



The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

November 2011 Newsletter

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

Next Meeting

Date: Wednesday November 16, 2011
Time: 7:30 pm
Place: Carriage Shed
5524 Dickinson St.
Manotick, Ontario

This Month

1. The October Meeting/Strategic Plan
2. From the Pen of the President
3. The Dickinson House
4. News from the Rideau Archives
5. Coming Events
6. Volunteers at the Rideau Archives

Topic: *The Development of the Tank, and Canadian Armoured Activities in Italy in 1944*

Speakers: *Scott Cameron and Owen Cooke*

Scott Cameron and Owen Cooke are two Rideau Township Historical Society members with an ongoing interest in military history in general and in armoured warfare. This month they team up with a presentation on the development of the tank, and Canadian armoured activities in Italy in 1944 at the breaking of the Gothic Line, both a high and a low point in Canada's military story.

Bring a friend

Light refreshments

From the Pen of the President

A cenotaph is a monument within a community that is on the one hand a memorial to and on the other a reminder of those who have made the supreme sacrifice and who served to protect our rights and freedoms.

On November 5, 1978, the first Cenotaph in the village of Kars was unveiled. That Cenotaph was many years in the planning. It was built on land provided by the Carleton Board of Education near the main entrance to Kars Public School. It was designed by Vic Thompson, and erected and financed by Branch 314 of the Canadian Legion in Manotick. The design was simple and powerful, a sword vertically embedded in cement. The unveiling was a moment of great pride and accomplishment for the Village.

However, communities evolve and move on. In 2009 it became apparent the Public School in Kars would have to be demolished and the Cenotaph would have to be relocated. The new site was again provided by the Carleton Board of Education, this time in front of the Kars Middle School. It is a beautiful site. The Cenotaph is located immediately in front of a row of four flag poles. In front of the Cenotaph is a red brick walkway known as the memorial walkway, leading to the street. Within the walkway is a cross made of black pavers (bricks). The name of each

veteran who served in the First and Second World Wars is inscribed in a black paver. The names of those who made the supreme sacrifice are inscribed in pavers across the top of the cross. The Cenotaph and Black Cross are lit by floodlights. The design and setting are spectacular.

The Cenotaph was rededicated during a solemn and moving ceremony that preceded the annual Remembrance Day Ceremony on Sunday, November 6, 2011.

The names of the Veterans who served in both World Wars were provided by the volunteers at the Rideau Township Branch, City of Ottawa Archives located in North Gower. A committee of Kars citizens, known as the Kars Cenotaph Relocation Committee, developed the plan for the new site, and conducted an extensive fund-raising program that provided the funds to cover the cost of the move and the development of the new site. The Committee was assisted and supported by Branch 314 of the Manotick Legion and the Carleton Board of Education.

The next time you are in Kars examine this beautiful monument, review the names of the Veterans who served and ponder the many sacrifices they and others made so that we may enjoy a Country blessed with so many freedoms. It will be a touching experience.

The October Meeting - The RTHS Strategic Plan

Members are reminded that the October meeting did not feature a speaker. The meeting instead was to allow the membership to review the strategic plan prepared over the summer by the executive with the help of a volunteer facilitator, Warren Wilson.

Along with just being a good idea, an up-to-date strategic plan is a requirement for an organization such as the RTHS if we wish to apply for grants for various purposes. The plan does not commit us to carrying out specific projects or spending any money on specific activities. It offers instead guidelines and priorities for the Society to follow in choosing projects or activities to support as we do our year to year planning and budgeting.

The planning session was well attended (37 members participated). The Executive appreciates very much the

strong support of the Membership both in completing the survey form and in attending this planning session.

More information on the planning session itself appears later in this newsletter. The strategic plan appears on page 5 of this newsletter.

Notice of Motion

The following motion will be put forward at the January AGM.

“It is moved that the strategic plan as presented at this meeting and outlining the Mission, Vision, Values and Key Result Areas for the Rideau Township Historical Society be adopted as the Strategic Plan for the Society covering the period 2012 to 2017.”

The Dickinson House

We are nearing the end of another season at the Dickinson House. Although we haven't added up the numbers lately, we think we are once again approaching the 4,000 visitor mark. The heritage crafts weekends were particularly successful in drawing additional visitors to the site.

