

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

May 2011 Newsletter

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

Next Meeting,

Date: Wednesday, May 18, 2011
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Pierces Corners Hall
3048 Pierce Rd.
Pierces Corners (at Malakoff)

This Month

1. The April Meeting
2. From the pen of the President
3. The Dickinson House
4. News from the Rideau Archives
5. Dr. Leach's Safe
6. Cheese factories of Rideau

Topic: *The Home Children of Rideau*
Speakers: *Susan McKellar, Georgie Tupper*

May 2010 was declared the **Year of the Home Child**, to honour and celebrate the courageous children who came on their own from the British Isles to make new lives in Canada.

During the late 19th and early 20th century Britain sent many children to Canada, children whose families were unable to care for them. They found a new life here, with new families, and made a great contribution to their new country. Some came to Fairknowe Home in Brockville, and from there at least 150 came to families in the North Gower/Manotick/Kars area. Some of their descendants still live in this area. Come to the May meeting, at the Pierces Corners hall, and find out more about these children. Guests are welcome!

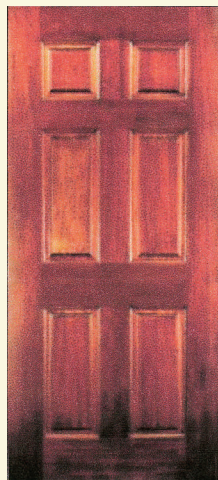
Bring a friend

Light refreshments

From the Pen of the President

During the recent Society tour of the Dickinson House Brian Booth made a note of the variety of doors which exist within the house, including at least one "Cross and Bible" door. He also referenced a web site on door construction from which the following is derived. I found it interesting.

Early doors in North America were 'plank' or 'batten' doors built with vertical planks fastened to a frame that held the planks together. In the 1700's the plank door evolved into a more stylized and practical design known as frame or panel doors. Despite variations over the years, frame and panel doors are still the most popular style today.



In the frame and panel doors, two vertical 'stiles' run the length of the door on either side, connected by a number of horizontal 'rails' forming the frame. This frame was then filled in with 'floating panels' that fitted into grooves cut into the stiles and rails. These panels thus floated in the frame. The overall effect was a door that minimized the tendency to swell and shrink, always a problem with wooden doors.

The number of panels in these doors varied from two to eight. But the configuration that has been widely constructed is the six panel door that is known as the "Cross & Bible" or "Christian" door. The framing of the top four panels resemble a cross, and the bottom two panels an open Bible. All of this can form the base of interesting



From the Presidents Pen (continued)

conversations during an examination or tour of historic or modern houses.

What style or design of doors are in your houses? We have two generations of doors in our house, one dating about 1855, the others in 1960. All are constructed in the Cross & Bible design.

Dickinson House in Manotick and Rideau Branch City Archives in North Gower will be participating in Doors Open Ottawa, June 4th and 5th. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about these heritage buildings along with their doors and treasures within their walls.

Dr. Leach's Safe

Older residents of Manotick and area will remember Dr. W. J. Leach very well. He practiced medicine in Manotick for many years. In the early years house calls at all hours of the day or night were as much the rule as the exception. In winter many roads were not plowed and part of the trip to a patient's bedside may have been accomplished on foot or by horse drawn sleigh. It was not an easy life.

The RTHS was contacted recently by Kit & Kaboodles in regard to Dr. Leach's safe, which is stored in the basement of the store. They wish to find a new home for it.

The RTHS is considering ways to add this artefact to the body of Manotick memorabilia available to the community. We are considering the practicality of placing it in the Dickinson house in the area that was once a general store. This is not a straight forward proposition as the thing weighs of the order of 1200 lbs or 550 kg.



Coming Events:

June 18 – Excursion to Fulford Place, Brockville

On Saturday, June 18, we plan to travel by bus to Brockville to visit Fulford Place and have lunch. The cost will be modest. A sign-up sheet for this excursion was circulated at the April meeting. If you didn't sign up then, you may contact Susan McKellar at susan.mckellar@rogers.com or 613-489-3961. A magnificent Edwardian mansion overlooking the St. Lawrence River, Fulford Place was built around 1900 by Senator George Taylor Fulford. It con-

tains original tapestries, paintings, statuary and ceramics and is surrounded by elaborate gardens.

On the way back from Brockville we will visit the Heritage Place Museum in Lyn, Ontario.

September 21 The September Program

Dr. David Shanahan, president of the North Grenville Historical Society, will speak about the history of Kemptville.



Cheese Factories of Rideau Township

The building on the left was used to store cheese at the Wattersons Corners cheese factory. The picture is recent, taken during a field trip to locate and photograph buildings that were used for cheese making. The RTHS and Iona Joy are working to update her 1990 publication with the above title.

The Dickinson House, April Meeting

Presenters: Coral Lindsay, Brian Earl, and the Dickinson House

Article by Ron Wilson, Pictures by Maureen McPhee

The April meeting was all about the Dickinson House. The RTHS is at the beginning of our fourth year of programming and operations at the house after the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority moved out. The first three years are considered to have been quite successful with of the order of 4,000 visitors in each. As usual RTHS has been planning for something new for the coming season to "keep them coming back". Brian Earl and Coral Lindsay made presentations at the meeting to share our latest ideas and try to interest members and visitors to the meeting to consider helping out as volunteers during the coming summer.



The dining room at the Dickinson House

In his presentation Brian gave the spiel that he uses in greeting visitors at the door of the house. In it he introduces the house as being built by Dickinson in the mid-1860s. Originally it was attached to the Currier cottage which among other functions served as the kitchen and dining room for the house. Over the first 40 or 50 years or so the house itself served as a residence, a general store,



The master bedroom

a telegraph office, and a post office. Not only was it one of the very first houses in Manotick, it served the village in many ways over the years.

Over its lifetime the house was lived in by only three families. Dickinson moved in with his family in 1870. His children continued to live there and operate the mill until 1928 when the house and mill were purchased by Alex Spratt. The Spratt family operated the mill and lived in the house until 1946 when the mill and the house, were purchased by Harry Watson. Harry and his family lived there until 1972 when the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority purchased both.

Coral explained the need for volunteers to act as costumed interpreters and greeters at the house this summer. A costumed interpreter is one who explains the exhibits to the visitors. Greeters obviously greet visitors as they enter the house, but also can work outside inviting visitors to the house; sort of a non-violent press gang. There are other roles for volunteers for those who choose not to work with the public, such as maintenance and promotion.

The evening finished up with a tour of the Dickinson House followed by refreshments and hosted by our costumed interpreters. For some it was the first time they had been in the house. Everyone seemed to enjoy the experience and it has gotten us off to a good start for the 2011 season.

The pictures in the article are current and give an idea of the sorts of displays this season's visitors will see.



The sewing room

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).*

The Rideau Township Branch of the City of Ottawa Archives has recently acquired records created by Dr. David Wardrope Wallace of Kemptville, Ontario. His great-granddaughter, Catherine Gallagher, a resident of Sunrise, Arizona, donated and shipped the records to the Archives. Born and raised in North Gower, Dr. Wallace practised medicine from around 1881 to 1924. His practise was located in Metcalfe for over 30 years and then in Kemptville for about 10 years. The documents include patient registers, photographs, genealogical research and patient lists compiled by Catherine Gallagher. These documents will surely offer a treasure trove of information to be discovered about the life and health of people of Osgoode and North Gower.

Some New Books at Rideau Archives Branch Reference Library

Bartlett, Betty, and Barbara Humphreys. "Presence of the Past" in Rideau Township. 2005.

720.971383 Ba

Booth, Brian D. "Manotick in the Canal Age". 2011.

971.38401 Bo v. 5

British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa, comp. "British Home Children: their Stories". 2010.

971.05 Br

Forbes, Joy V.C. "Perseverance, Pranks & Pride; Tales of the One-Room Schoolhouse". 2010.

379.7138 Fo

Goddard, Lance. D-Day, "Juno Beach; Canada's 24 Hours of Destiny". 2004.

940.5421 Go

John Steedman & Co. "Hints to Mothers on the Treatment of their Children". n.d.

Vault – Box 344.01

Lindsay, Coral. "Kars on the Rideau. 2d ed". 2010.

971.384 Li

Preston, Linda, comp. "Voices from Goulbourn's Past". n.d. 2 vols.

971.383 Vo

Proulx, Gilles. "Between France and New France; Life Aboard the Tall Sailing Ships". 1984.

359.00944 Pr

Santor, Donald M. "Canadians at War, 1914-1918". (Canadiana Scrapbook.) 1978.

940.40971 Sa

Scribner, J.M. "The Ready Reckoner; for Ship Builders, Boat Builders and Lumber Merchants. Being a Correct Measurement of Scantling, Boards, Plank, Cubical Contents of Square and Round Timber, Saw-logs, Wood, etc., Comprised in a Number of Tables; to Which are Added Tables of Wages by the Month, Board or Rent by the Week or Day, and Rail Road Distances. Also, Interest Tables at Seven Per Cent". 1867.

Vault – Box 337.19-2

Spratt, Carol. "Spratt Family Tree". 2010.

929.2 Spr

Swayze, Ken. "Stage 4 Archaeological Assessment of BgFv-3, Riverwood Village Development, Lot 21 Concession 1 North Gower Twp. (Geo), City of Ottawa". 2008.

917.383 Sw

Van der Linden, Eda. "They Ventured Forth! Stories of Dutch Canadians in Osgoode Township, Ontario, 1940s-1960s". 2010.

971.384 Van

"Canadian Military Journal/ Revue militaire canadienne". Vol 10, no 4, Autumn/automne 2010, vol. 11, no 1, Winter/hiver 2010.

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