

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

March 2017 Newsletter

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

The March Meeting

Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2017
Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place North Gower Client Service Centre
2155 Roger Stevens Drive
North Gower, ON



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

The Speaker: Hannah Blaine

Hannah was one of our students at Dickinson House last summer. She was hired to do research on Joseph Currier.

Subject: Joseph Currier

Joseph Currier was an important figure in Manotick history. He was Moss Kent Dickinson's partner in the building of the mill and founding of the village. He also built 24 Sussex Drive, and was a major player in the Ottawa and area lumber business.

Hannah has examined Currier's career and times and will present some results of her research at the meeting.



Jane Anderson, Brian Earle and Sue Gordon attended the City of Ottawa Heritage Day in the foyer of City Hall. The event is held each year on the Tuesday following family day. It is well attended and provides an excellent opportunity to not only showcase the RTHS, but also to meet and share experiences with other heritage organizations in the Ottawa area.

The Spring Programs **Spring 2017**

April:

On Wednesday 19 April Ruth Stewart-Verger and her mother Donna Stewart, storytellers, will tell us about the Famous Five and the recognition of women as "persons". This will be at Orchardview on the Rideau, Manotick.

May:

In May our speaker will be Jim Witham, former director of the Canadian War Museum, on how to start and run a museum.

June:

Probably on Saturday, 24 June, we will have an excursion to the Wilno Heritage Village to explore our Polish roots, with a lunch at the Polish buffet at Wilno Tavern.

2017 Memberships Now Due

A reminder: very-reasonable annual dues for 2017 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

Renewals and new members are always welcome. Please help us out. Renewals are down significantly this year.

In Memoriam

The members of the Historical Society were saddened and distressed to learn that two of our long term members passed away last month.

Evelyn “Corky” Sawyer, wife of Brian Sawyer, passed away on February 12, 2017 at Longfields Manor.

Corky will be missed by numerous family, friends and members of her extended family. A teacher, a traveller, a homemaker, Corky always put her time into charities around the world.

Corky grew up on a farm in Quebec the youngest of a family of six. She acquired her nickname from her older sisters, who said she was always bobbing around like a cork.

She was a former member of the RTHS, and the wife of a past president, Brian Sawyer.

She was the mother of three, grand mother of seven, and great grandmother of one.



Barbara Humphreys was a valued member of the Society and an exceptional woman.

She passed away suddenly on Tuesday, February 21, 2017 in the arms of her beloved husband Douglas and her daughter Gwyneth (Hiro).

Barbara was born on October 8, 1919 in Kelliher, Saskatchewan. After schooling there she enrolled in architecture at the University of Manitoba, graduating with the gold medal in architecture in 1941 - one of the very early Canadian women architects. Her early career took her to Thunder Bay and Montreal with Defense Industries; Toronto with Victory Aircraft; and then to Ottawa with Veterans' Land Act and the Chief Architect's branch of the Federal Public Works.

In 1952 she married Douglas, an economist with the Bank of Canada and in 1953 moved with him to a house she designed on the Rideau Canal in Manotick. With the birth of their daughter, Gwyneth, she resigned from Public Works to devote her attention to raising her daughter while engaging in private practice in Manotick, Ottawa and Kingston.



Barbara Humphreys (bottom left) with Society members Susan McKellar, Owen Cooke and Bill Tupper..

She was also very involved in community life – particularly heritage associations – serving as a member of LACAC, one of the founders of Dickinson Day, associated with the creation of the popular Miller's Oven, and was a fierce defender of Watson's Mill as a significant historical Canadian asset..

For many years Barbara taught Canadian historical architecture at Carleton University, she lectured at many schools and co-authored numerous publications dedicated to architecture., received the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal, the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal and the Gabriel Léger Medal, given annually by Heritage Canada.

Her wonderful smile, her freely offered help and her love of community and Canada will be sorely missed

The February Presentation Women in Dairy Farming Article by Pat Earl Photos by Owen Cooke

On Wednesday, February 8th, Dr. Meredith Quaile gave a very inspiring talk on women's role in dairy farming. She entitled her talk 'Grass and Sunshine into Cream and Butter'. Dr. Quaile, a Russell Federal government policy analyst, wrote a two hundred page thesis on this topic, focusing on the time between 1813 and 1914.

