

# The Rideau Township Historical Society

*Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township*

## March 2018 Newsletter

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

### ***The March Meeting***

**Date:** Wednesday March 21  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** North Gower Client Service Centre  
2155 Roger Stevens Drive  
North Gower, ON



### ***The Winter/Spring Programme***

**April** - Valerie Knowles will speak on - "Ottawa Valley Builders."

**May** - 3 short segments: Karen & Robin Craig on the Craig family; Owen Cooke, update on Tommy Watterson; Bill Tupper, "William Cowan"

**June** - Excursion to Pinhey's Point and other area destinations

### ***Speakers:***

***Dennis Osmond, Rod Brazier, Gary Bagley***

### ***Subjects:***

Instead of a single speaker we will have 3 speakers, each giving a short presentation on their subject as shown below.

- Dennis Osmond will speak on "**Commemorating Sappers and Miners on the Rideau Canal at Newboro**"
- Rod Brazier will speak on "**Railways in Muskoka**"
- Gary Bagley will speak on "**Loyalists**"

### ***The New RTHS Board for 2018***

President – David (Sandy) McNiece

Past President – Tom MacDonald

Secretary – Ruth Wright

Treasurer – Sue Gibson

Vice President – Susan McKellar

Membership – Gary Bagley

Program – Dorothy Gray

Communications – Maureen McPhee

Publications – Jane Anderson

Dickinson House – Brian Earl

Director at Large—Scott Cameron

### ***The 200th Anniversary of the Town of Richmond.***



In 2018, the Goulbourn Township Historical Society (GTHS) enters its 41st year of preserving and celebrating the people and history of the former Goulbourn Township. We will begin a new series of lectures, projects and events to entertain and inform our members of the history for the past 200 years.

FYI: The GTHS Archives section at the Stittsville and Richmond libraries have many records for research use

on the area's early families and the history of Goulbourn Township.

**Also, mark your calendars for the June 15th to 18th weekend at which GTHS will be participating in the 200th Anniversary celebration of the founding of the Town of Richmond.** Come and participate with GTHS and the Town of Richmond in walking tours, historical trolley tours, costumed interpreters, and much more.

Our next event is "Researching Your Genealogy" with Marilyn Cottrell - Saturday March 24th at the Stittsville Legion at 1:30PM.

Bob Halbertstadt  
GTHS President

# *A.Y. Jackson – His Manotick Years, 1955-1963*

*Speaker: Irene Staron*

*Article by Susan McKellar*

Our February speaker, Irene Staron, lives with her husband Al Smith in the studio/dwelling built by Jackson in Manotick in 1955 (of course, renovated since she purchased it in 2006). She took her audience on a multi-dimensional tour – of Jackson's life and art, the connections she has with him, and the house – accompanied by a succession of striking images.

Irene's passions are design, lifestyle trends, nature and technology, and design is her business. Her Russian parents immigrated to Canada and established a family in a home filled with art, music and literature. The family also spent much outdoor time in the Lake Simcoe and Georgian Bay areas, hiking in the woods and sketching on the shore. Other early influences included a good art teacher and a visit to the modern, exciting Expo 67. Later when she studied at Ryerson in Toronto she spent time in the neighbourhood of the Toronto studio of the Group of Seven.

Born in Montreal in 1882, Alexander Young Jackson worked at lithograph companies and studied art in Montreal and Chicago, then studied Impressionism in France. The National Gallery of Canada purchased one of his early paintings. In 1913 the Montreal Art Gallery held an exhibition of his work. He was considering moving to the United States, but fellow artist J. E. H. MacDonald convinced him to stay in Canada. He moved to Toronto, continued painting and met other artists. He shared a studio with Tom Thomson and became good friends with him. They and other painters took sketching trips to Georgian Bay, etc.

He served in World War I and was wounded; he was transferred to the Canadian War Records branch as an artist for the remainder of the war, then returned to Toronto. He became part of the informal Group of Seven. The Beaver Hall Group was formed in Montreal in 1920 with Jackson as president. Individual expression was important for this group. The group included women artists, and he developed friendships there. He became a lifelong friend of Ann Savage, exchanging 300 letters. Staron feels the relationship was based on true affection and respect, in spite of the fact that he proposed and she declined. He never married.

In 1955 when Jackson was 72, he moved to Manotick on the advice of Lawren Harris, and built a home and studio there. He had nieces and nephews as well as colleagues in the area. He continued painting, and held soirees for friends, colleagues and people of note. They would be drinking and smoking and talking, and Jackson would ask for their opinion of various paintings. If he got a negative opinion on one, apparently he would throw it into the fireplace!

