

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

October 2009 Newsletter

Newsletter Editors: Coral Lindsay and Ron Wilson (rideauarchives@ottawa.ca)

Next Meeting

Oct. 21, 7:30 p.m., St. Andrew's, Kars:

Katherine Killins and friends will present "What they Wore".

Later In the fall...

Nov 18, 7:30 p.m., Carriage Shed, Manotick:
Talk by Dr. Andrew Iarocci on 1st Canadian Division, World War I.

Dec. 9, 6:30 pm. The annual Christmas pot-luck dinner. Music, great food, great company, great conversation. Please join us.

Speaker: Katherine Killins

Katherine Killins has worked in Dundurn Castle in Hamilton as an interpreter, and is very knowledgeable about period costumes.

Subject: "What They Wore"

Katherine plans to talk about some of the outfits people chose to wear, and show us pictures of the highlights of the evening. Come and see yourself in living colour!

Besides the costumes there was all the behind the scenes activities of organizing such an event, finding the musicians, and the support provided by the Manotick Legion.

Some of us suggested to Katherine that she do a party again the next Saturday but she said "Maybe next year." Let's hope.

Special Thanks

A very special thank you is owed to Katherine Killins and her team of workers who came up with the idea for **Manotick Saturday Night**, expanded the idea into a brilliant plan, then made all the arrangements and hosted the very successful event.

Kudos to and cheers for everyone involved.



Organizing Committee Web Site
www.manotick150.ca/

Bring a friend

Light refreshments

For a ride call Brian Earl

Features This Month

1. The September meeting.
2. Manotick Saturday Night..
3. News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa Archives.
4. The Dickinson House this Summer.

Dickinson Legal Stamp

The stamp shown here was used by George Dickinson in his role as a notary public.

Now in the Dickinson House



Last Meeting

Glenn Wright on the RCMP in Ottawa

Article by Lucy Martin

September's meeting took place at **Pierce's Corners, in a lovely hall that has its own story**. Stuart Rogers gave us a thumbnail sketch: the building was built in 1855 for £140 (\$700) on Gallagher Road, before being dragged to the present site.

In time, it was declared surplus and nearly burned as an exercise for the fire department. But **community members rallied in the 1970's, rescuing the hall** for continued use. Most recent improvements include a kitchen, better bathrooms and new flooring. (It's a nice space, worth knowing about and using.)

The building held memories for many in the audience, including former area Mayor and MP Bill Tupper. It was there **Tupper reported enduring "the worst night of my political life"**, appearing with 5 rivals for office before an audience stirred up by a controversial article in the Kemptville Advance (which he had yet to read), all while battling a fever of 103.

Tupper survived the fever and the election. He noted **the hall still housed the same humble wooden table where officials for Marlborough Township once conducted the business of governance**. The building also hosted a party to commemorate the RTHS's 25th anniversary.

Marguerite Rogers introduced the guest speaker, her friend, Glenn Wright. Wright retired in 2006 after a 30-year career as an archivist and historian with Library and Archives Canada, National Defense and the RCMP. His current activities include research for print and TV, writing and presentations that further his long-standing interest in the field of genealogy. The speaker offered his thanks to Leslie Anderson for her help and attendance at the presentation.

Wright began by observing an anniversary coincidence: just as the RTHS is marking its 35th year, it was **35 years ago to the very week that women first began their training as RCMP officers**.

Wright did not wish to comment on RCMP controversies of today. **His focus was the broad over-view of an iconic and truly Canadian institution, part of Sir John A. Macdonald's vision** and legacy of a law-abiding country from sea, to sea, to sea.

Interesting details: **until fairly recent times, all RCMP recruits had to be able to ride**. Equestrian training was discontinued as an economy measure in 1966. (Side note: The world-famous musical ride is still performed by actual RCMP personnel. Each year approximately 800 apply, 45 of whom are selected for 3-years of special duty.)

