



The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

October 2010 Newsletter

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

Next Meeting

Date: Wednesday, October 20, 2010
Time: 7:30 pm
Place: Kars R.A. Hall,
1604 Old Wellington Street,
Kars, Ont

Speakers ***Ken Swayze***
Coral Lindsay

Subject: ***Kars on the Rideau***
Second Edition

Note that this is a special meeting of the RTHS for the purpose of launching our new book "Kars on the Rideau, Second Edition" by Coral Lindsay. There will not be a business meeting. Come one, come all for this special occasion and bring some friends.

Ken Swayze has degrees from Simon Fraser University (BA archaeology; MA geography) and a background in archaeological research. He has discovered and excavated archaeological sites in most regions of Canada, while employed for Heritage Planning and Research Branch, Ontario; Canadian Parks Service (western region); and the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Northern Oil and Gas Action Plan). He is currently an archaeological consultant and lives in the upper Ottawa Valley. Ken will speak on the archaeological find of 2006 near the corners of Rideau Valley and Roger Stevens Drives.

Coral Lindsay needs no introduction. Suffice it to say she did not stop collecting material on Kars when the first edition was published in 1972. She has added a wealth of pictures and information to increase significantly the historical and genealogical value of the book. She will share her thoughts and read passages from this new edition.

150th Anniversary of the Mill

Watson's Mill celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2010.

Isabelle Geoffrion and the Watson's Mill Team have announced a year-long celebration to commemorate this anniversary. Stay tuned to their e-news at www.watsonsmill.com and celebrate with them throughout the year.

[Events for Fall 2010](#)

Bring a friend

Light refreshments

This Month

1. The September Meeting
2. Kars on the Rideau
3. Watson's Mill 150th
4. The Dickinson House
5. News from the Rideau Archives
6. From the Pen of the President

From the Pen of the President

September brought sadness with the passing of two friends and colleagues, namely Keith Buck and George Riley. Keith was a valuable and longtime member of our Society. He had a smile that always made you comfortable in his presence.

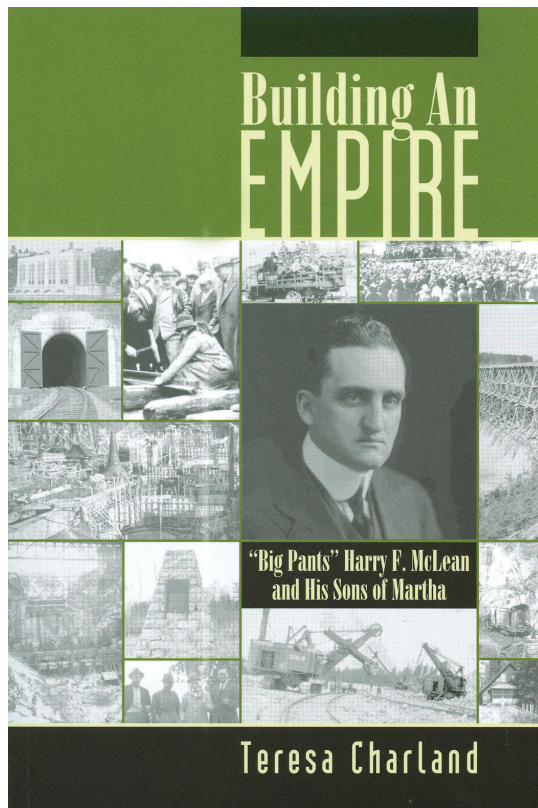
Keith and George both were Second World War veterans and were commended for leadership and bravery. They both studied geology at McGill University and worked in different capacities for the Department of Mines and Resources in Ottawa as well as overseas. Professionally they were valued members of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy and mentors to young scientists. They possessed two enviable traits, namely their analytical skills to quickly get at the heart of a problem, and from the podium or with pen could make complex issues understandable. Keith and George both resided in Manotick and it is a pleasure to describe them as good citizens and gentlemen.

The September 2010 Meeting

Teresa Charland's Presentation on Harry F. McLean *Article by Lucy Martin*

After a break over the summer, members and guests gathered in North Gower at the Rideau Branch of the Archives to hear Merrickville author Teresa Charland detail the unusual life of Harry F. McLean.

The audience of 26 included Betty Bartlett, Charland's history teacher at South Carleton High, a connection that added a warm sub-text to the evening.



Harry McLean was one of Merrickville's most famous residents. At times, he's best remembered for oddities like throwing money out of windows, funding winter sports for Merrickville's children and having a private zoo. That reputation for eccentricity perhaps overshadowed McLean's major accomplishments as a builder of important infrastructure projects.

Charland spent a full decade researching and writing her book. Challenges were plentiful, including ambiguous records and letters. (For example, she ran into two different men named George Cook, plus a Col. Ramsey and a Col. Ramsay, points of confusion that took years to unravel!)

Charland says her work was greatly assisted by oral histories in the National Archives and invaluable help from members of the Bytown Railway Club, who always seemed to know otherwise obscure technical details.