Growing up in Greely, her interest in women on the dairy farm was sparked when she worked as a tour guide at the Experimental Farm. Dr. Quaile's research took her to local regional museums, heritage homes, England, and New Zealand where she worked on a farm while there.



Meredith Quaile presenting

She spent many hours scouring farming magazines, books, old photographs, basements, barns and sheds, seeking for tools used by women on the dairy farms. The result of all her research was put together in a delightful, and captivating presentation for our RTHS members at Knox Presbyterian Church.

Using a series of fifteen photos, Dr. Quaile introduced us to women at work on the farm.

1. The Brownlee Farm

- A staged photo of the Brownlee farm, taken in 1893, showed a well off family, their extensive herd of 15 cows and 5 horses, a large well ventilated barn, a fenced in yard complete with turnstile and a few of the necessary farming tools.

2. Mrs. Otto and her Cow.

3. An 1887 Dasher Churn.

- A staged photo of women working a cream separator in an orchard – something which never would have been done.

4. Cream Separators -

- Cream separators changed and improved over the years but usually due to limited finances the new models were not deemed necessary. Women had no control over the purse strings in the family and therefore on most farms change was slow and the tools remained limited to old styles.

5. Billings Estate

- Lamira Billings and her daughters were exceptional dairy women. Mrs. Billings kept diaries of their work. A former teacher, healer, and herbalist, she recorded many things.

6. Pans

- Shallow pans were made of wood or local iron and were used for separating the cream.



Meredith brought along a number of examples of tools and books used in dairy farming.

7. Basic Tools

- Stools, pails – made of wood or leather – these were sturdy, cheap and repairable, and most important of all, hand made.

8 Cream separator pans

- Shallow pan, deep pan – these were the basic types used by most women.
- Later centrifugal machinery replaced the pans and revolutionized dairying.

9. Butter Churns

- Mabel Thom using a dasher churn; an end over end barrel churn; samples of over 1,000 types.
- A seated treadle churn made of wood, later crockery
- A spring churn

10. Butter working

- The butter was washed, salt was added, and using a bowl and a ladle the butter was worked until all excess water was removed. If too wet, the butter would soon become rancid.

11. Butter Presses/Prints

- Farmers branded their own butter
- Butter was sold locally or traded with neighbours
- Scotch hands –corrugated wooden paddles- were used to press the butter into boxes or forms for branding
- Later, with the opening of creamery factories, butter was formed into a one pound brick, wrapped in cheese cloth or waxed paper and placed in twenty pound boxes for shipping. Ontario butter was considered quality butter and was shipped to the United States and Britain.

12. Milking Machines at Guelph Agricultural School

- From 1907 pail and hands to a surge milker, a vacuum line using electricity or a generator.

13. A Mehring foot treadle milker

14. Ads for Dairy Equipment

- Ads portraying women in dairy work using Milk Maid and Dairy Queen Separators

15. Milking machines 1910 -1918

- Dairy Maid Milker, and a DV milking machine

With the onset of machinery, women were considered no longer capable of doing the milking and the job passed on to the men of the family. For the ladies, it was to be a great relief from sore hands and kicking cows. However, because of the expense, the old methods were utilized until after World War 1, with the farm women out in the fields a couple of times a day, adding hours to their daily routine.

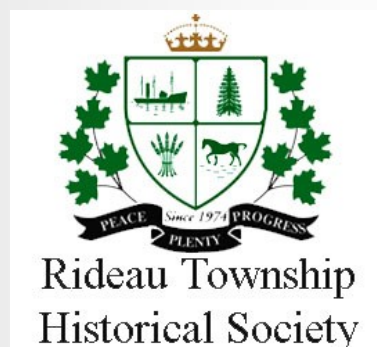
Dr. Quaile's presentation was both entertaining and informative and after a few questions and answers we all left with an appreciation of farm women of the past.



Patricia Pratt thanks Meredith for an informative and entertaining presentation.

Scott Moffatt has put a short description of the RTHS on his web site, and has just added our logo. Please check it out on Scott's website.

His web site is at <http://www.rideaugoulbourn.ca/communityresources/>.



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.

Thomas N. Johnston: Connecting North Gower to the Railway

Just beyond the limits of North Gower Township, the railway ran for over a century along the line established by the Bytown & Prescott Railway in 1854. At first North Gower residents looking for rail service north toward Ottawa or south toward Prescott could only choose between stations at Osgoode and Kemptville. In 1871 the situation improved, when a flag stop at Rossiters was replaced by a new Manotick Station, with the idea of running a branch line from the station to Manotick proper for the benefit of the mills there.