Not only were these craftsmen a successful draw, but they have proved to be an excellent source of further information not only on the crafts but also on historic facts

in other areas. Many of them left contact information and will be pleased to help us out in the future.

The house will be open Saturdays and Sundays through December 4th this year to accommodate visitors on the upcoming women's weekend and during the three weekends of the Watson's Mill's Christmas Market, November 19 to December 4.

Please consider whether you can help out as tour guides at the house on any of these weekends.

Coming Events:

The Peer Exchange Program serves almost 100 participants from over 30 local heritage organizations. See their web site at <http://www.choocopo.ca/english/peer-exchange.html>. There are two upcoming events for this program.

November 15th, 2011 - **Active Collecting**

What strategies can we use to make sure that our collections continue to grow and stay relevant as the organization and community evolve, and how can we use the collection to engage the community?

December 13th, 2011 **Volunteer Recruitment and Service Indicators**

How do we attract and retain volunteers, and what information can we collect in order to ensure we are serving them well?

Watson's Mill

Christmas Market: Saturdays and Sundays from Nov. 19th to Dec. 4th.

Clan Digging: An Introduction to Genealogy at Watson's Mill

Saturday October 12

10 am- 3 pm (Lunch Included)

\$35 person, \$30 for Watson's Mill members

For more information Call Cam at Watson's Mill 613-692-6455.

The Mill is located at 5525 Dickinson Street, Dickinson Square, Manotick. Free parking on-site.

Web Site: watsonsmill.com

Minutes of the October 19 Strategic Planning Meeting

by Maureen McPhee

Opening: The Rideau Township Historical Society (RTHS) met at Knox Church in Manotick. The evening commenced at 6:30 p.m. with a light meal. The President, Bill Tupper, then opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m., welcoming everyone to a special meeting on strategic planning. There were 37 members present.

Report of the Nominating Committee: The President stated that Coral Lindsay had resigned as Vice President of RTHS. He thanked her for all of her contributions to the Society, past, present and future. He then presented the report of the Nominating Committee for the vacated position, which recommended that Maureen McPhee become the new Vice President for a term extending to the end of January 2012. Owen Cooke had agreed to be Recording Secretary during this period, at those times that the Vice President was acting as President. A motion to this effect was put forward by Marguerite Rogers and seconded by Colin Wright. The motion was carried unanimously.

Program: Susan McKellar said that as Christmas was approaching, there were three suggestions for the December program: 1) a potluck dinner, for which a committee chair would need to be found; 2) a dinner at a local golf club or restaurant; or 3) an excursion to view the IMAX film on the CPR, followed by a dinner close to the theatre. Following a show of hands, it was decided to proceed with option 2.

Strategic Planning: The President outlined the steps that had led to the holding of the evening's strategic planning session. He then introduced the facilitator, Warren Wilson,

who explained the purpose of strategic planning and reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

A document was distributed outlining the results of the survey that had been carried out since the last meeting, and these were summarized by Will Pearl. Mr. Wilson then introduced a draft strategic plan, which the Executive Committee had prepared based upon the survey results. Mr. Wilson facilitated two discussions on: 1) reactions to the survey results; and 2) suggestions for improvements to the draft strategic plan. The results of the second discussion are attached as Annex A to these minutes.

Participants were encouraged to e-mail any additional comments to Maureen McPhee at the address on the RTHS website, or to send them by mail to Box 56, North Gower, Ontario, K0A 2T0. The deadline for comments was October 26, 2011.

It was noted that a revised strategic plan would be approved by the Executive Committee. It would then be brought back to the membership for acceptance as a consensus document that they could support. It was made clear that there would be no opportunity for further changes at that time.

On behalf of RTHS, the President thanked Warren Wilson for his excellent facilitation and also expressed the Society's appreciation for the meal prepared by Melanie Hayes, Stephanie Cameron and Jane Anderson.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned shortly after 9:00 p.m.

Annex A: Report on RTHS Strategic Planning

(The following should be read along with the strategic plan on a following page for references such as "result 1" or "Mission".)

The following points were raised by participants in the RTHS Strategic Planning Meeting held on October 19, 2011. The points were made in response to a draft strategic plan, which had been prepared by the Executive Committee following a survey of members' views.

Mission:

The majority of participants liked the draft Mission statement.

