

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

October 2013 Newsletter

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

The October Meeting

Date: Wednesday, October 16, 2013
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Alfred Taylor Recreation Centre
2300 Community Way,
North Gower, Ontario



Book Launch for “Cheese Factories of Rideau Township, Second Edition”

On Wednesday, October 16, at 7:30 p.m., at the Alfred Taylor Recreation Centre, the Rideau Township Historical Society will celebrate the launch of a second edition of the book *Cheese Factories of Rideau Township* by Iona Joy. The public is invited to attend so bring lots of friends.

For almost a hundred years small cheese factories dotted the landscape of Rideau Township. By the early 1960s all were closed. *Cheese Factories of Rideau Township* is an attempt to identify the cheese factories which once operated in or near Rideau Township and to honour the cheesemakers and the farmers who contributed so much both to the local community and to the Canadian economy.

This Month

1. Launch of the Cheese Factories book
2. The September Meeting
3. News from the Rideau Archives
4. Dickinson House report
5. Some Watson's Mill Events
6. The November Meeting
7. Victorian High Tea
8. Minutes of the Sept meeting

Wine, Apple Juice and Cheese will be served

Cheese Factories of Rideau Township Second Edition

Although it is not widely known these days, cheese occupied a special place in the economic development of our country. In fact for the last decade of the nineteenth century it took turns with fish as Canada's leading staple export after timber and sawmill products.

The export of cheese was so important to Canada that the federal and provincial governments and universities such as Queen's in Kingston, all contributed to the development and management of the industry. The goal was to produce and deliver the highest quality product to an international market in order to keep and increase the number of those clients.

How this was accomplished and by whom is the subject of the book. It required a commitment at all levels to maintain standards, keep schedules, and above all, work hard and long in the factories, on the farms, and in the transportation of the cheese to market. The book discusses all these aspects of the making and marketing of the cheese.

The book also recognizes and names many of the people who built and owned the factories, worked as cheesemakers, produced the milk on the farms, were patrons of the

factories and served as “titans” of the industry from both a business and political perspective. The name index at the back of this book contains more than 275 names.

So get a copy of the book, kick back and enjoy learning about the fine work, the successes, but also the problems of the Canadians who built and operated the cheese industry in the 100 year period roughly from the 1850s to the 1950s.



The morning gathering at the North Gower Cheese Factory c 1900. The delivery of the milk provided an enjoyable social opportunity. Photo courtesy of Wm. Hicks.

The September Meeting

Six Servings of Yukon

Article and Photos by Lucy Martin

You never know what might be on tap at the RTHS monthly meetings. An expert speaker from afar, or equally interesting speakers from within our own ranks, many of whom rank as experts themselves.



The presenters. From left to right, Doug Culham, Maureen McPhee, Barbara Humphreys, Owen Cooke, Susan McKellar, and Bill Tupper.

Fresh from our summer break, 40 members, guests and speakers showed up at Knox Presbyterian Church in Manotick to experience a broad sampler of Yukon-related experiences as shared by fellow society members. This was one of those evenings where newsletter space will not permit full coverage of all the material presented. ("You should have been there", basically!) It was also quite fun to get glimpses of what speakers were doing in their younger years.

Owen Cooke began with memorable travels taken as a teen: "To the Yukon and Alaska in the 1950s". Regrettably, Cooke could not find many of his photos from that trip, though he came with substitute images. Cooke said his father, Arnold Cooke, had always wanted to see the north. Arnold decided to take the leap in 1956 by taking a job as a carpenter building the air base in Whitehorse. Owen says he remembers his dad sending him a \$100 bill (twice!) and a rare, exotic appliance, acquired at the American post exchange – a blender.

By the summer of 1957, Arnold Cooke wanted his wife and son to share some of that experience. Having only flown by plane once before, the journey's many flights were quite exciting to a young aviation buff. City stops were: Toronto, Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Fort St. John (and maybe a stop in Watson Lake?) until they got to Whitehorse. Planes flown were: Vickers Viscount (Toronto-Calgary), Vickers Vanguard (Calgary-Edmonton), Convair 340

(Edmonton to Fort St. John), and a Douglas DC-6B (Fort St. John to Whitehorse).