This branch never developed, leaving North Gower without direct rail access and Manotick Station with an important role, channelling passengers, goods, and mail between the train and the Township. It fulfilled this role for eighty years, many under the watch of Thomas N. Johnston.

First trained in telegraphy at the St. Lawrence & Ottawa's Oxford Station, Johnston struck out in the early 1880s for California, only to return a few years later. By this time, the Canadian Pacific Railway had leased the St. Lawrence & Ottawa and was looking for a telegrapher to staff Manotick Station. Johnston was hired and established in a two-story building that also became, after his marriage to Hannah Louisa Tomkins in 1885, his family's home. The Johnstons lived there until Thomas, one of the most senior telegraphers among the dozens then active in Canadian Pacific's Ottawa Division, retired in 1922, moving to Manotick shortly before his death.

One might wonder if perhaps the Johnstons felt safer in their retirement, being further removed from the railway line. Life beside the tracks always carried with it the very real danger of train wrecks, collisions, or other hazards. Ironically, it was just after leaving Manotick Station that this danger struck home: in 1923, four of their Tomkins nieces were tragically killed when a train struck their automobile at a crossing just south of Manotick Station.

During his time running the station, Thomas Johnston had witnessed broad changes in the railways. One interesting change which seems to have caught his eye related to the need for both railway and telegraph personnel to travel the rails swiftly. Powered hand carts were developed, but another alternative invented to satisfy this need was the pedal-driven railway velocipede. This could take the form of a specially constructed unit but also could be a regular bicycle modified by an attachment sold through department stores.

Although only residing in North Gower for a short time, Thomas Johnston played an important role in serving the people of the Township during the height of transport by rail in Canada.

Rideau Branch holds some records of Johnston's life and career, including several photographs, St. Lawrence & Ottawa schedules and Canadian Pacific seniority lists, in the Mansfield Family collection collated by his daughter Gwendolyn (Mrs. R.C. Mansfield).

Stuart Clarkson



Derailed Canadian Pacific boxcars, [ca. 1920?] JMGR040 -022-0074 Mansfield Family collection (RV 105.74)



Susan McKellar with a visitor to the North Gower Winter Carnival. RTHS had a display of books, pictures, and display boards from both the Archives and the RTHS. There was a lot of interest - quite a few people dropped by to have a look .

Far left, Jane Anderson at the table.

Rideau Township Historical Society Minutes

Wednesday, February 8, 2017

Knox Presbyterian Church, Manotick, ON.

Vice-President Susan McKellar opened the meeting by welcoming 23 members and guests. Moved by Jane Anderson that we adopt the minutes of the January meeting as published in the newsletter. Seconded by Greg Hutton. Carried.

Finance: Sue Gibson presented the operating budget for 2017. The annual budget totals \$50,745, with a shortfall of approximately \$850.00 due mainly to the decision of the Executive to purchase a portable sound system (cost of \$1250.00) which, as described by Brian Earl, was similar to the one borrowed for the evening from Knox Church and which can be used in various venues. Sue recommended that the surplus be taken out of an existing GIC. Moved by Jane Anderson that we accept the 2017 budget as presented. Seconded by Maureen McPhee. Carried.

Sue then outlined the January expenditures (\$2850, mainly due to the republishing of Manotick Then and Now) and reported that we have a \$15000 GIC, petty cash of \$245 and a book bank balance of \$3433.55, which results in cash in hand of \$18678.55.

Membership: Director Patricia Pratt was on hand to receive renewals and/or new memberships for the year. She reported that to date this year 7 family and 6 single memberships have been received.

Program: Owen Cooke informed us that the March 15th meeting will be a presentation at the North Gower Client Service Centre of research done on Joseph Currier by summer student Hannah Blaine. In April mother & daughter team Ruth Stewart Verger and Donna Verger will converse on *The Famous Five Women*. Owen has received bus estimates for the June excursion to the Polish Museum in Wilno and is making plans for lunch at the highly recommended Wilno Pub.

Communications: Director Maureen McPhee has developed a new logo for RTHS which is based on the top half of our banner and can be used on various communication posters and bulletins. She passed around copies of this logo and the new letterhead. Councillor Scott Moffatt has put this new logo on the Ottawa website. Facebook has been successful, receiving 93 hits in January.