- It was described as comprehensive and concise.
- There was some debate as to how intertwined the RTHS mission should be with the heritage of the Rideau Canal, with a view also being expressed that canal heritage was not the aim of the Society.
- It was confirmed that the Mission statement is consistent with the objectives set out in the RTHS Constitution.

Vision:

The draft Vision statement was described as excellent and broad enough to allow for future growth.

- There was a suggestion that the last line be amended to read "historical and geographical " matters, but it was also noted that any such change would have to be made to the Mission as well.
- It was recommended that "creates heritage destinations" be amended to read "encourages" such destinations.
- It was noted that RTHS support for the Rideau Archives should be referenced, but it was stated later in the meeting that the Archives and RTHS are separate entities.
- It was recommended that the Vision statement be simplified by breaking out the separate points.
- It was felt that the verb tense should be changed to: "RTHS will be recognized...."

Values:

- There was a positive response to the reference to the importance of partnerships.
- There were no other comments made on values.

Overall, the Mission, Vision and Values were rated as being at least a 7 or 8 on a scale of 1 to 10, with only tweaking around the edges being required.

Key Results Areas:

- There was discussion as to whether publishing should be a separate key result or alternatively, whether Result 1 should read "Excellent Programming and Publishing".
- It was noted that it should be clear under Result 1 that programming should cover the whole geographic area of the former township.
- There was some debate over whether Result 3 - Attraction of Adequate Funding was a key result, or whether it was just a function of the Executive Committee that should be part of the business plan. Concern was expressed that without Result 3 in the strategic plan, Result 4 will not happen.
- There was a suggestion that Heritage Destinations should be under Programming; however, others thought that it was a different result area.
- There was some debate about increasing excursions

under 1.2 with a suggestion being made to integrate with other organizations, so as not to compete with them.

- It was felt that 1.4 concerning business elements of meetings was an administrative decision that did not need to appear in the strategic plan.
- It was noted that with respect to 2.1, program synopses from the minutes could be used as promotional pieces externally.
- It was suggested that there should be explicit reference to developing a working agreement with respect to operation of Dickinson House and Watson's Mill; however, others thought this was covered by the general reference in 2.3.
- It was requested that 4.1 be amended to read: "To explore management and restoration of Dickinson House...."
- It was suggested that 4.2 be amended to read "explore the desire for" or "the feasibility of" a second museum.
- There was a suggestion that historic site markers and plaques be included under Result 4 - Heritage Destinations.

Overall there was a consensus that that the strategic plan was heading in the right direction and was 75% there or more.

Change of Direction for the Dickinson Memorial

Bill Tupper and Brian Earl met with Mr. Roger Boulton, CEO of Beechwood Cemetery, Serge Loyer from Beechwood Family Services and M. Andre Martel, Vice-president of Martel et Fils, Monuments. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that the Dickinson Memorial would not be completely restored as previously reported. The monument is, in itself, an historic artifact. To clean it up and replace the eroded sandstone inserts would not be in keeping with accepted preservation practices. Instead,

the monument will be repaired by replacing the broken top piece. A bronze plaque will be made and mounted on a boulder in close proximity to the existing column. The plaque will repeat the details carved on the monument and, in addition, will have a brief bio of MKD emphasizing his political and industrial contributions to Manotick and Ottawa. DSHMI has applied for an Heritage Grant from the City to help defray costs.

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 **extensive genealogies** and other research collected by Shirley Davidson Lowe was recently given to the Rideau Branch of the Ottawa Archives. Shirley's extended family included Davidsons, Harrises, Wilsons and others from the former Marlborough Township as well as Martins, Lindsays, Scobies, Fergusons, etc. of the former North Gower and Osgoode Townships. This wealth of information was donated by Shirley's husband, Donald, and son, Jim, in appreciation of her work here at Rideau. We are very grateful.

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

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

The mission of the Rideau Township Historical Society (RTHS) is to stimulate interest in the history of the people, communities, institutions and industries within the boundaries of the former Township of Rideau, as well as historical subjects in general.

NOISSI

RTHS will be recognized as a well-established Ontario heritage society with an active membership that, while working in cooperation with others:

- Provides high quality historical programming and interpretation;
- Researches and publishes authoritative works of local history; and
- Encourages the establishment of heritage destinations that engage the public and enhance knowledge and understanding of historical matters.

