



The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

September 2012 Newsletter

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

Next Meeting

Date: September 19, 2012
Time: 7:30 pm
Place: Carsonby Community Hall
6047 Prince of Wales Drive

This Month

1. The Next Meeting
2. From the Pen of the President
3. The June Excursion
4. The Dickinson House
5. The RTHS High School Scholarships
6. Re-dedication of the Dickinson Monument
7. News from the Rideau Archives
8. Watson's Mill some events

Topic: "Duty, Family, Service" - The Wallace-Eastman Family

Speaker: Catherine Gallagher

The speaker will discuss

- Dr. David Wardrope Wallace, his Scottish Immigrant parents, siblings and other family members
- Wife Esther Angelia Eastman and her United Empire Loyalists ancestors (Eastman, McEwen, Kerr, McLaughlin, Sherman)
- Dr. David Wallace's early life in North Gower, career as school teacher, and his medical practice in North Gower, Metcalfe, Ottawa and Kemptville
- Dr. Wallace's brief stint in Canadian Parliament for Russell district
- Dr. David and Esther Wallace's 8 children and families

Cathy spent most of her career in sales management in the education, manufacturing, and travel industries before moving to Arizona to marry retired US Army Intelligence officer Bob Gallagher in 2003. Although always interested in family and history, Cathy laments the fact that she did not begin researching her family tree until 2000. She is currently the President of the West Valley Genealogical Society & Library outside Phoenix which has over 700 members. Cathy and Bob are passionate about preserving family history, photographs and memories, and enjoy travelling and assorted genealogical pursuits.

Bring a Friend, Light Refreshments

From the Pen of the President

I trust your summer was enjoyable and productive. Your executive has planned interesting and educational programs for the autumn months. I hope you will find each of our meetings a stimulating experience.

Dickinson House has been an exciting and busy place this summer. Forty-three hundred guests from May through August have enjoyed a wonderful educational heritage experience as they learned about the contributions of the Dickinson Family to the social and economic growth of Manotick. We were fortunate to receive Federal Government support which enabled us to hire three students during the summer, one for 7 weeks, one for 14 weeks and another for 16 weeks. The students were all quick learners, became excellent tour guides and brought some refreshing new ideas and energy to the House. Our

Vice-President (grant applications, recruiting, job descriptions, training and supervision) and Treasurer (bi-weekly payroll and monthly payroll submissions) contributed enormously to the success of our summer student program. I express our thanks to them for their interest and dedication.

We presented five heritage craft weekend programs so far this summer. They brought diversity and special attention to our overall activities. In addition, our visitors enjoyed four musical concerts; two organ recitals by Rowena Pearl, a bag pipe recital by Scott Cameron, and the Manotick Brass Ensemble.

We struggled since we assumed responsibility for the insurance of the artifacts in the House to correctly establish their value. This has been worrisome, but the problem is on the threshold of being resolved. This summer we engaged Janet Carlisle, one of Canada's leading antique

and artifact evaluators to appraise the contents of the house.. She has completed her examination and should be conveying the results to us shortly.

Dickinson House has been run since it's inception by volunteers, and their presence has been one of our great strengths. Our volunteer base is slowly eroding or dimin-

ishing. This trend is of great concern. Undoubtedly there are reasons. In the next few months we will have to address this issue. Please let us know if you have views on how this can be reversed or how we can recruit new volunteers.

The June Excursion to Fort Wellington and the Grenville County Historical Society Archival Resource Centre

Article and Pictures by Lucy Martin

It was a very pleasant Saturday, June 16th, as we gathered at the Roger Stevens Drive client centre in North Gower for our annual field trip. Bus driver Mark Strong transported twenty-nine attendees to Prescott in short order. We were joined there by others who arrived in their own vehicles.

Fort Wellington National Historic Site bills itself as one of the best preserved nineteenth-century fortifications in Canada. Readers who haven't been there lately should consider going again. A new \$3.1 million dollar visitor's centre opened this year. Parks Canada reports the major project was finished on time and on budget.

The showpiece of the new visitor's centre is a recovered wreck representing regional maritime history. Excavated from the river near Mallorytown in 1966, experts believe the hull began as the HMS Radcliffe, a gunboat built at the Kingston dockyards in 1817. Disarmed under post-war treaty provisions, the boat was modified and saw decades of non-military use before being scuttled sometime in the 1870's.



