to accept membership renewals; several of these were accepted at the end of the meeting.

Evening Program: Maureen McPhee introduced our speaker for the evening, Alison Cheng, who gave a very interesting talk on "The Role of John A. MacDonald and Moss Kent Dickinson in the 1882 and 1887 Elections of Canada". Tom MacDonald, appropriately, thanked Alison after some questions and discussion.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned about 9:00, followed by a social time with refreshments provided by Orchard View staff.

RIDEAU TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2015 MEMBERSHIP

Single: \$10.00 _____ Family: \$15.00 _____ Life Member: \$100.00 _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

I/We prefer to receive notices and news by: e-mail: _____ hard copy by mail: _____

I/We agree that the Executive Committee may use the above personal information for internal Society use. Members' names will not be made available to individuals or organizations outside the Society.

Signature(s): _____

Please submit this form with your cheque payable to **Rideau Township Historical Society**

To: Patricia Pratt, Membership Director
Box 56
North Gower, ON K0A 2T0

Note to New Members:

The Society can no longer afford the increasing cost of embossed plastic name tags. We shall provide a paper tag in a plastic holder. If you would like an embossed name tag, we can provide them for \$5.00.

Please indicate here for an embossed name tag at \$5.00 each: _____. Please show number required and names to be embossed: