

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

May 2016 Newsletter

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

The May Meeting

Date: Wednesday, May 18, 2016
Time: 7:30p.m.
Place: Kars RA
1604 Old Wellington Street
Kars Ontario



Spring Program 2016

June 18th Excursion:

By bus for a tour of the **Bell House**, lunch at a restaurant as yet to be determined followed by a guided tour of the **Diefenbunker**, with attendees responsible for the cost of their own lunch and admittance fees. A sign-up sheet will be available

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

Dickinson House 2016

The operation of the Dickinson House each summer as a museum is the flagship project of the Rideau Township Historical Society.

Over the past few summers the Society has hosted as many as 8000 visitors annually. The House will open for

The Speaker: Maureen McTeer

Maureen McTeer is an Ottawa lawyer, author, and lecturer. She obtained her undergraduate degree from the University of Ottawa in 1973, and her law degree from the same University in 1976. She later received a Master of Law from Dalhousie University, and a Master of Arts in Biotechnology, Law and Ethics from the University of Sheffield. She is the recipient of three honorary degrees (Sheffield, Carleton, Athabaska).

She is the recipient of the "Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case", and the "DIVA Award for Outstanding Contributions to Women's Health and Well Being" in recognition of her commitment to issues of equality. She was for a time a member of the The Royal Commission on Reproductive and Genetic Technologies 1989-93.

Subject: 24 Sussex Drive, Past and Future

Maureen has resided at 24 Sussex Drive and Stornoway. She has written the only definitive historical account of three of Canada's official residences, namely 24 Sussex Drive, Stornoway, and Harrington Lake. In her May 18th presentation she will offer her insights into the history of 24 Sussex and her thoughts on its future.

See the poster on page 4 for further information.

This Month

1. The May Meeting
2. The April Presentation
3. News from the Rideau Archives
4. Upcoming Programs
5. Minutes of the April meeting
6. Dickinson House

the 2016 season on May 21 and will run until December 4.

[Click here](#) to see the activities that are planned for the Dickinson House and Watson's Mill this summer.

[Click here](#) for the Dickinson House web site.

The April Presentation

Speaker: Scott Cameron

Photos: Liam Norris

Other illustrations: Scott Cameron

Article: Susan McKellar

Our featured speaker at our April meeting was Scott Cameron, a soon-to-be graduate of Carleton University in history and political science, long-time guide/interpreter at Watson's Mill, and RTHS member.



Scott Cameron. He was obviously enjoying the presentation and so did the audience.

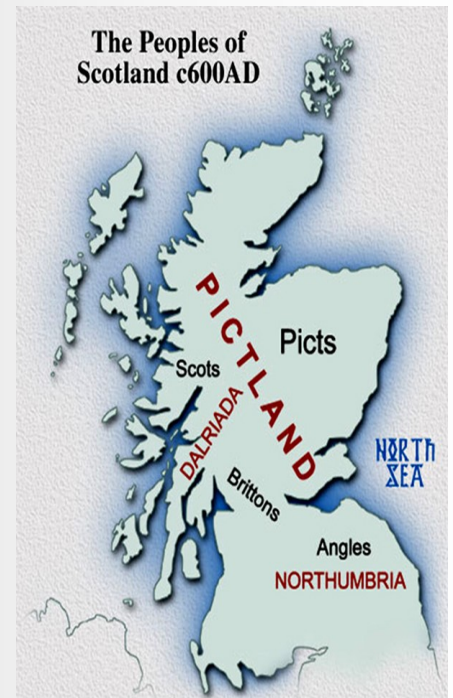
Scott is an excellent speaker, enthusiastic, entertaining, and knowledgeable about his subject (as was his great-aunt Coral). He is immensely proud of his Scottish heritage and has spent a good part of the last year and a half researching the Picts, very early inhabitants of Scotland. He was introduced to them in a university course on the Celtic Iron Age, and wanted to know more. He warned us that there's a lack of knowledge about them, and not a lot of definite answers although several theories. But he then proceeded to give us a fair amount of information on them, gleaned from early writers including Caesar.

The Picts lived in what is now northern and eastern Scotland up to the end of the 9th century when they seem to have disappeared. They were savage people who used guerilla warfare; Hadrian's Wall (122 A.D.) and the Antonine Wall (142 A.D.) were constructed to keep them out.

They were also naked people who painted themselves blue. In the interests of good taste Scott was unable to show us any pictures of them. They were Christianized around 600 A.D. and apparently started to wear clothes then.

"Picti" means "Painted One" in Latin, hence the name we know them by, but that's not what they called themselves. Their language was not written, so we don't have records of it.