Publications: Jane Anderson stated that the price of the recently re-published Manotick Then and Now will be \$25.00 and is available for purchase. Barbara Humphreys will be interviewed this month. The memorial book on the Great War is due to be launched in November, and the History of North Gower is slated for 2018.

Dickinson House: Brian Earl reminded us that Dickinson House will also celebrate a 150th anniversary this year. The 3rd floor exhibit by Melanie Hayes, "A Walk Through the Decades", is progressing and the organ is in the midst of repairs.

Grants: No report.

Youth: No report.

Speaker Meredith Quaile then gave a very interesting and informative talk entitled "Grass and Sunshine into Cream and Butter" outlining a history of the role of women and dairy tools in the 19th and early 20th centuries dairy industry. Following a question and answer period, members were invited to peruse the assortment of dairy tools displayed by Ms. Quaile.

The meeting was adjourned and refreshments provided by Jane Anderson and Ruth Wright were enjoyed.

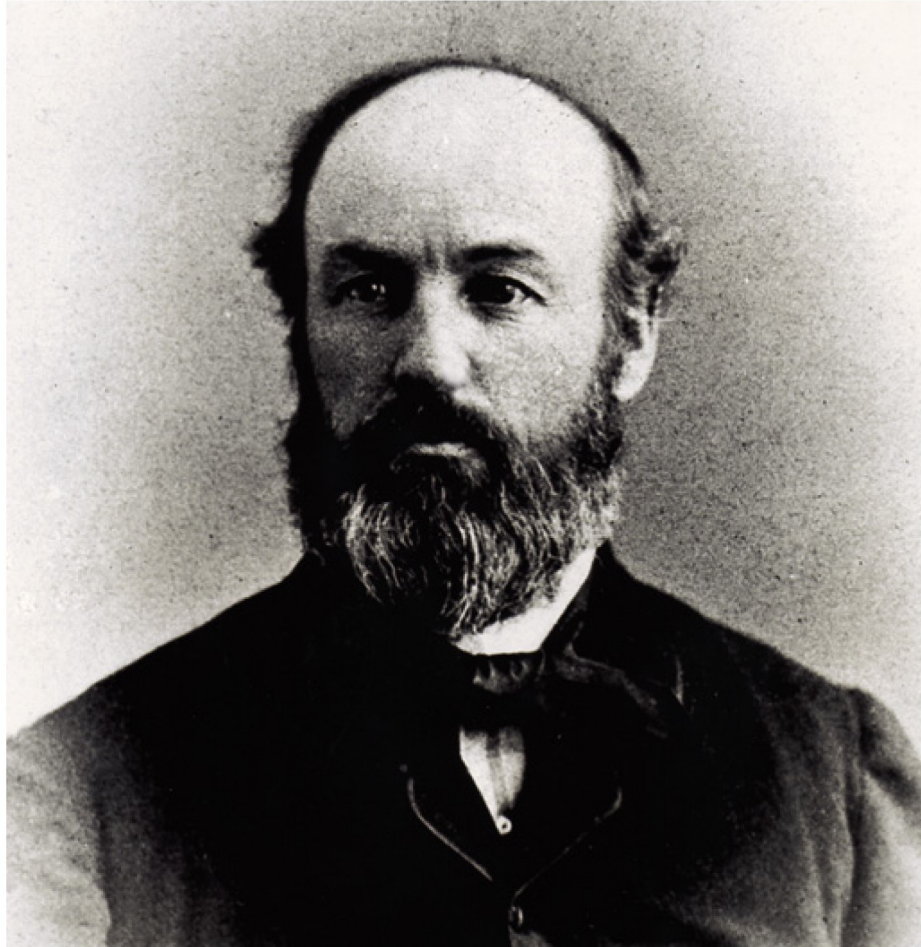
The RTHS gratefully acknowledges the financial support received from the City of Ottawa.

Rideau Township Historical Society

Wednesday, 15 March 2017, at 7:30 p.m.

North Gower Client Service Centre

2155 Roger Stevens Drive



**J.M Currier, builder of 24 Sussex Drive, Ottawa and
Co-owner of the Manotick Mill**

Hannah Blaine

**The Life and Times of
Joseph Merrill Currier**

RIDEAU TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP

Single: \$10.00 _____ Couple: \$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

Membership Director

Box 56

North Gower, ON K0A 2T0