Over a thousand lots of his paintings have been sold worldwide. The Firestone Collection includes 25 sketches

of the Ottawa Valley. Jackson's autobiography, *A Painter's Country*, includes a map of the places where he has painted, many of which are familiar to Staron. She notices a change in his palette in his later years.



*Our speaker, Irene Staron, responds to questions from the audience.*

After suffering a stroke, he sold his home to Hubert Rogers; Rogers was born in Alberton, P.E.I., where Staron's husband's father was born – another connection! Jackson's final home was in Kleinburg, in the McMichaels' home, from 1967-73.

In 1987 his niece Geneva bought the house, and local architect and RTHS member, the late Barbara Humphrys, designed an addition. Staron bought the house in 2006, drawn to it in large part because of its natural setting, with a wide variety of plants on the property. There are stepping stones to another niece's property, where Jackson was wont to go for dinner. When Jackson built his studio, the view from it was of the river – now it's of the dense vegetation. Staron says the house and studio have lots of light and space, and she feels his presence there.

There were lots of questions and comments by members of the audience, and one member spoke for the community in expressing delight that an artist is living in and treasuring the house.

*A Special Event*



*The People of  
Dickinson House*

*"A journey through time"*

*April 14*

*Dinner at Doyle's Oven  
Dickinson House  
at 6:00 pm*

**Sold Out**

*Tickets: \$40  
on sale February 12 at  
613-692-6455*

*or  
watsonsmillmanotick@gmail.com*

*info at  
www.itrtheatre.com/DH.html*

Tickets go on sale Feb. 12 for this unique theatrical presentation in Manotick's Dickinson House Museum and the nearby Carriage Shed. The evening will commence at 6:00 p.m. with dinner at Doyle's Hotel (aka The Miller's Oven).

See above for details and also visit [www.itrtheatre.com/DH.html](http://www.itrtheatre.com/DH.html) for more information. Tickets are limited, so order early so as not to miss this special production by our local writers Sheila Dubyk and Myra McFarlane.



*The February meeting was held at Knox Presbyterian Church in Manotick and was well attended.*

# Rideau Township Historical Society

Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

City of Ottawa Client Service Center

2155 Roger Stevens Drive, North Gower



Railways in Muskoka

**Rod Brazier**



The United Empire Loyalists

**Gary Bagley**



Commemorating Sappers and  
Miners on the Rideau Canal  
at Newboro.

**Dennis Osmond**

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 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.

### ***Book Review by Owen Cooke***

Richard Holt, *Filling the Ranks; Manpower in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1918*. Foreword by Tim Cook and J.L. Granatstein. (Carleton Library Series 239.) Montreal: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 2017. 347 p.

Last autumn, when Rideau Township Historical Society collaborated with Heritage Ottawa in the Heritage Forum at Kars, some of the organizers were delighted to receive Indigo Books gift certificates. One of these was used to purchase *Filling the Ranks* for the Rideau Archives Branch reference library. We saw it as providing needed background material for our joint Rideau Archives / Historical Society memorial project to commemorate local First World War fatalities.

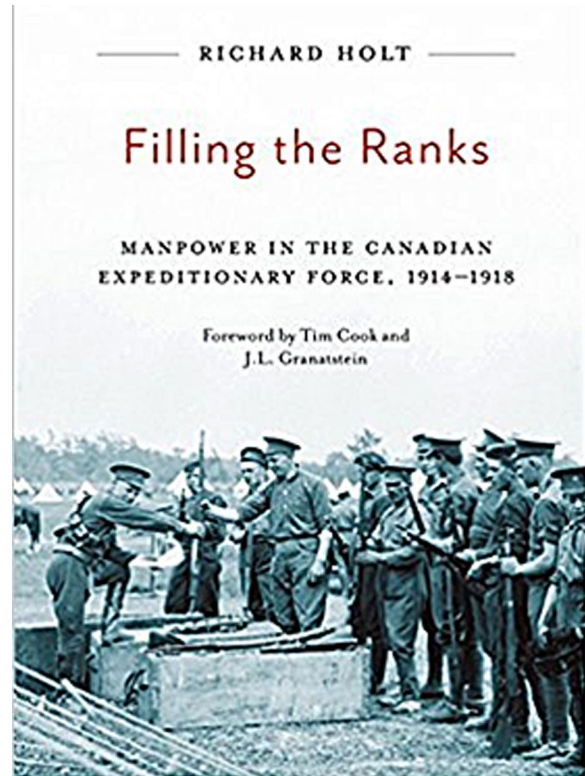
The author, the late Dr. Richard Holt was a 38-year veteran of the Canadian Forces, a Lieutenant Colonel in The Royal Canadian Regiment who, on his retirement, studied military history and completed his Ph.D. at University of Western Ontario. This book is his thesis, with only little revision – perhaps too little in some places.