After the Romans abandoned Britannia in the 5th century the Picts began to form into the Pictish Kingdom. It was divided into 7 provinces, in two realms, north and south. They were consolidated in 670 under Bridei, and subsequently Orkney, Dal Riata and Northumbria were conquered. The last ruler of the Picts was Donald MacAlpine, brother of Kenneth MacAlpine, the Gaelic King of Dal Riata who brought about the fall of Pictland.



Map showing various tribes in Scotland around 600 AD

The main archaeological evidence of the Picts are Standing Stones. The Class I stones were the earliest ones, from the 6th and 7th centuries; they were larger boulders or stone slabs with symbols that have not been deciphered. Class II stones were later, in the 8th and 9th centuries; they often featured Christian elements.

Scott then talked about some of the early writers who mentioned Picts. These included Caesar and Eumenius, another Roman writer; Gildas, a 6th century Roman cleric; Adomnen, the 7th century Abbot of Iona; Bede, an 8th century British monk; and Hector Boece who wrote in 1549.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (compiled by Alexander the Great) and the Pictish Chronicle are sources of information but unfortunately are incomplete. They do include a list of Pictish Kings, back to the time of Noah (apparently).

Many theories exist about what happened to the Picts:

- mutual collaboration with the Gaels
- eradication by the Vikings and/or the Gaels (no evidence exists)
- conquest and military defeat by the Gaels (Scott's choice; some evidence exists)

Following Scott's presentation there were several questions and comments from the interested audience, including



Example of Pict standing stones.

compliments on his research. One member said he had given us lots of information and lots to think about, but it was "like drinking from a fire hose"!

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.

Queen Victoria's lengthy rule in Britain occupied much of its "imperial century," an era of dominance in world affairs from the fall of Napoleon until the First World War. Victoria and her Empire were closely linked, as she was a keen supporter of Britain's imperial plan to bring civilization to the world. Canada had a special relationship with Queen Victoria, who loomed as a parental figure during the emergence of Canada as a nation, personally choosing Ottawa as the capital.

Her birthday on 24 May, celebrated during her reign according to the custom of marking the reigning monarch's birthday, became after her death in 1901 the holiday we know as Victoria Day.

But by this time a more specific request to remind students of the benefits of the Empire was also being sought after a submission to Ontario's Minister of Education by Clementine Fessenden of Dundas in 1897. Her idea of Empire Day spread, bringing patriotic songs, poems, and regalia to the classrooms and militaristic drills and parades to the streets.

This was the backdrop to the Governor-General Earl Grey's 1909 speech to Canadian schoolchildren outlining the need for them to uphold the imperial plan. The date



Frontispiece to T. Eaton's Ontario Readers: Third Book, 1909 (MGR001-19-006)

chosen for Empire Day, however, was 23 May, immediately preceding Victoria Day. With the Queen so intimately tied to her Empire, it became difficult for Canadians to distinguish between the celebrations.

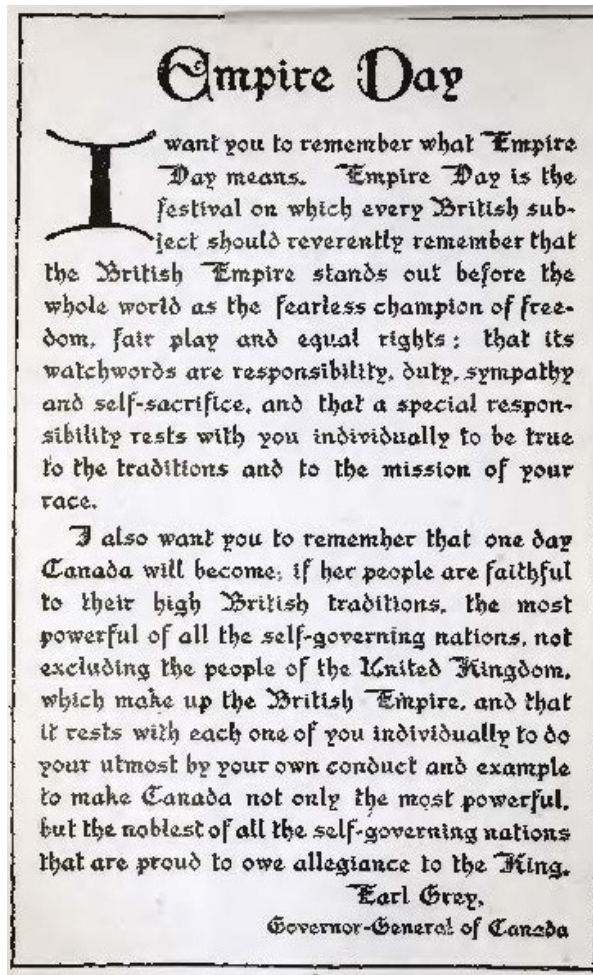
By 1945, irritated newspapers were running annual notices to remind citizens that the two days were in fact different, and a decade later the Department of Education was still issuing brochures to help clarify.

