

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

March 2020 Newsletter

The March Meeting

Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2020
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Ottawa Client Services Building,
2155 Roger Stevens Drive,
North Gower, ON



2020 Memberships Now Due

A reminder: very reasonable annual dues for 2020 are now being collected. (\$15 individual; \$20 family) See Membership Director Gary Bagley at any meeting, or mail your cheques and the form on page 5 of this newsletter to: RTHS P.O. Box 56 North Gower, ON, K0A 2T0

Renewals and new members are always welcome. Join and enjoy the newsletters, meeting presentations and excursions.

RTHS Spring Program

March 18th Michael Whittaker "North Grenville Archeological Society" @Ottawa Client Services Building, 2155 Roger Stevens Drive, North Gower, ON

April 15th Mags Gaulden "Grandma's Genes (DNA)" Mags Gaulden @ Manotick Place Retirement Community, Manotick, ON

May 20th "North Gower Book Launch" @Alfred Taylor Community Centre, 2300 Community Way, North Gower, ON

June 13th Excursion to Smiths Falls
(more info at the April meeting)

Speaker

Michael Whittaker

Michael retired from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada following a varied 30-year career in Research Branch, Communication Branch, and Market and Industry Services Branch. Before and through this time he has maintained an interest in history with memberships in historical societies, and as a heritage interpreter and reenactor. Currently, he is President of the Rideau Valley Archaeological Society, which was formed two years ago. He is also a member of the North Grenville Heritage Advisory Committee.

As to field experience Michael has

- participated in archaeological digs in Kingston, Ontario; Gatineau, Quebec; and Canasota, New York.
- organized and helped manage historic re-enactments and heritage events in Merrickville, Prescott, Crysler's Farm, and Ogdensburg, NY.
- written more than 50 historical articles related to the New York side of the St. Lawrence River, and for organizations to which he belonged. He continues to write articles and press releases.

Subject

Rideau Valley Archaeological Society.

Michael will speak about his career in archaeology and the needs and benefits of that science.

Dickinson House

It's that time of year again. RTHS is working hard to get everything ready for the opening of the House in May. One of the tasks each year is to recruit volunteers to serve as tour guides during the summer.

Anyone with an interest in local history and in meeting others with the same interest would be most welcome as a volunteer for conducting tours or for some of the other jobs that are necessary to run the program.

If you are interested please contact Brian Earl at (613)-692-2371 or brian.earl@sympatico.ca

The February 2020 Presentation Wednesday, 19 February 2020

***George Laidlaw, “The Joys of Canadian History”
Article by Owen Cooke
Photos by Rod Brazier***

Some forty members, guests and residents gathered at the Manotick Place for our February meeting. Dorothy Gray introduced our speaker, George Laidlaw, Ottawa born and Manotick raised, and a prolific author. Mr. Laidlaw spent a career as a federal government biologist, but was always intrigued by Canadian history and storytelling.



He has written 91 books, some history, some historical novels, some adult and some aimed at a young adult audience. He brought 75 titles with him to display and for sale.

Mr. Laidlaw spoke of his love for history, particularly Canadian history. Canadian history books in schools are boring, he said, but the subject is fascinating. He took us on a tour through incidents in Canada's history, mostly military history and presented very much in the "great men" tradition. He began with Wolfe and Montcalm at Québec in 1759. What if Montcalm had waited for his reinforcements to come up from the Beauport shore before giving battle on the Plains of Abraham? It was a failure of Montcalm's intelligence service which had indicated that Wolfe could bring more men onto the Plains which caused him to attack before they arrived. He did not know that he was facing the totality of Wolfe's force. In an aside, he also blamed a Canadian militia officer for letting Wolfe's troops get up the Anse au Foulon to the Plains in the first place.

He repeated the apocryphal tale of Wolfe at Culloden, in which the Duke of Cumberland ordered him to shoot a wounded Highlander, but Wolfe refused, saying he would rather give up his command than shoot a wounded man. From this came the Highlanders' respect for Wolfe, and

the Highland regiments' service in Canada during the Seven Years War.