HMS Radcliffe restored and displayed in the visitor's centre at Fort Wellington.

Parks Canada's Fort Wellington website describes this display in far greater detail. A concluding paragraph characterizes the recovered hull thusly:

"This craft's exceptionally long career, first as a naval vessel intended for border defence, then as a commercial craft, attests to the changing nature of life along the frontier. The hostilities it was built to counter gave way to growing industry, trade and commerce. Its conversion from vessel of war to vessel of trade reinforces the grow-

ing significance of commerce and development on the St. Lawrence throughout the nineteenth century."



Costumed interpreters in the period dress of the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment at Fort Wellington

The historic fort itself remains a fine attraction. After being divided into two smaller groups, Fort Wellington interpreters Holly and JP took all of us through several distinct segments: the visitor centre and the new HMS Radcliffe display, a mock military encampment, a musket firing demonstration, the fort's timber-spiked outer earthworks, the inner bailey (if that is the right term?) with open space, separate officer's quarters, the cook house and latrines. Center ground is held by the fort's substantial blockhouse, three stories high. Though the fort's entire history is explained, the main displays are presently styled to reflect barracks life circa 1846.

After almost two centuries of relative domestic peace, it is an interesting exercise to consider a time when Canada faced potential attack from U.S. forces. Most of us have to really shift our outlook to study surroundings in terms of attack, defense and survival.

In the 1840's the fort had an array of artillery to defend itself, control river traffic and even bombard Ogdensburg, should that seem necessary. (Our guide may have revealed more, but she discovered an American was present – disguised as a dual-national RTHS newsletter correspondent. At which point the flow of Canadian security secrets dried up.)

The only entrance through the rampart embankment consists of double wooden gates that date from 1839. They open in opposite directions so that by knocking down the

outer gate attackers have only made it more difficult to open the inner gate. The slow-burning wood is studded with metal to impede chopping from an axe. If the earthworks or gates were breached, defenders would still be tucked away in the inner blockhouse, able to shoot through the stoutly protective walls - while awaiting relief from Kingston.

Archeological excavation of the latrine in 1990 revealed all sorts of details, including enough broken crockery to prove fort inhabitants ate off of fairly nice dinnerware - not pewter or crude trenchers. Holly explained that the displays of ordinary life at the fort strive for accuracy and were updated to reflect that added knowledge. Many of the recovered items are now on display.

In the 1840's Fort Wellington was staffed by members of the recently-formed Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment (RCRR). The RCRR had been granted special privileges to discourage desertion, including permission for a fair number of enlisted men at that time to live with wives and children within the fort.

The second floor of the blockhouse was arranged to portray the section where married men and their families would bunk. Father and mother got the wooden pallet, children and pets got the floor. (If you wonder that pets were permitted, bear in mind the value of a good ratter.) Unmarried men filled out the third floor. All this took place above the ground floor's powder magazine.

According to the fort's website, "...in 1846, at least 65 men, 26 women and 36 children lived on the second and third floors of the blockhouse." Wives and offspring were entitled to partial rations, though that ceased at age 14 for the children. While living conditions must have been quite challenging, personnel in this fort seemed to enjoy a more varied diet and nicer social conditions than was often the case.

Fort Wellington offers much to see and consider, for anyone interested in regional history and ordinary life in times past.

Lunch was enjoyed at the Red George Public House, an impressive old stone warehouse overlooking the river on Water Street in Prescott. Owner Scott Hubbard said he and a partner bought the building some 30 years ago. It was constructed in sections that date from 1828, 1832 and 1836 - all combined in 1836. Prescott was once an important staging area because of the rapids between there and Montreal. Hubbard says that forwarding trade was decimated with the opening of the first canals in the 1890's.

Today, parts of the building are offices. The current pub operation is just five years old. It is named after "Red" George MacDonnell, a conspicuous figure in the War of 1812. Hubbard graciously detailed the history of the building and some of its interesting quirks and features. He says he bought it out of love. It is nice to see buildings being cared for by people who value architecture and regional heritage. Oh, and the food was good too!