VISION

- Importance of telling the story of historical development within the former Rideau Township and elsewhere.
- Responsibility to engage local residents and the public.
- Importance of partnerships with like-minded organisations, to maximize effort and use of resources.
- Importance of marking and preserving historic sites.

VALUES

KEY RESULTS AREAS – (Where we focus efforts) & Related Strategic Objectives (What we need to do)

1. Excellent Programming & Publishing

- 1.1 To seek out high quality speakers on a broad range of topics.
- 1.2 To increase the number of excursions.
- 1.3 To continue publishing a range of authoritative works of local history, including smaller booklets.

2. Effective Promotion & Communication

- 2.1 To increase regular promotion, advertising and reporting of RTHS activities in local newspapers; use of public notices; and broader distribution of newsletters.
- 2.2 To establish a committee to work with the Communications Director, including members from outside the RTHS Executive.
- 2.3 To improve joint communications with other heritage organizations.
- 2.4 To have more RTHS booths at events such as fairs, conferences and community celebrations.

3. Attraction of Adequate Funding

- 3.1 To establish a committee responsible for grant applications and fundraising, the Chair of which will be a member of the RTHS Executive.
- 3.2 To recruit an individual with expertise in grant applications.
- 3.3 To hold targeted fundraising events.
- 3.4 To establish a fair but sufficient membership fee.
- 3.5 To charge an entrance fee for certain key RTHS-sponsored public events.

4. Heritage Destinations

- 4.1 To explore management and restoration of Dickinson House, with a view to operating a living museum therein.
- 4.2 To cooperate with Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. in developing Dickinson Square into a national heritage destination.
- 4.3 To explore the feasibility of a second museum in North Gower, with a special focus on fire-fighting artifacts.
- 4.4 To explore the marking and preserving of other historic sites.

5. Increased Membership

- 5.1 To recruit new members, with a particular focus on young people.
- 5.2 To use social media and communications technology to connect with members.
- 5.3 To invest in youth through sponsored heritage projects and history scholarships or bursaries.

Volunteers Make Things Happen at the Rideau Archives

Article by Lucy Martin

Most RTHS members know the Rideau Branch of the City Archives as a regular site for our monthly evening meetings. But to truly appreciate the facility, drop by on any Tuesday. That's when the wheels turn and things happen. I spoke with some of the fourteen people working there on Tuesday, November 8th to hear why they came - and what they valued about this resource. Please remember that there are other volunteers that were not there that particular Tuesday.

After years of toil, Ellen Adamsons just sent a book about her husband's family off to a publisher. "With Only a Suitcase" follows the path of Janis and Velta Adamsons as refugees who came to Canada in the aftermath of World War II and the communist take over of their homeland, Latvia. (The book should be available for purchase in late November.)

Ellen benefited from significant help from Ron Wilson along with Invaluable translation and copy editing from sister-in-law, Maija Adamsons. How did the archives help? Ellen said the research room and volunteers provided a supportive community. "Always they had advice of where you could go and what you could do. And the advice was given really well, there were suggestions, 'try this'."

Georgina Tupper is one of the persons most responsible for the existence of the Rideau Archives in the first place. She's still a driving force, recruiting volunteers and managing the many projects undertaken each year. Besides the importance of preserving this region's records, artifacts and history, for Tupper it's not just about place, it's also about people. "It's the group we have with us here, that makes it such a pleasure."

Tupper says most discover the archives once their children are grown or retirement frees their time. They come to research their own family history projects or try volunteering. Each year the Archives puts together special exhibits, for 2011 it was Home Children and post offices. In 2012 it will be fraternal organizations, lodges, from Orangemen to Odd Fellows. "We use our exhibits to gather more information from the community. If we exhibit what we have, they'll come in and have a look and remember that yes, they have things at home, they have pictures..." which generates wider discussions and donations of relevant archival material.

Betty Bartlett had trouble remembering how long she'd been volunteering for the archives. 1974 was her best guess. Having been a history teacher at South Carleton, Bartlett also had a long-standing interest in local buildings and architecture. (Bartlett's "Driving Tour of Rideau Township" remains a popular RTHS publication.) "Local history

has been my big interest and my only regret is that I grew up in Toronto, so it's all kind of second-hand!" Bartlett admits there were advantages to growing up in a big city. "But on the other hand, there wasn't the same sense of community. Here, people have life-long connections."