Mr. Laidlaw moved on to the War of 1812. He believes that Isaac Brock was a genius, as indicated by the stratagems he employed to convince the American Brigadier General Hull to surrender Detroit, convincing him that the British-Canadian-Indian force was much larger than it was, and implying that he would not be able to control the Indians when battle was joined. He did, however, criticize Brock for behaving like a junior officer leading his troops personally at Niagara, and getting himself killed. He praised the military skills of Tecumseh, who played such a vital part in the first year of the war and was critical of Major General Henry Procter whose defeat at Moraviantown (the battle of the Thames) led to Tecumseh's death. Mr. Laidlaw suggests that Major General William Henry Harrison, "old Tippecanoe", a future President of the United States, personally killed Tecumseh.

He continued on through Canadian history, with an aside on the Franklin expeditions, in which he repeated the now-discounted story that Franklin's men died from lead poisoning from the new canning process for foods which he had championed.

He discussed the effects of the Fenian raids on Canada, and noted that the final raid on Manitoba in 1871 was foiled by the actions of Louis Riel and a Métis band. This is a less-known contribution by Riel to Canadian history.

Mr. Laidlaw's final segment was the story of the Avro Arrow. In the 1950s A.V. Roe Canada designed and built the Avro CF-105 Arrow, which he claimed to be the most advanced interceptor built then or since. Unfortunately, he said, in 1957, the year the Arrow first flew, the Russians launched Sputnik I, the first orbiting artificial satellite.



lite. The Americans lost interest in manned interceptors in favour of missiles and did not encourage the Canadian efforts. At the same time, he said, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and A.V. Roe President Crawford Gordon

disliked each other intensely. In 1959 Diefenbaker cancelled the Arrow programme and ordered the prototypes to be destroyed. Many Avro employees were in tears. In the years following, many left Canada and joined aerospace development in the United States, some participating in NASA's programme to put a man on the moon.

A lively question and answer session followed the presentation. Ruth Wright thanked our speaker, and the meeting broke up for refreshments, book buying and more questions to Mr. Laidlaw.

Rideau Township Historical Society

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

7:30 p.m.

Ottawa Client Services Centre

2155 Roger Stevens Drive

North Gower, Ontario

DIGGING UP THE PAST



Michael Whittaker

President of the Rideau Valley

Archaeological Society

**Mr. Whittaker will share his
experiences 'digging up the past'.**



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.

North Gower, not Niagara Falls ...

In 1886, some months after complaining about North Gower's Church Street bridge, Rev. Samuel Daw appeared in the Ottawa Assizes of the Ontario Court of Chancery as a witness in a civil case, Beatty v Butler. Francis Benjamin Butler, a farmer at Richmond, had left for Manitoba in 1882. Upon his return three years later, he immediately began to keep company with Ida Evelyn Beatty, daughter of Richmond physician Dr. William Beatty and niece of Aylmer mayor Thomas Ritchie.

Dr. Beatty was known in North Gower Township, where he had several years earlier served as consulting physician to James Craig's brother Asahael, who had died in 1883 from a kick to the head by a horse. Dr. Beatty, frowning upon the developing relationship, made his daughter promise to stop seeing Butler, whose own father refused to assist with getting a marriage licence.

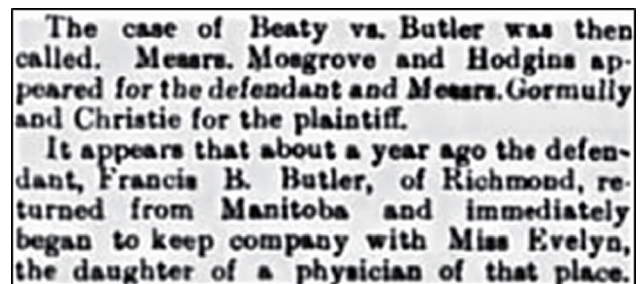
Faced with this opposition, the couple then eloped -- not to Niagara Falls but to nearby North Gower. There, on 11 February 1885 at the Anglican manse, Rev. Daw solemnized their marriage, with Daw's wife witnessing the union. Within days, however, the young bride abandoned Butler for her sister's house in Aylmer. Their impromptu marriage proved to be an issue for the courts.

