

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

September 2015 Newsletter

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

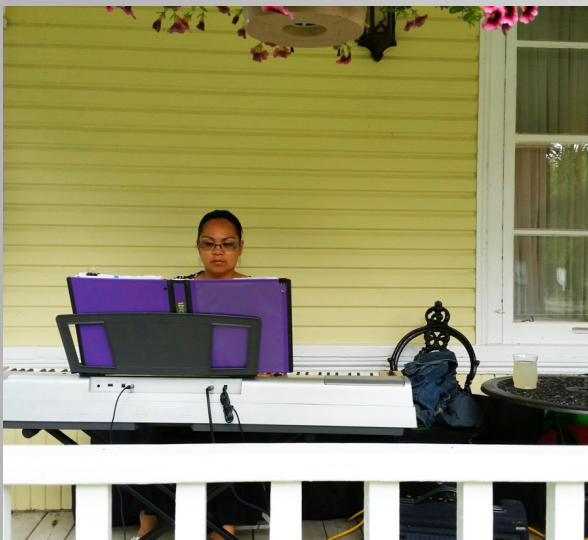
The September Meeting

Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2015
Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place Anglican Church Hall
4419 Donnelly Drive
Burritt's Rapids, ON



**Bring a Friend.
To arrange a ride call
Brian Earl at (613) 692 2371.**



Rowena Pearl on the keyboard at her Dickinson House. Concert on June 21.

Subject: Clara's Rib

A True Story of a Young Girl Growing up in a Tuberculosis Hospital.

The Speaker

Anne Raina is the youngest of ten children, seven of whom contracted tuberculosis. Anne's father, her eldest and youngest brothers died of the disease.

Anne worked for many years in the public and not-for-profit sectors. She was a senior executive with a national disability organization when struck with disabling autoimmune disorders herself.

She has been writing poetry, skits and short stories for friends and family since she was a child. Although she had been published in magazines and newspapers, co-writing Clara's Rib was her first adventure in publishing a book. She is one of eight members of The Ottawa Story Spinners who, annually, for the past five years have published a book of short stories in the Black Lake Chronicles series. She has two children's books ready to hit the market shortly and is currently working on her Mother's biography and another non-fiction book and more children's stories. Anne maintains an active schedule of speaking engagements and has been invited to present to schools, book clubs, Probus groups, Historical and Genealogical Societies, libraries, faith communities and various community organizations. The medical community has embraced her book and she was invited as a keynote speaker at a TB conference for 250 doctors and health care providers in November 2012 and annually she is invited to address the first year medical students at Ottawa University. She has been asked to present to symposia for Respiriologists and she is the recipient of the Canadian Lung Association's 2014 Heather Crowe Award for raising awareness of lung health.

Anne lives in Ottawa with her husband, Grant Cameron.

This Month

1. The September Meeting
2. The Country Fair at Dickinson House
3. The September 1 special meeting
4. The June Excursion to Kingston
5. Lucy Martin from B.C.
6. News from the Rideau Archives

The RTHS June Field Trip: Kingston and Sir John A. Macdonald

Article and Photos by Lucy Martin

The last event before the summer break was our traditional field trip. In this case, we hit the road for a day that focused on Sir John Alexander Macdonald's many connections to Kingston, Ontario.

We were treated to a perfect June day: neither cold nor hot, with blue skies, sunny warmth and gentle breezes. Twenty-three members and interested guests gathered at the client centre on Roger Steven's Drive for the 90 minute trip to Kingston. We rode on a very comfortable charter bus from Howard Transportation of Athens. Driver Ed Wills gave us a choice of routes. By popular acclaim we took the 416 to the Thousand Islands Parkway to enjoy lovely river views.

Arriving in Kingston via the south causeway, Owen Cooke provided a running narrative of prominent historic sites, such as Ft. Frontenac, Ft. Henry, the Royal Military College facilities, Kingston City Hall (completed in 1844) and a statue of Macdonald in City Park. Our first stop was Bellevue House, a few blocks west of Queen's University. The property was made a National Historic Site in 1995. The house and grounds reflect life there in the 1840s.



Bellevue House in Kingston

Bellevue House was built for Kingston merchant Charles Hales between 1839 and 1840, in the style of an Italian villa. Kingston lawyer John A. Macdonald (1815-1891) and his first wife, Isabella Clark Macdonald (1811-1857) lived there from 1848 to 1849. Their short residence at Bellevue was marred by ill health for Isabelle, and sorrow for all when their first son, John Jr., died at Bellevue at age 13 months.

Tours at Bellevue House are self-guided, with docents in period dress on hand to take questions. That was something many in RTHS could either relate to, or use for comparison, in the operation of Dickinson House.

