

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

November 2008 Newsletter

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Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Society will be held **November 19 in the Carriage Shed on Dickinson Square** in Manotick at 7:30 pm.

The Carriage Shed doors will open at 6:30 p.m. for viewing the displays of steamboat photographs, posters, ads, maps, Power Point slides and other memorabilia. Ron Wilson's DVD has toe-tapping music as well.

Visitors are welcome.

The next executive meeting is Nov 26 at Brian Earl's House

Please Note

RTHS Members will have 2 opportunities to see the Fleets & Forwarders presentation by Coral and Mark.

There will be an earlier presentation on November 12, also in the carriage shed. RTHS members are welcome to attend. The hitch? It will cost \$2 at the door on that day. The presentation begins at 6:30 pm.

Speakers: Coral Lindsay & Mark Jodoin

Topic: FLEETS AND FORWARDERS:

Steamboat Days on the Rideau Canal, 1830's – 1930's

The forwarding companies with their steamboats made an indelible impact on settlement, commerce, industry and agriculture in the Rideau Valley and beyond for more than a century. Moss Kent Dickinson and his partners competed in the forwarding trade from 1844 until 1869.

Coral Lindsay and RTHS president Mark Jodoin will present an overview of some of the more than 25 companies which were dominated by Macpherson and Crane, Canada's and Rideau's largest forwarders.

Commercial Steamboating on the Rideau Canal continued from the 1830s to the 1930s. Its decline was due to the development of the railroads.

The collection of photos, facts and folklore has expanded (like rising bread) since this topic was showcased for RTHS September 15, 1982. Were you there? Where were we?

Bring a friend

Light refreshments

***For a ride call Brian Earl
613-692-2371***

We were sorry to hear about Brian Booth's accident returning home from the October meeting. We wish you a speedy and complete recovery Brian.

Features This Month

- Coming Events
- Fall plan for the Dickinson House
- The September meeting. (overlooked last month)
- The October meeting.
- News from the Archives
- Mining the Archives Records



Fall Plan for the Dickinson House

The Dickinson House will re-open to the public November 22-23, 29-30 and for the Olde-fashioned Christmas December 6-7 from 12 to 5 pm. More than 3300 visitors have toured the House, June 6 to October 30. A huge "thank you" to all the volunteers.

The House will be decorated for Christmas with your help! Katherine Killens will hold a workshop on Thursday, November 13, 7:00 to 9:00 pm to teach us how to make decorations using natural products. Please bring scissors, glue gun and sticks, ruler, pencil and pad, and scraps of ribbon. The House will open at 6:30 pm. Please come.

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Coming Events

DEC 6-7 Manotick's "Old Fashioned Christmas", December 6-7

2009: The **Manotick 150th Anniversary** committee,

chaired by Peter Peers, Manotick Messenger, is proceeding with plans for 2009 celebrations. Brian Earl represents the RTHS on the Dickinson Square committees.

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News from the Rideau Archives . . .

Hours:

The Archives is open every Tuesday from 9:30 am to 4:30 p.m., and at other times by appointment. (613-489-2926).

Dr. Herbert George Finlay (HGF) Blair – (1875 – 1942)

Dr. Blair was born in Ashton, Ontario, the son of Archibald and Mary McEwen. He graduated from McGill Medical School in 1901 and practised in North Gower for 40 years.

In 1905 he married Jessie Mabel Potter, daughter of Dr. Samuel Potter and Emily Conn.

Mabel died in 1924 and four years later he married Retta Elizabeth Murray daughter of Rev. James Holt Murray a Methodist minister in North Gower.

In Oct. 2008 his son David L. Blair, a resident of Ottawa, donated his father's

- Medical Account books;
- A beautiful photo of his Boyd Block house in North Gower;
- Schedule of Fees authorized by the County of Carleton Medical Association with a list of the participating doctors which was on display in the Doctors office;
- A Bunsen burner, and several pill boxes,
- A Gaelic Bible, 1829,
- A Masonic Order Apron with case,
- A Membership certificate for the Manotick Lodge, dated 4 Aug. 1904

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Mining the Rideau Archives

International Harvester Almanac, 1917

Over the years Rideau Archives has collected a number of the annual almanacs put out by the International Harvester Company of Hamilton, Ont. Recently Miss Betty Lindsay gave us a copy of the 1917 edition. Like the others, this is full of interesting information and charming pen-and-ink illustrations.

Did you know that an apple tree will bear fruit for 25-40 years, but a pear tree will bear for 50-75 years? That round timber, when squared, loses one fifth of its volume?

That one mason and his helpers (calculated at 1 ¼ helpers for each mason) can lay 2,000 bricks in one day? Of course, a day was ten hours work back in 1917.

The book extols the value of kerosene over gasoline as a fuel for farm use, and notes that it may also be used for killing lice, cleaning sinks, removing grass stains, destroying mosquitoes and many other uses. In the long run, International Harvester got it wrong on kerosene's future on the farm. The almanac may be viewed at Rideau Archives any Tuesday, 9:30 to 4:30.