The summer's adventures include driving from Whitehorse to Dawson City and Valdez, Alaska. Cooke does not recall major bridges on the way. He said heavy ore trucks would start to sound their horns up in the hills and would expect the crossing ferry to be on their side by the time the driver reached the river bank. Cooke said he was struck by the sight of spawning salmon and steam locomotives simply abandoned in place - relics of the gold rush's "bust" cycle.

The Cooke family blew two tires on that trip and tied them to the roof, along with caribou antlers - all of which was perfectly normal up north. Driving the truck back to Orillia, though, the sight began to draw strange looks. Those who wonder if taking children or grandchildren traveling is worthwhile could find an answer in Cooke's summation "All in all, it was a great trip!"

Before he was our previous RTHS president, before he was a MP, local mayor or university professor, Bill Tupper was a geologist who spent two summers doing geological survey work in the Yukon, in 1964 and 1969. Tupper recounted adventures from the '64 field season, as an exploration geo-chemist for the Geological Survey of Canada in the Keno Hill area. The exploratory and scientific work was intended to further development in the Yukon Territory.

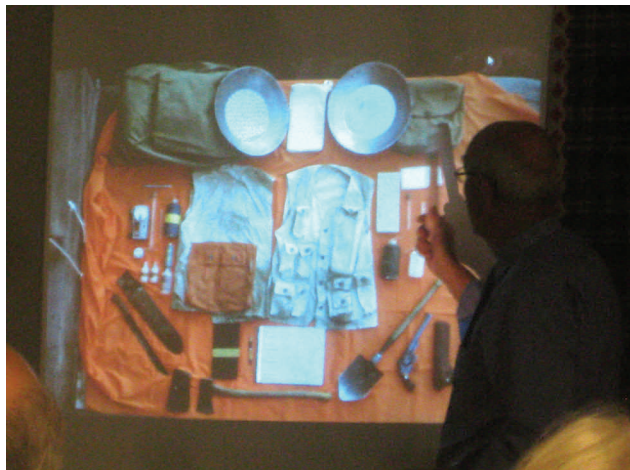
Of course, mining and mineral resources are important features of the North's economic activity. Keno Hill is one of the richest silver camps in the world in terms of percentage of silver found in the ore there. Keno Hill ore goes to a smelter in Idaho for processing.

With a series of illustrative slides, Tupper gave a 2-minute summation of a full semester course in field geology. Basically, soil, water and sediment – even vegetation - sampled along different points of waterways can indicate various mineral deposits in the area. With the right clues it's easier to know what is (or is not) there - and where to dig for it.. While such detecting looks very straight-forward on an area map, it requires considerable effort on the ground to establish the relevant information.

Tupper says they worked from late-May to freeze up, covering about 2,000 square miles. They collected some 6,000 sediment samples, which were analyzed for 16 metals. The results were available by February of 1965.

Tupper shared his own slides that conveyed a small sense of the area's beauty and what must have been an exhilarating experience for all 18 expedition teammates.

(Perhaps less exhilarating for the crew member who saw most of his clothes and his whole season's earnings burn in a tent fire?) While the work required a bit of jumping about, they were able to use an abandoned mining camp as the main base camp, which happened to come with the luxury of a working generator.



Bill Tupper describes the geologists camp kit used by the field team that summer. Out of sight behind Bill is a pistol they carried for protection..

Tupper turned some of the samples he found into jewelry for his wife, Georgie Tupper.

Barbara Humphries spoke about her 1970s trip to do an inventory of an abandoned gold-rush town called Forty Mile, for the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board. Here's a little background on how that trip fit into a larger picture, as explained on a Parks Canada website:

"Parks Canada spearheaded the first inventory of historic buildings. Unprecedented in the world, Parks Canada initiated in 1970 a nation-wide survey of buildings constructed before 1914. To lead the new Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings (CIHB), Parks Canada hired architect Barbara Humphries to manage the program."