Witnesses' statements in the case appeared on the front page of the Ottawa Journal in November 1886. Daw indicated that, while performing the marriage service, he had wondered why the couple hadn't sought to be married in Richmond. He also had noticed that Beatty appeared distressed, but he had felt compelled to complete the marriage, as both Butler and Beatty had answered all the required questions properly.

Rev. Glassford of Richmond corroborated Daw's suspicions at the Assize, stating that he had heard from many that Miss Beatty was "slightly insane." The Beatties' housemaid claimed Evelyn had previously proposed to several people and, in the month or two before her marriage to Butler, had been breaking dishes and appeared generally agitated.

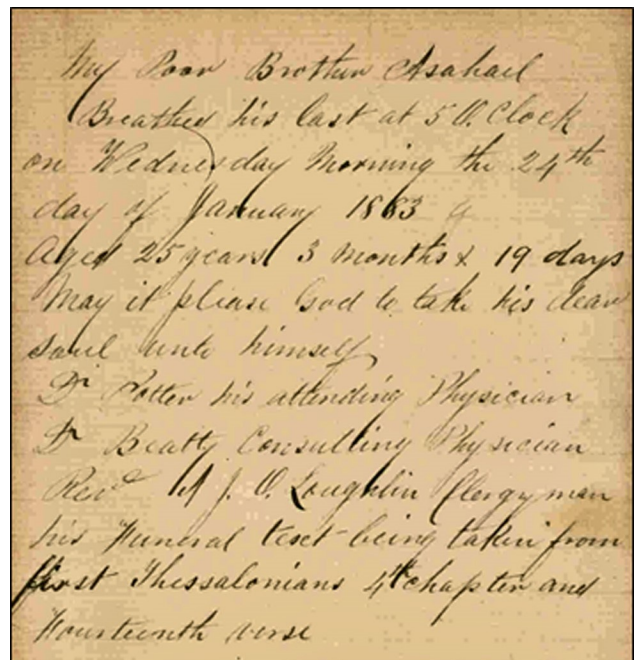
The court decided to annul the marriage, with Beatty v. Butler being cited several years later in J.A. Gemmill's

Practice of the Parliament of Canada upon Bills of Divorce (1889) as an important case in Ontario marriage law. Butler went on to be married in 1895 at another manse, this time in Manotick, to the daughter of another Richmond doctor -- Kezenia M. Beckett, daughter of dental surgeon William Bennett, well known for his work in Jamaica. The Butlers settled in Ottawa to raise a family. Evelyn Beatty never married and died in Montreal in 1934.



The case of Beatty vs. Butler was then called. Messrs. Mosgrove and Hodgins appeared for the defendant and Messrs. Gormully and Christie for the plaintiff. It appears that about a year ago the defendant, Francis B. Butler, of Richmond, returned from Manitoba and immediately began to keep company with Miss Evelyn, the daughter of a physician of that place.

Extract from Ottawa Journal, 15 November 1886, p. 1



My Dear Brother Asahael
Breathed his last at 5 O. Clock
on Wednesday Morning the 24th
day of January 1883
Aged 25 years 3 months & 19 days
May it please God to take his dear
soul unto himself,
Dr Butler his attending Physician
Dr Beatty Consulting Physician
Rev. W. J. O. Laughlin Clergyman
his funeral text being taken from
first Thessalonians Chapter and
howbeit worse

Extract from James Craig's A Memorandum of Births Marriages and Death, 1883

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: _____

Date: _____

Individual Membership \$15 _____

Life Membership \$100 _____

Family Membership \$20 _____

Donation \$50 _____

(2 adults & school-aged children)

Other Donation \$ _____

Thank you for supporting RTHS!