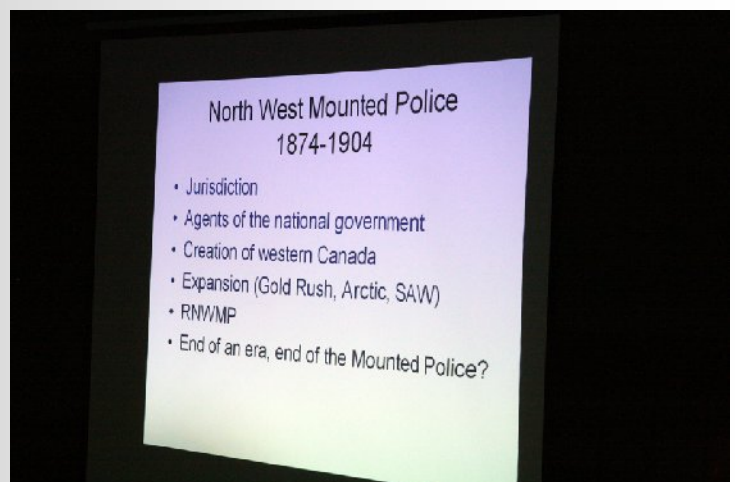
Institutional chronologies can be a dull affair: lists of dates, buildings, names, titles and a maze of organizational charts. **Wright's lively talk was well-spiced with the individuals and quirks that make history a dynamic adventure**. Appropriate slides were enhanced by his wry observations.



*(Editors note) One of the surprises for some of us was that what we now call **the Royal Canadian Mounted Police** was a late coming name. The missions and names of earlier versions of the RCMP went through several iterations before reaching the present day form.*

Some western provinces had their own provincial police forces in earlier days but then disbanded them in favour of having the RCMP do the job for them.

The slide below shows one earlier version. It didn't even include the word "royal".



For example, it turns out that **Don Cherry's grandfather, John Cherry, left Kingston as a young man of 18 to be among the first recruits headed west.** On the TV show *Who Do You Think You Are?* some years ago, Don Cherry took great pleasure in reading his ancestor's short record of service, including several sizable fines for breeches of discipline. (Unscientific evidence that insouciance may be hereditary?)

Wright also gave a nod to **the defunct and largely-forgotten Dominion Police**, whose duties included intelligence work, and providing security for politicians and visiting royalty before being merged into an expanding and newly re-named RCMP in 1920.

The establishment of RCMP administrative offices in Ottawa included aspects of city geography, as well as the eternal and unending bureaucratic questions of *who* gets much-contested space. It even touches the Catholic Church after Archbishop Alexandre Vachon's costly architectural aspirations lead instead to the RCMP - finally - gaining a single dedicated headquarters in Ottawa. **In 1952, the RCMP initially rented the complex Vachon had envisioned as a grand seminary.** Though at first denied the right to make alterations, the force eventually added facilities for forensics and computers to keep pace with investigative advances.

The politics of where to house economically significant job sites continues with **the much-discussed RCMP move to the former JDS campus near Barrhaven.**

The creation and evolution of the RCMP is a complex and interesting topic, naturally reflecting growth and change in Canada at large.

A red-coated Mountie may be the icon most associated with Canada, featured from comics to movies and on 13 Canadian stamps, so far. More information can be found at the RCMP's website:

<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/hist/index-eng.htm>

As always, we thank our guest speaker for sharing specialized knowledge with attendees.



Canadian stamps featuring the RCMP



President Mark Jodoin presenting speaker Glenn Wright with an autographed copy of "Shadow Soldiers"

The Dickinson House This Summer

The **Manotick Saturday Night** party was still affecting some of the RTHS volunteers at the Dickinson House on the Sunday following.

Several of the volunteers in their costumes were out on the lawn trying to teach each other square dancing. Several passers-by joined the fray and then went on to tour the house.

A good time was had by all.