Born in Bismark, North Dakota in 1883, McLean came to Canada at age 22 to work for the Toronto Construction

Company. That launched a career of building railroads, hydroelectric plants and military bases, across two wars and the Great Depression.

Determined and innovative, McLean got the nickname "big pants" because of his girth. In his personal life, he married more than once, but had no children. It's generally agreed that he drank to excess and preferred to avoid the spotlight. Some of his antics made a perverse sort of sense, as when McLean claimed he'd rather give his money away than let the government have it.

And what does "Sons of Martha" mean? Massive projects often involve the risk of injury, or death. Reportedly, after hearing Rudyard Kipling personally recite the poem in



Teresa Charland presenting.

question, McLean was inspired to build cairns commemorating fatalities at his worksites. Kipling's springboard was the biblical story of Jesus chiding Martha for putting practical tasks (like feeding her guests) ahead of spiritual matters:

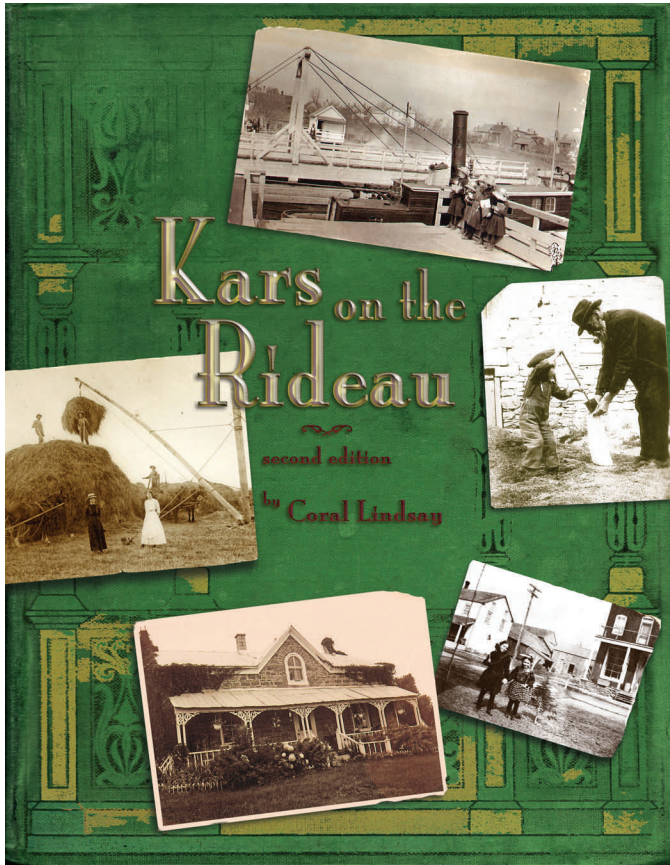
Rudyard Kipling's "The Sons of Martha" (first stanza)

*The Sons of Mary seldom bother, for they have inherited that good part;
But the Sons of Martha favour their Mother of the careful soul and troubled heart.
And because she lost her temper once, and because she was rude to the Lord her Guest,
Her Sons must wait upon Mary's Sons, world without end, reprieve, or rest.*

This past June, Charland's book received the W. Gordon Plewes Award from the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering for notable contributions to the study of the history of civil engineering in Canada or by Canadians elsewhere. We thank her for making Harry McLean's story better-known, and salute the engineers and workers of the world, for improving life in general.

Kars on the Rideau

OTTAWA, ON, October 10, 2010 -- The Rideau Township Historical Society is proud to announce the launch of the second edition of the local history book *Kars on the Rideau* at a public event to be held in the village on October 20, 2010.



Kars on the Rideau has been updated by its original author and well-known local heritage interpreter Coral Lindsay, a resident of the village which is located 25 minutes southwest of downtown Ottawa on the west bank of the Rideau River. In this edition Mrs. Lindsay has added more than 300 photographs, images, and maps, recent archaeological findings and additional facts to the story of the founders, families and farms that have provided so well for Eastern Ontario and beyond for more than two centuries.

The first edition, published in 1972, was based on the work of the Kars Women's Institute when a nine volume Tweedsmuir History of Kars was compiled at the suggestion of Lady Tweedsmuir, wife of the former Governor General of Canada. Much of the social and economic change over the 38 years since is captured in the book's additional information and pictures, plus this second edition also takes advantage of developments in vastly improved printing technology.

The 211-page book covers several themes of Kars history, ranging from the geological to the genealogical, and offers the reader insight into the residents' feelings, attitudes and concerns of their time. For example when judged from the present, readers might conclude the early villagers – despite facing the vagaries of weather, wars, and an agrarian lifestyle – were much happier and satisfied with their lives than might be expected.

The book will be launched on October 20, 2010 at the regular meeting of the Rideau Township Historical Society to be held at the Kars R.A. Hall, 1604 Old Wellington Street at 7:30 pm. The program will include a presentation on the recent archaeological finds in Kars near the corner of Roger Stevens and Rideau Valley Drives. All are wel-

Why not join the RTHS?