(read more at: http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/23_architectural_history.aspx)

Forty Mile is about 60 miles NW of Dawson City, near the border with Alaska. Established around 1886, it was the site of the first gold placer mine in the Yukon, possibly in Canada. The village grew to a permanent population of about 200 residents along with hundreds of transient miners. At its height in the mid-to-late 1890s, Humphries said the village boasted 2 grocery stores, 2 doctors, a blacksmith, a dressmaker, a shoemaker, a lending library, 6 saloons and a distillery. By the turn of the century, though, Forty Mile's population plummeted after better strikes were found in the Klondike.

Humphries' trip had some exasperating surprises. When she got to Whitehorse all the planes had been commandeered to fight a fire. Finally, one plane's crew said they

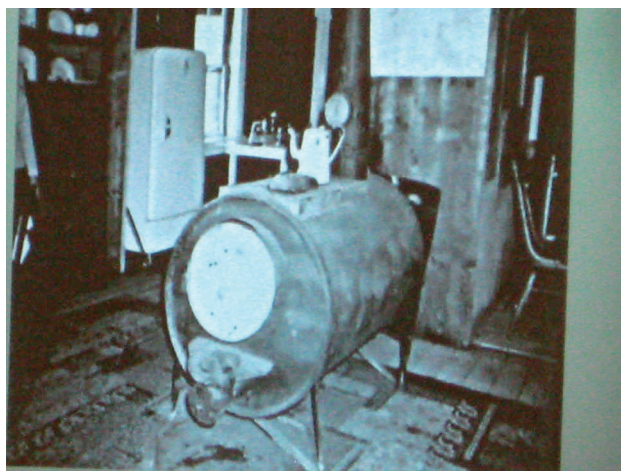
could fly her toward Forty Mile if she had a sleeping bag. They didn't know if anyone could fly her out again. Arriving at Clinton Creek, Humphries' local contact had just departed to deal with a family medical situation.

The only person who could take her the rest of the way had vanished and no one knew when he'd be back. Humphries was told she should go sit in the pub and make it known she needed to get to Forty Mile. At the pub, local wisdom went along the lines of: "Oh, it's only a few miles - just follow the river. If you see a bear don't run." (She was not interested in quite that much adventure.)

Finally, after retiring for the night, the man with the boat knocked on Humphries' door just before midnight to say he was back and could take her the next day. That turned out to be a lovely ride, through beautiful countryside.

All told, Humphries spent a day on-site, plus travel time there and back. At Forty Mile a string of log cabins along the river was all that was left to see. Structurally, they were not too bad but all were in poor repair with broken windows and such. Humphries shared evocative slides of what she found, including the former RCMP building. (The RCMP didn't arrive in that village until about 1894. Until then, Forty Mile had been a self-governing town, and was pretty rowdy.)

One of her slides was of the interior of a building a student had rented to write his thesis without distractions. Humphries says the former village is now a Yukon historic site with a walking tour for tourists.



A cabin without distractions.

Doug Culham was transferred to the Yukon in 1987, as part of his work as a government surveyor. (Which would probably be another great talk.) Culham gave us profiles on five important and colourful characters from early gold rush days.

The discovery of gold in the Klondike pretty much defined the Yukon to the outside world and was a main reason it was made a territory in 1898. Of course, aboriginal people had already been there for thousands of years. But the

gold rush changed everything. To which Culham added, "I know what gold fever is, because I've had it." (He used to pan for gold on weekends.)

Culham gave biographical details about another surveyor, William Ogilvie, P.L.S., D.L.S., who was born in Ottawa, and for whom an Ottawa road is named. For 23 years Ogilvie surveyed Canada's west, in the railway belt. His lasting claim to fame was laying out the boundary between Canada and Alaska along the 141st meridian west. He became the Yukon's 2nd commissioner from 1898-1901. During that time frame the area's miniscule non-native population skyrocketed to about 30,000 new arrivals. Ogilvie had to record the many (and sometimes-contentious) land claims.