In 1914, when Britain went to war with Germany and Austria-Hungary, Canada was also automatically at war as part of the British Empire. However, it was up to the Canadian government to determine the extent of its involvement. When the British requested troops as the magnitude of the war became obvious, Canada first committed to a division of 31,000, then 250,000 men promised by Sir Sam Hughes, the Minister of Militia and Defence, in October 1915, then doubled by Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden to 500,000 on 1 January 1916.

The book studies how Canada recruited, trained and despatched overseas military manpower to sustain this commitment. These numbers, to be raised by voluntary recruiting, were apparently not fully thought out beforehand. Indeed, there was never any rationalization of manpower for war purposes, be they industrial, agricultural or military.

Holt demonstrates the increasing difficulty of voluntary recruitment and the inefficient utilization of that manpower by raising large numbers of often under-strength infantry battalions and by transporting them to Britain. Most were broken up to provide reinforcements for the Canadian Corps in the field. What was really needed were smaller drafts, mostly of infantry, to replace "wastage" on the Western Front when they were needed.

He investigates sources of recruits – underaged, overaged, recruits from ethnic groups not previously tapped, or even enlisting the inmates of prisons and lunatic asy-



lums. He explains more briefly the drafting of Canadian men under the Military Service Act from late 1917, although those draftees sustained the Canadian Corps during the final battles of the Hundred Days in 1918, when with much-increased pace of operations the Corps suffered heavier losses than throughout the whole war up to that point. 24,132 conscripts served in France and 1,097 of them perished there (p. 206-207).

Holt also studies the training of the newly-enlisted in Canada and finds it wanting, because of severely limited quantities of mostly obsolete weapons and equipment used to teach lessons already out of date on the Western Front. He is not the first historian to study the mish-mash of Canadian training organizations that existed in Britain 1914-1916. Here he builds on the work of Desmond Morton and demonstrates that the rationalization begun by the creation of the Ministry of Overseas Military

Forces of Canada, the only Canadian government department to be created outside Canada, eventually resulted in a smoother flow of reinforcements to the Canadian Corps.

The book is not without a few problems. After Dr. Holt's death it was brought to publication by two of his colleagues. The author undoubtedly would have made

changes and insisted on a more finished product. No-where does this show as in the index. Its five pages deal well with the concepts and themes brought out in the book, but don't address the wealth of fascinating detail that the author has developed on individual battalions, nor does it index the names of the many individuals featured in the text. For instance Major General Sir Sam Steele, veteran North West Mounted Police officer, is noted as the commander of the 2nd Canadian Division, but too old to take it to France, and as commander of the Shorncliffe District in Britain, p. 159ff., but on p. 189 he is referred to as Colonel Steele, commander of Military District 10 in Manitoba, but without a date. This could have been rationalized in the index, but there is no entry for him at all.

Thirteen pages of illustrations are crowded before the Introduction. Almost all are well-known official photos from Library and Archives Canada. They do relate directly to the text, and would better have been placed with the material they illustrate. There are a number of tables and organization charts throughout the book which amplify the neighbouring text.

Extensive notes and bibliography attest to the detailed research done by Dr. Holt to produce what will clearly be regarded as an important work on Canada's wartime effort.

**NORTH GRENVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



Thomas Ahearn



Alexander Graham Bell

**OTTAWA TECHNOLOGICAL FIRSTS**

Phones, lights, motor cars, planes, stoves, radio and TV!



Guglielmo Marconi

What do these three men and this hotel have to do with the introduction of technological changes to Ottawa?



Windsor Hotel

**14 Mar**

**7:00 pm**  
**Court House**  
**15 Water Street**  
**Kemptville**

[www.northgrenvillehistorical society.ca](http://www.northgrenvillehistorical society.ca)

*Poster for a presentation at the North Grenville Historical Society*

*Unfortunately their presentations are held a day after this newsletter goes out so we couldn't warn you sooner.*

*Keep in mind that these presentations are being given.*

*To check for upcoming presentations their web site is*

[www.northgrenvillehistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.northgrenvillehistoricalsociety.ca)