Bartlett would like to update the files on notable area houses, and she's thinking about a new project interviewing area farmers. A tempting and daunting subject indeed!

Archive patron Brian Booth was engrossed in the actual ledger book of James Lindsay. He said, "I come to see what's here and to make use of the materials." Booth began writing about the history of North Gower Township in 2004, going all the way back to the Ice Age! (He's currently researching 1840-1860.) A retired patent examiner, with training in engineering, Booth appreciates having access to source materials and supplemental books all in one location.

Coral Lindsay is another Archive mainstay, though she makes it sound like play. "I love to come here for lunch!" She's always happy to help visitors, "Especially if I know them, or I know their great-grandparents. That makes me sit up and pay attention." Lindsay says it's not all genealogy at the archives. "Right now I'm working on who won the War of 1812."



Mary Davidson and Serge Barbe are studying a photograph album donated to the Archives by the family of the late Shirley Lowe.

Archive librarian and North Gower resident Owen Cooke says he comes every Tuesday because he is interested in the organization of knowledge. Cooke jokes that he's always going to be a "foreigner" in the community, but says he's gradually coming to understand it, partly thanks to the Archives. "Anybody could get a great deal of local knowledge, and not only local knowledge, but a knowledge of our past, as Canadian citizens - as world citi-

zens.” Cooke's latest project is a revision of his Bibliography of Canadian Military History. Already published in three editions, the fourth version will be on-line, which means it can be constantly updated.

Ron Wilson wears many hats in service of the Archives and RTHS. His interest in local history began with the discovery of some documents in his mother's cedar chest, records of the purchase of the farm he grew up on, dating from the 1800's. A retired oceanographer with skills in computer data management, Wilson has been instrumental in putting out three recent books for RTHS - with more on the way. Of the Archives, Wilson says, “If you have that interest (in local history) this is a good place to work on it.”

Patrons Naomi Samuels and Maritta Saharanin, were busily researching records of the Osgoode Odd Fellow lodge. They have enjoyed use of the Archive building for many meetings of the Women's Institute, including one this month.



Maureen McPhee searching land registry records for North Gower.

Maureen McPhee also had standard archival white gloves on, as she went through land registry books for North Gower Township from the 1860's. She was checking

documents as part of on-going research into the history of Dickinson House and Watson's Mill. McPhee says she was trained as a historian, but previously she disliked the research parts of that job. Oddly, she now finds it fun. “There's something intriguing about this whole Dickinson story, and I do like searching and finding little tidbits here and there, and then putting it together into a story.” She credits fellow archive volunteers with making the work easier. “There's a community of people here that will help you. They help you find what you need, direct you not just here, but at the City archives.”

Life-long Manotick resident Mary Davidson was elbow deep in a photo album donated by the family of the late Shirley Lowe. “I'm here because I come from the area and I'm interested in the history and I like looking up family things.” Davidson thinks the Archives may be the best destination for archival material like that album, saying this way the photos stay safe and accessible. Davidson is a winter volunteer, saving the summer for golf. “I do enjoy it, as long as there's something for me to do I'll keep coming back.” Davidson hopes to write up her Harris family history one day.

Davidson's golf buddy and fellow archive volunteer Pat Pratt is also keen on the sense of connection she gets through volunteering. “I'm a local person, so a lot of the people we're researching, I know them.” Pratt looks after the files on the local schools. “I enjoy doing that because I went to school here!” Pratt began volunteering about 16 years ago, after being recruited by Georgie Tupper. “It's just fun to work here, because it's interesting.”

Serge Barbe is the Community Records Archivist for the City of Ottawa Archives. Each Tuesday for the past five years he's come to the Rideau Branch, to supervise the operations and provide professional services to the public. “They know a lot more about the history of the community, so I'm there to help them, rather than them help me!” Barbe is being modest, he is a key part of services on offer at the branch. “In terms of it's treasures, yes, there's something for everyone in the archives, where it's your family history, or the history of your house or in terms of administrative needs.” One could for example check records to understand assessment values, or research by laws that could affect their community.

Newest volunteer Ruth Wright is yet another life-long area resident. She says she enjoys the camaraderie and getting to know more about her community. “I come across a lot of people that I know and it's just interesting!” A recent retiree, Wright began volunteering in October. She says people don't know all that the archives has to offer. “I'm learning things. It's fun!”