The other characters in a fairly complex narrative were George Carmack (an American from California), his brother-in-law Scookum Jim Mason, and Tagish Charlie (also called Dawson Charlie). Those three are generally credited with co-discovering the finds that launched the Klondike Gold Rush in August of 1896. Some say another name on that list should have been Canadian Robert Henderson. Carmack got rich. Scookum Jim got drunk and fell off a bridge. Tagish Charlie lived in Whitehorse and died in 1915.

While panning for gold by hand is the image most easily called to mind, serious mining had to be consolidated into something more efficient. Sluices were useful, which required bringing in water from other sources. The next advance in terms of extracting gold was using dredges which could really handle the gravel and bedrock. Modern dredging operations are huge, with machines big as a football field, which float around in a lake of water.

By the way, Culham does have something to show for his own bout of fever. His wife Maureen has a gold ring made from his findings.

Maureen McPhee called her talk "The Yukon: Land of Opportunity". McPhee had been supervising historians in the Indian Affairs Department in Hull when her husband Doug Culham was transferred up north in 1987. She wondered how she would ever find a job in Whitehorse. Happily, she did find work for which she was well-suited.

The back story to that endeavor was illustrated with a map of treaties signed by the federal government with various naïve groups. No treaties had been signed for parts of B.C. or the Yukon. In 1973 Canadian courts determined there was such a thing as aboriginal title and the federal government had to develop policies that dealt with comprehensive and specific land claims.

When McPhee got to the Yukon, such negotiations had already been going for 10 years and had failed to gain agreement. She was able to join that project "...starting at the bottom". A final umbrella agreement was concluded just before McPhee and Culham moved back to Ottawa in 1990 - a result that was somewhat forced by way of a

deadline. (McPhee said that sort of arbitrary time pressure would probably not survive court challenge today.) It took 3 more years to finalize that agreement.

McPhee directed her talk to the importance of that challenging work. (Her career path eventually carried her to the position of Director General, Self Government Branch for Indian and Northern Affairs, so we really were hearing from a main participant.)

McPhee says First Nation groups in the Yukon were the first in Canada to negotiate self-government. Hopefully, those agreements will foster confidence, improvements and a more optimistic future for Yukon and Canada.

McPhee said she and Culham traveled to communities all over the region in their time there and they learned a lot. She quite enjoyed the people she got to know and greatly appreciated the Yukon's space and grandeur.

Susan McKellar presented a wealth of slides and explanatory comments from the Yukon Road trip she and her husband Jack McKellar took in July/August of 2012. She worked off a relatively-new laptop, which she complained takes off on its own pace. "It's kinda like traveling with Jack - you don't stop. You just take a picture through the windshield!"

The McKellars drove the Alaska Highway and the (unpaved) Dempster Highway. Susan especially enjoyed Whitehorse, which she said had a lot of energy. Naturally, she went to the local archives. They also stumbled by pure luck on something called the Moosehide Gathering, which is only held every other year.

Susan said she was struck by the confidence of native inhabitants, and the amazing scenery, all well-represented by her excellent pictures.

Eric Field wrapped the presentations up with a famous Robert Service poem from 1907: The Cremation of Sam McGee.



Eric Field reading "The Cremation of Sam McGee."

A lively post-talk Q&A period followed, with more discussion from others who have been to that region too and concerns about the lasting effects of mining on the land. (Doug Culham said the tailings are staggering - nothing grows on them, "a scar on the landscape".)

To broad chuckles from the audience, Bill Tupper spoke again about how contagious placer mining can be. To this day, he says the Yukon helps provide some portion of a miner's "grub stake", up to a certain level. (read more on that here: <http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/nr/mines/exploration/mip/prospectorast.html>)

Tupper recounts that seasonal placer gold miners still set up in the Yukon each spring and work like dogs until freeze up in October. In the middle of the wilderness, he says, "You meet them, and there's just no other way of

describing them other than being grease monkeys...they are just wild, dirty-looking people." Tupper says the ones with the right luck, skill and stamina can net \$100,000 or more for 6 months of long, hard days.