We were told Bellevue House has a small (but meaningful) handful of artifacts that actually belonged to the the Macdonald family: a family cradle from Scotland, the trunk in the study, the office chair and some dictionaries in French and Latin are displayed in the study. The separate visitor's centre (which we saw first) had a display of papers and photographs relating to Canada's first prime minister. They are on loan from Library and Archives Canada.

Outside Bellevue House's rear door there is a quiet expanse lawn and a gazebo, shaded by a number of stately trees. South of that lawn is a large, sunny and well-tended garden showcasing an interesting array of flowers, vegetables and herbs known to be in cultivation at that time.



The gardens at Bellevue House

The working garden was very engrossing to many on our tour. Head Gardener Kris Dimnik explained the produce is sent to a local restaurant, Sir John A's Public House, as well as to Loving Spoonful, a charitable organization working to enhance access to healthy food through various outreach programs.

Dimnik and another colleague (whose name I failed to collect, sorry!) tend the large garden in period dresses and bonnets. We were told the heavy clothing tends to be hot and the off-the-shoulder pattern can leave upper arms sore and bruised. In the 1840s those jobs would have almost certainly been held by men. In the off season, Dimnik works at a Kingston Flower shop.

Leaving Bellevue House, next up was a tasty lunch at the Kingston Brewing Company, which bills itself as Ontario's oldest brew pub (est. 1986). The bad part about this segment of the tour was that we were right beside the waterfront open market, without nearly enough time to fully enjoy the view or the wares. That's how it goes in Kingston, one should be sure to allocate ample time to amble!



Lunch at the Kingston Brewing Company

After lunch we re-boarded the bus and drove past the Macdonalds' residence where they lived after they left Bellevue House, at 180 Johnson Street. We also passed offices that John Macdonald once used at 110 Rideau



The plaque at Cataraqui Cemetery with the monument in the top right of the picture

RTHS Scholarships

RTHS has given Scholarships for Excellency in History to a student at St Mark's Catholic High School and to one at South Carleton High School. Tom MacDonald and Brian Sawyer had the privilege of giving the awards of \$250 to these students. We also gave \$250 to the history teacher at each school to help promote interest in historical events or studies.

Tom MacDonald is shown here presenting the award to Shay Pitcher of South Carleton at their graduation ceremonies.

Sydney Roy received the award from Brian Sawyer at the St. Mark's graduation. Unfortunately we did not get a picture of Sydney.



Street. Our final stop was Cataraqui Cemetery, where Macdonald and various family members are buried.

We drove back on Highway 15, through Portland, before turning east at Smiths Falls. The terrain gave Bill Tupper a naturally-occurring "teachable moment". Our former president (and retired geologist) explained we were transecting a portion of the Frontenac Arch, which contains some of the oldest rocks on the North American continent. How old? Well, the exact number is hard to establish. But the scientific estimate is at least one billion years. The youngest edges of the arch are comprised of sandstone formed by sand deposits when the Atlantic Ocean came this far inland. Those sandstone deposits are called Nepean or Postdam, depending on where they are quarried. That sandstone was quarried for use in many notable regional buildings, including Parliament Hill.

The land just beside the Frontenac arch was scoured by glaciers 12,000 years ago. The resulting thin soil and poor drainage make for an area of marginal agricultural value.

Tupper's bonus narration just goes to show that, where ever we roam, RTHS members have a very broad range of expertise to share. Full marks go out to Owen Cooke, who organizing a most enjoyable day.

Lastly, dear readers, this will be my final article for our newsletter. My husband Craig Miller and I are moving to Vancouver Island over the summer. Barring any unforeseen mishap, we will be gone by the time meetings resume in September. Much as we have loved living in Kars and North Gower, circumstances call us westward.

It has been a great pleasure to be among you and learn about local heritage together. I, for one, hate to leave! But the book of life continues-with more chapters as yet unwritten. With sincere gratitude for your friendship and kindness, I bid you all a fond aloha.

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

News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa Archives

Hours: *The Rideau Archives is open every Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. 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.

25th Anniversary of the Rideau Archives

Twenty-five years ago, on 15 September 1990, after over a dozen years of preparatory efforts, the Rideau Township Archives officially opened its doors in the beautifully restored North Gower Town Hall with one hundred boxes of public and private records.

The roots of the Archives go back to 1975, when Rideau Township Council created the History and Heritage Committee, later called the Heritage Board. The Rideau Township Archives was the result of efforts by the Board to preserve principally the corporate heritage of Rideau Township, the townships of Marlborough and North Gower, and the Police Villages of Manotick and North Gower but also the various records of the people and organizations of the area.