- attend the meetings and enjoy the presentations
- meet other people interested in local history
- find fascinating projects to volunteer for
- get assistance and advice with genealogical and historical research
- learn more about local history

Meetings are held monthly (except for July and August) at various locations in the former Rideau Township including Manotick, Kars, North Gower and Carsonby. We also do excursions to historical points of interest.

Yearly membership costs are \$10 for a single & \$15 for a family.

Contact the [Membership Director](#)

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

The Dickinson House, Summer of 2010

The Dickinson House will be open for six more weekends:

- October 16 - 17, 23 - 24, and 30 - 31;
- November 20 - 21 and 27 - 28;
- December 4 - 5.

We hope to reopen the House again in the spring of 2011.

During the Manotick B.I.A. Harvest Festival we were visited by 271 people on Saturday, October 9 between 11:00 am and 4:00 pm. All of the guests were delighted with our stories, costumes, the exhibits and the architecture. Many of them plan to return and bring friends.

The Third Floor

As in previous years the RTHS has provided volunteers to conduct interpretive tours of the Dickinson House. In addition to the tours the RTHS has provided the vast majority of the historical furniture, displays and items. The major contributors for these contents are Coral Lindsay and Mark Jodoin, who have raided their personal collections heavily to do this.

Coral is mainly responsible for setting up the rooms and each year she endeavours to add new content and to redo some of the old so that visitors are not treated to the



This large spinning wheel has a connection to Coral Lindsay's family. It was built by Stephen Martin, who was Coral's husband's grandfather.

same experience as the last visit. This year we gained access to the third floor and Coral has once more dipped into her and other peoples' collections. The pictures included here are of the new third floor. We are open for several more weekends. Please come and see these new displays and revisit the old.

These artefacts are domestic but they represent the same process as that which was used in Dickinson's woolen mill. It opened in 1861, was leased to R. W. Conway and burned to the ground in the early 1880s. The records in the woolen mill were destroyed in the fire. However we have access to the census records and other information.



These devices are wool winders. Once the wool is spun it can be wound into skeins to prevent it from tangling and to provide a measure of length. A skein is defined as "a length of thread or yarn wound in a loose long coil". For the two wool winders above forty turns provides the length that was described as a skein. Each of these winders has a mechanical mechanism that indicates forty turns so the operator doesn't have to count.



This picture is of three looms for weaving thread or yarn into cloth. The two on the table were made by Elijah Scharf, Coral Lindsay's father. The samples of cloth on the floor have been woven on one of the three looms shown here.

News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa 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).*

- There will be **two new exhibits this fall**. The first will be on the Post Offices of Rideau Township and the second on the 20th anniversary of the Rideau Township Archives

New Books at Rideau Archives Branch Reference Library

- Carleton Board of Education. A Celebration of Twenty-Eight Years of Quality Education, 1969 to 1997. [1997?], Vault – Box 178.44.
- [Carleton (Ont.: County).] Revised By-Laws of the Corporations of the Late District of Dalhousie and County of Carleton; Containing the Principal By-Laws of Said Corporations ... from August, 1842, until June, 1873 1873. N.B. – This is a very rare item. The only other copy listed in Amicus is in Rare Books at the Supreme Court of Canada Library, Vault – Box 108.04.
- Clark, W.B., [comp.] Book of Family Worship and Helps to Devotion : Prayers for Every Day in the Week, Morning and Evening 1852, Vault - Box 107.9-3.
- Cochrane, Jean. The One-Room School in Canada. 1981, Vault – Box 178.46.
- Cook, (Sir) Edward. Why the Empire is at War; the Causes and the Issues. [1914?], Vault – Box 127.3-1.
- Cunnington, Susan. Stories from Dante. [1900?], Vault – Box 106.01-1.
- [Freemasons. Grand Lodge of Ontario.] Centennial Celebration; Fraternal Reviews, 1955; 1855-1955; Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario. [1955], Vault – Box 106.11-3.
- [Freemasons. Grand Lodge of Ontario.] Centennial Celebration; Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario; One Hundredth Annual Communication, 1855-1955, Toronto 1955. [1955], Vault – Box 106.11-2.
- Maturini Corderii colloquiorum centuria selecta: or, a Select Century of M. Cordery's Colloquies: with an English Translation, as Literal as Possible, and a Large Vocabulary, for the Assistance of Beginners in the Study of Latin. 1815, Vault - Box 107.9-2.
- Ontario Association of School Business Officials. Manual for School Business Officials. 1964, Vault – Box 178.5.
- Roosevelt, Eleanor, and Frances Cooke Macgregor. This is America. 1942, Vault – Box 129.28.
- Sankey, Ira D., comp. & singer. Sacred Songs & Solos; nos. 1 and 2 Combined. [18--], Vault - Box 107.9-1
- World's Grain Exhibition and Conference; under the Distinguished Patronage of His Excellency the Governor General; Announcement and Prize List; Regina – Canada, July 25th to August 6th 1932. [1932?], Vault – Box 129.26.

In addition to these specific titles the Archives has acquired

- Several periodical issues and yearbooks, 1933-1959,
- Several heritage cookbooks, 1933-1993,
- Several school textbooks, 1884-1950.