Tupper said successful miners live the other half of each year "like kings and queens", with elegant winter homes in places like Vancouver Island. They travel, enjoy theatre and fine food, nice clothes and so on. Tupper stated he would have liked to give those enormous contrasts a try himself, but his wife nixed that plan.

Truly, the evening was a marvelous way to get a good sense of place without any planning, expense, or bugs! Thanks very much to organizers and speakers for cooking up such hearty servings of good Yukon stew.

The Dickinson House

In July of 2013, the City of Ottawa issued a Request for Offers (RFO) for the purchase or lease of five City-owned buildings in Dickinson Square, including Dickinson House. The deadline for submission of offers was October 3, 2013. RTHS did not submit an offer, but provided a letter of support to another respondent.

The offer submissions will be evaluated during the month of October and City staff will then provide a report to the Manotick Mill Quarter Community Development Corporation.

The City anticipates that the successful respondents to the RFO will present their offers to the community in late November of this year, and that purchase or sale agreements will be executed by the end of February, 2014.

Please remember that there are four heritage events left for the present season. They are as follows:

- **October 12 Harvest Festival:** in conjunction with Watson's Mill. RTHS displays will focus on grain production.
- **November 2: Women's Day and Victorian High Tea:** Tickets for the tea are available in the house. See the poster on page 7 of this newsletter for more information.
- **November 9-11: War Efforts and Dickinson House:** Displays on Women's Institute use of the

house for production of soldiers supplies and Spratt family contributions in the service and on the home front.

- **November 30-December 1: Heritage Christmas Crafts:**

Come out and enjoy these last weekends of a very successful season.



Pressing apples at the 2013 Dickinson House Harvest Festival

The November Meeting

Place and Time: November 20, 2013, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, North Gower, 7:30 p.m.

Topic: Rideau Archives World War I History Project to commemorate our brave local heroes who lost their lives during the first Great War.

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).*

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.

North Gower Client Service Centre Municipal History Exhibit

On September 28 2013, the Office of Councillor Scott Moffatt, Councillor for Ward 21 Rideau-Goulbourn, hosted the official opening of a permanent exhibit celebrating the area's municipal history. It covers the period starting from the District of Johnstown in Upper Canada in 1798 up to the amalgamation of Ottawa in 2001, all the while tracing the evolution of the townships of Marlborough, North Gower and Rideau and the police villages of North Gower, and Manotick. The exhibit also features a gallery of photos of some of the past members of council. The exhibit can be viewed in the old council chamber of the former Rideau Township Town Hall, 2155 Roger Stevens Drive, on Thursdays when the North Gower Client Service Centre is open for business.

Councillor Moffatt presented commemorative certificates to the members of Rideau Township's last Council: Mayor Glenn Brooks, Councillors Rob Fraser, Bonnie Gray and

Don Stephenson. Former Councillor George Pratt was absent and received his certificate afterwards.



Councillor Moffatt presents Georgie Tupper with flowers for her excellent research and design on the exhibit while Mayor Jim Watson looks on.

Some Watson's Mill Events

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

Web Site: www.watsonsmill.com

Watson's Mill hours of operation: Office hours: weekdays, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. The Mill is open to visitors daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please visit www.watsonsmill.com for a complete calendar of events.

- Manotick Farmers Market: Saturdays, 9:00am to 2:00pm, at the Carriage Shed parking lot, in Dickinson Square.

Watson's Mill is proud to team up once again with local growers and producers to host a Farmers Market in Historic Dickinson Square. The Manotick Farmers Market is scheduled to run on Saturdays, from 9am to 2pm, through Thanksgiving Weekend at the Carriage Shed, across the street from Watson's Mill.

- Milling Demonstrations:

On Sundays from 1pm-3pm visitors will watch real millers operate the original machinery, while they make flour using historic methods. Seeing the Mill come to life is a great experience for the whole family! It is so memorable to hear the roar of the equipment as it gets started, feel the floor boards shake, and smell the unique scent of grain being milled into flour. See the web site in case special events preclude milling.