The old Town Hall of North Gower which housed the Archives, built in 1876, was designated an Ontario Heritage Building in the 1970s. It had been restored in the 1980s by the Rideau Heritage Committee so that the Archives would have a fitting home.

The Archives was staffed then, as now, by a knowledgeable and dedicated group of volunteers from the Rideau Township Historical Society. They handled all facets of operations, providing assistance to researchers often looking for information of their families or properties, and many received training from various institutions, including the Canadian Conservation Institute and Archives Associ-

ation of Ontario. The volunteers also mounted exhibits which both educated and engaged the community, such as the Rideau Remembers project in 1995 marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Second World War. In addition, they delivered presentations and set up information tables at Dickinson Day, the North Gower Farmers' Market, and Gene-O-Rama.

Soon after the amalgamation of Rideau Township into the new City of Ottawa, the Rideau Township Archives became part of the City's network of archival institutions as a self-governing satellite branch of the City Archives. Volunteers continued to provide the same excellent service, now with the support of the staff at the Central Archives, and by that time, the collection had doubled in size.

It is now fifteen years since amalgamation, and the small Town Hall, still bustling with activity each Tuesday, has now become crowded, as the collection has doubled once again. And among those records you can find a videotape of Rideau Archives' official opening on 15 September 1990 (MGR121-004) as well as James McNiece's handwritten notes for the speech he delivered on the occasion (MGR034-01-001). Drop by on Tuesdays to help us celebrate twenty-five years of collecting and preserving the community's documentary heritage.

Stuart Clarkson

A few friends and colleagues of Lucy Martin enjoyed a meal with Lucy and her husband, Craig Miller, before their recent move to British Columbia. The RTHS will certainly miss them, and presented Lucy with a life membership as a thank-you for all her extensive contributions to the society.



Dickinson Square Heritage Country Fair

The second annual Heritage Country Fair, held on September 4th and 5th, was another big success. Building on last year's event, the fair attracted approximately 600 visitors to Manotick's Dickinson Square. A particular focus this year was activities for children and families.

New this year was a family-friendly Barn Dance in Watson's Mill, held on Friday evening. Children were admitted free and about a dozen attended along with their families, joining enthusiastically in the dancing. The Ever Hopeful String Band played traditional music and their caller, Pippa Hall, led dancers through circle and line formations. A light mid-evening meal catered by Manotick's Take Another Bite topped off a most enjoyable evening.

Great family fun continued on Saturday, September 5, in Dickinson Square. Events included a flower and vegetable show, art and baking contests, a family dog show, a puppet show, an old-fashioned photo studio, and a model train display. Live music was performed by the Lost for Words Trio, the Manotick Brass Ensemble and the Swampwater Jazz Band, and there were demonstrations of Ottawa Valley step dancing by Jessica Holmes, and swing dancing by the Once and Future Lindy Hoppers. Visitors enjoyed browsing through the Manotick Farmers' Market, and a highlight of the day was Horse and Carriage Rides around the village.

RTHS led the organization of the weekend activities, working in partnership with Watson's Mill, the Farmers' Market, the Manotick Horticultural Society, the Manotick Art Association, and Chew 'n Do, which helped with the dog show.

Contest winners at the Heritage Country Fair included the following:

Art Contest:

- Denise Guillmette for her painting "Watson's Mill Manotick"
- Honourable Mention for junior artists – Ruby Fhut, Evan and Keiran Driscoll and Heather Creasy

Baking Contest:

- Cake – Aleksandra Dukic
- Pie – Stephanie Cameron
- Cookies or Squares – Melanie Hayes
- Achievement of highest bid – Stephanie Cameron
- Flower & Vegetable Show Design Classes:
- Pretty Posy – Sharlene Desjardins
- Formal Victorian – Linda Gilmer
- Afternoon Tea – Linda Gilmer
- Peoples' Choice – Sharlene Desjardins

Family Dog Show:

- Best Trick – Maggie; owner Barbara Barkley
- Most Obedient – Timber; owner Kaytlyn Riou
- Largest Dog – Oscar, owner Lana Zervos

- Smallest Dog – Lola, owner Massimo Domanico
- Dog with the Most Spots – Archie, owner Simon Walker
- Longest Ears – Cassie, owner Lana Zervos
- Oldest Veteran Dog – Tigger, owner Klaus Beltzner
- Best in Show – Maggie, owner Barbara Barkley



The Barn Dance on the Friday night.



Carriage rides in the Village



Activities on the lawn.

Article and photos by Maureen McPhee

Howdy from out west!.