Manotick Saturday Night

Article by Lucy Martin

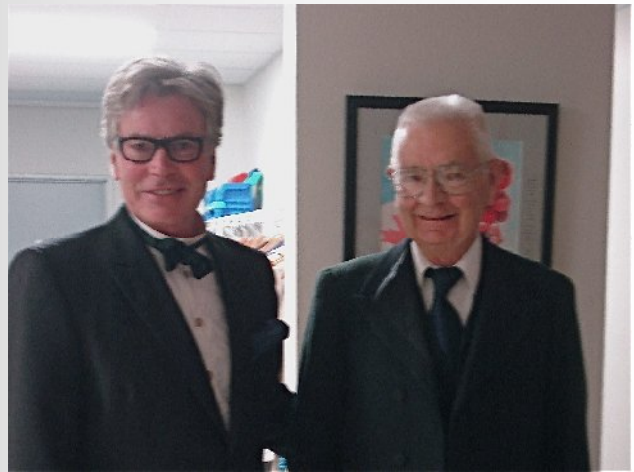
At the risk of sounding immodest, that went well!

Starting with a suggestion from the irrepressible Katherine Killins, RTHS members pulled off a fine little community party on October 3rd, to mark Manotick's 150th in an old-fashioned, folksy, family way.

Starting something new from scratch did require a number of meetings and several months of planning. But kudos all around for a job well done. One of the project's real pleasures was the easy, cooperative spirit everyone brought to the effort.

As a matter of fact, the whole thing proceeded a little like the old folk tale about stone soup. It's a busy world and many are hard-pressed for time. In this case, everyone who stepped forward had some talent, item or energy they felt willing to contribute, until the collaborative whole quickly exceeded the sum of the parts.

For those who missed it, what was the party like? The Legion's Harmony Hall was handsomely decorated to evoke the harvest season. Over eighty attended, wearing a wide and impressive array of period costumes, including some vintage originals, such as the 103 year-old wedding suit worn by Richard de St. Croix's father. The Legion's crack Anne Padgham catered a simple, but satisfying spread of sandwiches made on Watson's Mill bread, along with veggies, pickles, beverages and apple or pumpkin pie. (Accompanied by fresh whipped cream or good cheddar cheese, naturally.)



Greely's Mel and Eleanor McDougal rounded up fellow musicians from the Rideau and Osgoode area. They cheerfully played all night and bravely attempted to teach us some square dancing. (Note to self: learn some basic dance steps besides the rock & roll flailing about that passed for dance in my youth.)

If chatting or dancing did not suffice, lovely old crokinole and checker boards were also available for entertainment.

As demanded by party-goers, President Mark Jodoin's address was fulsome, yet brief. Jodoin was ushered in by piper Scott Cameron and his sister Margaret a new student on drums. Though still in high school, Scott is a fine piper with quite a lot of experience. I was astonished to learn Margaret was giving her first public performance, which she did with great style. Clearly, poise and musical talent run in the family.

Katherine's niece Rachel provided photographic talent with posed portraits and casual shots. These will be presented as part of the October meeting "What They Wore".

It's possible people were just being polite, but the most repeated comment as smiling party-goers departed was, "That was fun!". Also heard over and over again were variations on two thoughts: "Those musicians were great" and "We should do this again".

It remains to be seen if that happens, but our heartfelt thanks go out to all who made the night both happy and memorable.





From the Rideau Archives

Dr. David W. Wallace and his wife Esther Angelia Eastman were both born in North Gower and raised their family in Metcalfe, Ottawa and Kemptville. Dr. Wallace practiced medicine in Kemptville in the early 1900s. Most Wallace family members are buried in Springhill Cemetery, Vernon.

A great-granddaughter of Dr. Wallace, Catherine Gallagher, has promised to donate his patient records to the Rideau Archives to preserve them for future generations. She has already donated a history of the Wallace family. Catherine's mother Betty (Wallace) White celebrated her 90th birthday recently in Kennebunk with her family.

Our thanks to Catherine for her continuing support of the Rideau Branch of the Ottawa Archives.



Betty Wallace with her siblings Kenneth and Catherine, Ottawa circa 1924

Help Needed at the Dickinson House

Don't forget that volunteers are still needed for Saturdays, Sundays and holidays to act as hosts and interpreters for visitors to the Dickinson House. We will still be open throughout October.

On-the-job training is provided and period costumes are appropriate. Last year the 25 volunteers welcomed almost 4,000 visitors.

Please call Coral Lindsay, 613-489-2029, if you can help.

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