After lunch we pushed on to the Grenville County Historical Society Archival Resource Centre. Founded in 1891,

the organization is now housed in the old Grand Trunk Railway Station at 500 Railway Ave. (Excellent adaptive re-use for an attractive building.) As you might imagine, RTHS members who actively volunteer with the Rideau Archives were very interested in looking around. Small clusters formed to exchange shop-talk about techniques and equipment. Several books were purchased from that society's publication shelves. We owe thanks to guides, Bonnie Gaylord and Sandra Robertson, who kindly shared their facility with us.



The Grenville County Historical Society in the old Grand Trunk Railway Station in Prescott

The next stop was "The Little Blue Church". The original church on the site was used from 1809-1826. It was destroyed by fire in 1840. The church seen there today was built in 1845. Though not in active use, the building is under the trusteeship of St. John's Anglican Church in Prescott. The surrounding cemetery is one of the most historic in the area.



A stained glass window in the Little Blue Church.

One of the first buried there was Barbara Heck. Born in Ireland, Heck is credited with establishing the first Methodist congregations in North America – one in New York circa 1766 and another in Upper Canada, as a Loyalist refugee. Part of Heck's memorial tombstone reads "In memory of one who laid foundations others have built upon".

The cemetery is graced with lovely old trees and enjoys a fine view of the St. Lawrence River. It is still in active use. Our group enjoyed the church (inside and out) and strolling the attractive grounds looking at the grave markers.

Lastly, we swung past the Battle of the Windmill site. As time had grown short, we did no more than look from our bus. The tall stone windmill is quite striking.

The site's significance is described thusly on an Ontario Historic plaque: "After the 1837 Rebellions many rebels fled to the United States where a few joined American sympathizers in a new attempt to overthrow British rule in Canada. On 12 November 1838 they landed 190 men here and seized this windmill and nearby buildings. The local people remained loyal, reporting to their militia units; in a few days 2,000 militia and regulars, supported by naval vessels, besieged the mill. Although British guns did little damage to the mill, the insurgents, seeing no escape, surrendered on the 16th. Eleven were later executed and 60 exiled to Australia."

In due course, we were back at the North Gower client centre, happy, a bit tired and much better informed about our region. Do consider coming along on next year's field trip, which is open to members and non-member alike. Suggestions for what to go and see are welcome too. We thank Program Director Ruth Wright for handling all the arrangements that allowed this interesting event to take place so smoothly.



The "Battle of the Windmill" site with a ship passing down river on the St. Lawrence Seaway.

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, 10:00-4:00. Watson's Mill: starting Saturday, May 5th: open to visitation daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please visit www.watsonsmill.com for a complete calendar of events. Below are some highlights for the fall.

- Manotick Farmers Market: Saturdays, 9:00am to 2:00pm: at the Carriage Shed parking lot, in Dickinson Square. Visit: www.manotickfarmersmarket.com for more details.

Watson's Mill is proud to team up with local growers and producers to host a Farmers Market in Historic Dickinson Square. We are pleased to confirm that the Farmers Market will continue to run on Saturdays, from 9am to 2pm, through September 29th at the Carriage Shed, across the street from Watson's Mill.

- Annual Christmas Market: November 17th to December 2nd: Saturdays and Sundays, from 10am to 4pm. At Watson's Mill. Calling artists, artisans and crafters: currently accepting applications for participation in the Christmas Market. Forms are available by request electronically at: [watonsmilloffice@rogers.com](mailto:watsonsmilloffice@rogers.com), or by calling Melanie at: 613-692-6455; also, hard copy applications and guidelines also available at Watson's Mill—see staff at front desk. Forms will be available on the website shortly.

As warm autumn colours make way for cool winter weather, Watson's Mill is preparing for the Christmas season by hosting their annual Christmas Market, featuring numerous participating local artists, artisans and crafters. For the last two weekends of November and the first weekend in December, visitors to the mill can get into the spirit of the season and find unique gift ideas in our one-of-a-kind shopping experience. The event culminates on December 2nd, with the traditional Carols at Sunset featuring the Manotick Brass Ensemble.

Dickinson Monument: Repaired, Improved and Re-dedicated

Article by Lucy Martin, pictures by Ron Wilson

Back in June of 2010, RTHS's summer tour of Beechwood Cemetery made a point of stopping at section 22, plot 57. That's where Moss Kent Dickinson, his wife and their six children are buried. Unfortunately, it wasn't in great shape. The tall limestone column of the family headstone lay broken on the ground. The grave's inscriptions were also faint with age.