But, by this time, the days of the British Empire were all but over. Empire Day had already become a focus for youth events less connected with imperial themes, including a 1941 assembly held by the Ottawa Presbytery Young People's Union of the United Church in North Gower, attended by 150 visiting members.

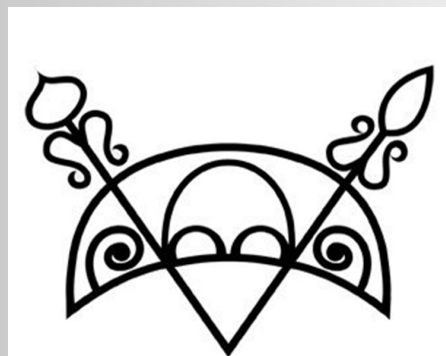
In 1957, Canada renamed it Commonwealth Day, leaving Victoria Day alone to harken back to Victoria's empire -- and to mark the beginning of good weather.

Stuart Clarkson

Foreword to T. Eaton's Ontario Readers: Third Book, 1909 (MGR001-19-006)



Other Pictish Symbols and Artifacts



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

Rideau Township Historical Society

Presents



photo by Valberg Imaging Inc.

Maureen McTeer

Ottawa lawyer, author and historian with her thoughts on

24 Sussex Drive: Past and Future



**Kars RA Hall
May 18, 2016
7:30 p.m.**

All welcome – no admission

The May meeting features Maureen McTeer speaking on 24 Sussex Drive, Past and Future. The meeting will be held at the Kars RA Hall as a substantial attendance is expected.

Rideau Township Historical Society Minutes
Wednesday, April 20, 2016
Orchard View on the Rideau, Manotick, Ontario

President Tom MacDonald opened the meeting by welcoming approximately 50 guests and members to our monthly meeting.

There being no errors or omissions, it was moved by Ron Wilson that we adopt the minutes of the March meeting as published in the Newsletter. Seconded by Jane Anderson. Carried

Tom then called upon members to submit committee reports.

Finance: Treasurer Sandy McNiece reported that our receipts to date total \$13,200 (which includes a \$10,000 grant), expenses are just under \$2,000, and we are left with a bank balance of \$18,000.

Program: Bill Tupper first thanked the members of RTHS for the opportunity afforded Georgie and he to launch their Dickinson Men book in November, and he then outlined the schedule for the next few months.

May – Maureen McTeer will make a presentation on a topic which is still uncertain, but possibly the future of 24 Sussex Drive, probably taking place at The Kars Community Centre.

June 18th - Excursion: By bus for a tour of Bell House, lunch at a restaurant as yet to be determined (possibly Alice's in Carp, although they don't take reservations), followed by a guided tour of The Diefenbunker, with attendees responsible for the cost of their own lunch and admittance fees.

Bill also encouraged members to lend a helping hand at a cleaning bee at Dickinson House on May 14th.

Publications: Jane Anderson reported that they have interviewed 5 people for the Oral History project. Another printing of *Manotick Then and Now* is being investigated.

Communications: Maureen McPhee made available for the members' perusal a plan approved by the executive on April 11. She encouraged members to attend monthly meetings and bring friends, and also asked for volunteers to do the write-ups for the meetings, as one is needed for May.

Membership: Patricia Pratt reported that we have 18 life, 12 family, 15 single and 3 complimentary memberships.

Dickinson House: Brian Earl reported that they are interviewing summer job students and applicants for the research position. The display for the Trades and Professions exhibit is proceeding nicely, thanks to Melanie and Stephanie. Volunteers are needed at DH for the summer session and anyone interested can get in touch with him and will be most welcome. He invited all to a Victorian Tea on May 21st, the price of which is \$20.00, with tickets available for purchase.

Youth: No report, except that scholarships are being arranged for St. Mark's and South Carleton.

Grants: Nothing new to report at this time.

Bill Tupper introduced our guest speaker, Scott Cameron who gave an interesting presentation on "The Lost Race: Finding the Picts". Following questions, Brian Earl thanked Scott for his very informative talk.

The meeting was adjourned at about 8:30 followed by a social time.