The "What Did We Do Last Summer?" Meeting

Presentations by Pat Earl, Lucy Martin, Mark Jodoin, and Coral Lindsay

Lower Fort Garry by Pat Earl

This past summer, Brian and Pat Earl took their daughter and three grandchildren to Manitoba. While there, they visited Lower Fort Garry, located twenty miles north of Winnipeg on the western bank of the Red River. Better known as 'the stone fort', Lower Fort Garry was built to replace Fort Garry which had burned in 1826. It did not become the administrative centre Governor George Simpson envisioned but instead was a supply depot for the Red River settlement and surrounding native populations.



On August 3, 1871, the first treaty in Western Canada was signed between the Crown and seven Chiefs of the Ojibway and Swampy Cree first Nations at the fort. Indian treaty #1 became the template for the ten subsequent numbered treaties in Western Canada.

The Fort was used to train North West Mounted Police in the early 1870's. Later it was a penitentiary, an insane asylum, the Hudson Bay Company residence, and a golf/motor country club. It is now owned by the federal government and administered by Parks Canada.

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An Amazing Move By Lucy Martin

Last fall the Kars Orange Hall was moved to Upper Canada Village. The purpose of the acquisition was to add a typical Ontario Masonic Lodge ca 1865 to the UCV collection. Lucy's presentation covered the move from Kars, the renovations and reconstruction in UCV, and the dedication and laying of the cornerstone ceremony in June 2008. A group of RTHS members attended this ceremony as the June excursion.

The ceremony was quite formal and interesting. Five hun-

dred Masons came, some from as far away as the American mid-west. They were on parade in their ceremonial dress and were supported by a pipe band. The ceremony included the anointing of the cornerstone.



The renovation of the hall was extensive. In Kars the siding on the lodge was clapboard. Under the clapboard they found an older board and batten covering. They chose the older covering for their purpose. The old roof may have had to be rebuilt entirely as well.



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The Dickinson House by Coral Lindsay

When the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority moved to their new building at Rideau Valley Dr. and Prince of Wales the Dickinson House was left empty, literally. The RTHS was given the opportunity to open it to the public on weekends and holidays this summer and fall. Coral Lindsay volunteered to manage the project for the RTHS. A number of RTHS members helped with the tours and with painting and decorating. Other people have contributed furniture and artefacts to the extent that 6 rooms are now furnished.

The house was first open on the Dickinson Day weekend. During that weekend there were just under 1200 visitors. As the summer went on we continued to do well. (As of Oct

31 more than 3300 visitors have been counted by our clicker.)



The tour guides wear period costumes, and some of their children and grandchildren, also in period costume, assist and have demonstrated on the lawn some of the games played back then, such as ring toss.

All in all it has been a very successful season and the RTHS hopes to continue the project into the future.

Shadow Soldiers of the St. Lawrence

Mark Jodoin, president of the RTHS, presented on the subject of 'Shadow Soldiers of the St. Lawrence'. His presentation was based a series of articles he is writing for Esprit de Corps magazine in honour of the St. Lawrence Seaway's 60th anniversary.

The stories tell of the exploits of explorers and loyalists who lived or died along the river's north shore. He discussed Simon Fraser, buried just north of Cornwall in St. Andrews, Ontario, who established the first white permanent settlements west of the Rocky Mountains.

Colonel Joel Stone, a loyalist from Connecticut who fought in the American Revolutionary War and eventually came north to found the town of Gananoque, was also featured. Mark also spoke of he famous loyalist from Johnstown, New York, Sir John Johnson, and Lt. Henry Simmons who founded Ernstown near Kingston, Ontario.

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October Meeting—An Expert Restoration by the Canadian Conservation Institute

For the October meeting, RTHS members were treated to the behind-the-scenes story of the restoration of the 1863

of restoration this project required while taking part in a CCI internship program.



Wallings Map of Carleton Country, now on display at the Rideau Township Archives. (Kindly donated by Mrs. Bessie Sadler Gray)

The map before treatment showing the stains and tears. The green color is false due to the overhead lighting when the picture was taken.

Sherry Guild is a Conservator specializing in works on paper with the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI). She described her agency's mission and the "Cadillac treatment" this map received. Co-presenter Amanda Gould is also a paper conservator. Gould performed most of the 100 hours

Using photos taken along the way, Gould described a process that begin with careful documentation and analysis of



the source material to develop the best restoration plan.

For this map, those steps included two baths in ethanol solvent to remove old varnish, using a special 6' x 6' stainless steel tray. The paper map was next washed to remove old stains and the original fabric backing was removed. Thinner portions of the map were filled in with a slurry made from fragments of original paper that came off with the fabric.

The map was then remounted for rigid support, onto Japanese tissue, made with long-fibre, plant-based material, which lasts longer than paper made from wood fibre. Restorative work was done to finish the edges and lost colour was replaced. A coat of wax finished the job. Cleaned, strengthened and stored in a new protective glass case, Guild and Gould guesstimate the map should be good for another 150 years.

The CCI was created in 1972 as a Special Operating Agency within the Department of Heritage Canada. The agency offers a wealth of technical bulletins and practical information on their website, including an excellent general-topic page for common questions about preserving books, fabric, photographs, and so forth. See for yourself at:

http://www.preservation.gc.ca/howto/grid_e.asp