At least vandalism did not appear to be a factor in the site's unhappy condition. A towering maple near the monument may have caused the damage. The tree carries an obvious scar where a long-lost branch of considerable size could have fallen right atop the grave. Who knows? Some combination of time, weather and gravity were most likely to blame.

In any case, the situation would not do. Moss Kent Dickinson partnered in building Watson's Mill. He was a founding father of Manotick, as well as an important business and political figure in the greater Ottawa region. His surviving children - long-time inhabitants of Dickinson House - became pillars of the Manotick community in their own right. The family deserved more than benign neglect.

RTHS's executive board decided to take up the cause. Manotick resident, Dickinson House volunteer and former board secretary Brian Earl championed the two-year ef-

inson Square Heritage Management Inc (DSHMI) and a heritage grant from the City of Ottawa.

Earl said the greatest initial challenge was finding someone – anyone - willing to undertake the work. He sought bids from five companies and only one responded. Fortunately, it was Vankleek Hill's Martel & fils/sons (est. 1903).



Margot Belanger (DSHMI), Scott Moffat, Brian Earl, and Bill Tupper (RTHS) unveil the plaques. Funding was contributed from DSHMI, Councillor Moffat's budget, and the RTHS. Brian Earl developed and managed the project from the initial idea to the final ceremony described here.



Project complete! The Dickinson Monument cleaned and with the top section back in place.

fort. Total funding of \$4,600 was provided by RTHS, Dick-

Earl said Andre Martel brought generations of experience to a tricky job and made sure everything was done properly. According to Earl, adding plaques was Martel's suggestion, a way to resolve the conflict between historic preservation verses desired improvements. As a result, two new bilingual plaques were mounted on a site-sourced, naturally-shaped granite boulder. (Which Professor Bill Tupper identified as a "glacial erratic".) That solved the legibility problem and provided better context for the family's accomplishments and significance.

Admiring the final outcome, Earl described the repairs: "They put the top back on. They ground the edges smooth – they did all this on the site, here. (They) Put in stainless steel pins, epoxied the whole thing back together again. Then they straightened it out on its base, because it was skewed a bit. And then they washed it down with an environmentally-friendly solution, to clean it up."

Earl also had high praise for the assistance, advice and cooperation provided by Beechwood's staff throughout the multi-year project.

The monument was re-dedicated on a gorgeous Saturday, June 30th - Canada Day weekend.

Addressing the small crowd, RTHS's President, Bill Tupper, reflected on a somewhat-forgotten aspect of the family's story – the untimely death of Elizabeth Trigge Dickinson. Losing a mate and parent would devastate most households. No stranger to family and political life himself,

Tupper observed how Dickinson the father was left a single parent. Dickinson the politician had to endure the pressure and social obligations of office without a supportive spouse. Furthermore, if Elizabeth had lived a full lifetime, Tupper wondered if their children might have successfully married and left lines of descent? Ultimately that Dickinson family line did die out. But the village they helped build is thriving.

Rev. Kelly Graham of Manotick's Knox Presbyterian Church said it's as if those at the re-dedication had adopted the Dickinson family - which is a tribute to the health of the community. He added "it's quite neat to see the attachment" that fostered a heritage project of "love, joy and respect".

Post-invocation, speech and photos, attendees clustered to touch and admired the restoration work. DSHMI President Margot Belanger echoed the minister's theme:

"We've adopted the Dickinson family as a village, because there's nobody else to speak for them." She said DSHMI was proud to partner with RTHS and the city to secure the funds for the grave restoration. Belanger believes in collective efforts to preserve the historic core of Manotick village: "This is ours!"

Walking to scattered cars as the small crowd dispersed, Councillor Scott Moffatt mused about the many changes his home town has seen over his own lifetime and going all the way back to Manotick's infancy in the 1860's. (It was Canada Day weekend - a good time to think about how the past shapes the future!)

Moffatt observed how much eventually followed from the combination of a few chance elements: a man - not even born in Canada - a canal, and the opportunity to build some water-powered mills.