- Used Book Sale: Daily: from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm in the Carriage Shed. All are welcome! With thousands of titles to sort through, it is easy to understand why they keep coming back for more!
- Watson's Mill Harvest Festival. Have you noticed the subtle change in the air? The sounds of leaves crackling under your feet as you're walking through the streets? The crisp smells in morning as you're waking up? It's hard to believe but summer is coming to an end, and fall is upon us. This year, Watson's Mill is hosting the Harvest Festival on the grounds of Historic Dickinson Square, October 12, 2013 from 11-3pm.
- Paranormal investigation of Watson's Mill, Fri, October 18, 8pm – 11pm, with the Haunted Ottawa Paranormal Society. Tickets: \$25/each.

- Grain Production Equipment Saturday, Oct 19, 2013, on the Dickinson Lawns, presented by the RTHS.
- Concert: Sat, October 19, 8pm – 10pm, Manotick United Church The Cooper Brothers, Southern Rock This is family friendly event. Light Refreshments will be provided. Cash bar opens at 7pm. For further information, please contact: Terry McGovern: mcgovet@rogers.com or 613-692-6133.
- Haunted House: Thursday & Friday Oct 24-25, Haunted House. More info to come, see the Mill web site.
- Concert: Rev. Ernie Cox Gospel, Fri, November 8, 8pm – 10pm, Manotick United Church. This is family friendly event. Light Refreshments will be provided. Cash bar opens at 7pm. For further information, please contact: Terry McGovern: mcgovet@rogers.com or 613-692-6133



As part of
Women's Day in Manotick
 November 2, 2013

The Dickinson House Museum
 1127 Mill St., Manotick

presents a

Victorian High Tea

Enjoy afternoon tea with all the trimmings
in a Victorian atmosphere

Two sittings: 1:30 or 3:00 p.m.

Tickets - \$10.00 per person

Now on sale at the Dickinson House Museum
Open weekends 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Dickinson House gratefully acknowledges the support of the City of Ottawa

Minutes of the Rideau Township Historical Society Meeting
September Meeting

September 18, 2013, Knox Presbyterian Church Manotick

Opening: The Rideau Township Historical Society met at Knox Presbyterian Church, Manotick, Ontario, for the regular September meeting and a program on the Yukon, with about 40 members present. President Brian Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Minutes: It was moved by Jane Anderson and seconded by Owen Cooke that the minutes of the May 15, 2013 meeting as published in the June Newsletter be approved. Carried.

Finance: Treasurer Colin Wright announced that the bank balance as of August 27 was \$21,960.51, with \$1,048 in outstanding cheques. The accounts reconciled.

Membership: Pat Earl reported that there are currently 11 life members, 6 complimentary members, and 79 paid members.

Program: Ruth Wright, program co-ordinator, announced the following fall programs:

- October 16: book launch of The Cheese Factories of Rideau Township, Second Edition, by Iona Joy, at the community centre in North Gower, with a wine and cheese reception to follow
- November 20: Owen Cooke and David Bullock will describe the WWI war dead history project they're working on, at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in North Gower
- December Christmas party: when asked by Ruth, members indicated a preference for a pot-luck dinner, rather than a dinner at a club or restaurant; Ruth will plan accordingly

Communications: Brian Sawyer has called a meeting of the committee for October 1.

Publications: Jane Anderson reported that while sales have been slow, a few books have been sold over the summer.

Dickinson House: Maureen McPhee referred to the full report in the September newsletter on both the operation of Dickinson House and the request for offers to purchase, as well as fall events.

Grants: Brian Sawyer reported that he and a few others had met regarding future funding from the City of Ottawa, and noted some changes to the grants system. One all-encompassing request is expected; there are no caps; and the request is to be submitted by early November.

Announcement: On Saturday, September 28, Councillor Scott Moffat will unveil a new permanent exhibit of municipal officers in the Client Centre in North Gower; all are welcome to attend.

Evening Program: The program on Yukon Experiences proceeded with several speakers, and closed with a reading by Eric Field of Robert Service's poem, The Cremation of Sam McGee.

Adjournment: President Brian Sawyer then closed the meeting around 9:30 p.m., and members enjoyed the delicious refreshments provided once again by Melanie Hayes.