MK Dickinson and his partners constructed a stone grist mill on the Rideau River at what is now the village of Manotick in 1859. The complex grew to include a saw mill and a carding/weaving mill by 1865. Dickinson purchased about forty acres to provide home sites for his workers. In addition to the mills, Dickinson owned a fleet of steam boats and barges which carried freight and passengers along the Rideau Canal between Ottawa and Kingston. Dickinson was a prominent member of the community and was instrumental in the growth of Manotick. Active in municipal politics, Dickinson was elected Mayor of Ottawa 1864-1866. A friend of Sir John Macdonald (Canada's first prime Minister) Dickinson was elected as Member of Parliament for the riding of Russell in 1882. He served one term to 1887. The Dickinson children did not marry, leaving no family to carry on the Dickinson name.

Erected by the Rideau Township Historical Society 2012/04/11

The monument beside this plaque marks the final resting place of
Moss Kent Dickinson 01 June 1822 – 19 July 1897 and his wife;
Elizabeth Trigge Dickinson 29 September 1821 – 29 October 1861 and their family;
George Lemuel Dickinson 04 July 1848 – 07 November 1930
Charlotte Trigge Dickinson 21 May 1851 – 09 June 1929
William Barnabus Dickinson 02 November 1853 – 13 March 1930
Alpheus Moss Dickinson 15 October 1855 – 31 January 1856
Lydia Mary Dickinson 13 March 1857 – 10 June 1872
Elizabeth Henderson Dickinson 19 May 1861 – 25 April 1933

Erected by the Rideau Township Historical Society 2012/04/11

The lettering on the top plaque highlights the career and community work of Moss Kent Dickinson and his contributions to Manotick. The lower plaque repeats the lettering on the monument itself which has become difficult to read.

The RTHS Scholarships

One of the RTHS responsibilities recognized in our Strategic Plan was the promotion of local history and the furthering of its study. Accordingly the Society has funded the award of two scholarships, one to a student at St. Mark's



Cassy Mueller won the scholarship at St. Marks.



Scott Cameron won the scholarship at South Carleton

High School, and one to a student at South Carleton High School. The scholarships are in the amount of \$500 and have been termed the "RTHS Award of Merit in History". The schools themselves chose the recipients of the awards.

The Dickinson House

We have had another busy year at the Dickinson House. As of the end of August we have hosted 4300 visitors. The larger attendance this year can be attributed to our additional open hours made possible by having the summer students and thus being open 5 days a week.

Displays Planned for the Fall

During September there will be some vintage logging, lumbering and carpentry tools on display in the foyer and

in the third floor attic (south room).

There will also be a display entitled "School Days" including old readers and other text books, pencil boxes, lunch pails, straight pens and ink bottles, and scribblers.

In October there will be displays featuring apples and honey followed by Victorian Memories in November.

Coral Lindsay
Interim Curator

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).*

We have a new artefact at the Rideau Branch. During the summer we were pleased to receive a gift of the Marlborough Township Council table from the Marlborough Recreation Association located in Pierces Corners. The table dates back to the 1940s and features a leather top. Our sincere thanks to the .Marlborough RA and please be assured we will take very good care of it.

FREE PHOTO: The Rideau Township Branch of the City of Ottawa Archives has recently been given a photo of the North Gower Baseball Club, 1922, in excellent condition. As we already have another copy of this photo, we would be happy to donate it to a descendant, relative, or interested person. Please contact archivist Serge Barbe (serge.barbe@ottawa.ca) or a volunteer at the Archives (613-489-2926, Tuesdays) for more details. It is being temporarily stored in Box 126.5. See page 8 of this newsletter for the picture.

An Invitation from the North Grenville Historical Society

We are back after our summer break with a new season of meetings, talks and activities. We begin this coming Wednesday, September 12 at the Court House, 15 Water Street in Kemptville. Doors open at 7 and the meeting proper begins at 7.30. The main speaker is myself, and I'll be discussing the Military Settlement project of 1815 – 1820 which started a flood of immigration and settlement in Leeds & Grenville. Once again, North Grenville experienced something different from the rest of the region, and almost became the centre of attention. There will also be a short presentation by Angela Beking, working with the BIA of Kemptville, on their plans to promote the archives, the walking tours, and other heritage events together with the businesses of Old Town Kemptville. Refreshments will served before and after the meeting, so come along and enjoy the chat and the start of a new season.

Dr. David Shanahan, President

North Grenville Historical Society



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