It took 71 driving hours -- and way too many motels. But this Tuesday we were able to check into the destination: a furnished studio apartment in North Saanich, near Sidney BC. It's a corner of a large house off Land's End Road, and it's ours for the month. It is quite nice! Our landlords, Tom & Peggy, have been very accommodating. Without the 95 boxes of our stuff that is still in storage, the studio space feels quite roomy.

The first photo is of our parking spot. The studio apartment is behind on the right.

After settling in we went for a supper-time hike just up the block in an adjacent park (Horth Hill Regional park). The neighbourhood is a natural wonderland, with a network of connecting trails. The park is all wooded rainforest, it's quite beautiful.

Next we need to find an economical long-term rental, get B.C. driver's licenses, have the movers deliver our junk and get a routine going of work, travel & recreation -- all those details of real life. I strongly suspect our long term rental will not be anywhere near as scenic as our short term rental. But you never know. (One can but hope and hunt.)

We're happy to be done with 6-to-12 hours of driving everyday!

aloha,

Lucy Martin



Jane Anderson and Lucy Martin enjoying a lovely day on the lawn at the Dickinson House.

The Heritage Garden, planted and maintained by the Manotick Horticultural Society, is in the background.



The Special Meeting September 1, 2015

Speaker : Robert Duquette

Article by Marguerite Rogers

Ruth Wright, Programme Chair introduced our speaker, Robert Duquette, who would tell us about his journey through life from Carleton County to Victoria B.C. and back.

Born in Carleton, his mother left the family when “Bobby” was only three. His father, unable to cope with 8 children, enlisted the aid of the Children’s Aid Society. Robert and his older brother Ron were fostered on the McEwen farm in North Gower Township for five years. The McEwens raised turkeys. Robert has vivid memories of being chased and nipped. When the boys were 8 and 10, their father brought them together again and moved the family to Toronto – Carlaw Ave. They attended Jarvis Collegiate.

When Robert and Ron were 13 and 15 they came home from school one day to find their father and younger siblings gone. There was a bottle of milk and a note telling them that the rent was paid until the end of the month, and wishing them well. In 1961 at age 15 he and his 16 yr old friend Nick, from the newspaper office where they worked, left Toronto and headed south to Florida. On the way, in Georgia, they encountered the Freedom Ride bus which blew up after they got off.

On south to Miami where he got a job at the Shorecrest Hotel; providing patrons with towels for the beach and chairs. In 1962 they were conscripted for participation in the Cuban crisis. Not wanting to be involved they escaped and headed north. The highways were closed but they were able to hitch a ride in a newspaper truck when the driver recognized Robert from his newspaper days.

Walking on they caught the attention of the police by Nick climbing the stone wall surrounding a mansion and breaking branches off a palm tree. Arrested, the police drove them north from county to county until they reached the state border and were released. From there they walked to New York where Robert found his brother Ron. The brothers believing that their father had headed back to Eastern Ontario in the Carleton Place area, decided to try and find him.

Without realizing it, they slept one night against the wall of the Kingston Pen. At Carleton Place they found the family living on a 100 acre farm and running a “Voyageur Restaurant”. Robert spent 1 ½ years on the farm and baking for the restaurant. He also worked part time in a shoe store. He moved to Ottawa where he met his wife. He applied for and got a job at Kaiser in London, Ont. He believed that it was a steel company, but when he got there he discovered that it was a lingerie company. His

wife said to leave but he didn’t. He spent 27 years with the company retiring in Victoria B.C. in 1984 where he had been transferred.

At the Empress Hotel he became involved in dinner theatre as a writer, producer and actor. He became interested in antiques after a friend found 2 cups and saucers of the Royal Empress china in the Royal Oak antique shop. In the “bowels” of the Empress Hotel there were 14 sets of this china.

A serious spinal injury requiring 14 surgeries kept Robert in hospital for nearly 6 years. It was then that he decided to try and find his mother and to learn more about his family. Many letters to government and individuals led him to a chance meeting with a lady from Clarence Creek, Ontario who was able to assist in his search. His mother had remarried in Toronto in 1951 to Christy Baldwin. She had 4 more children. She is buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery. He found a sister in the Yukon and a grandmother in Gaspé, Quebec. In 1998, 38 persons gathered in Victoria for a reunion.

In 2014 he left the care home where he was living and came east. The Marlborough Pub in North Gower has a picture of the turkey farm. In 2015 he left a note on the door of the Rideau Archives requesting help with his search. On this day – Sept 1/15 he met Earl McEwen, a grandson of the family which fostered Robert & Ron. Photo albums contained pictures of the boys. Memories of a white picket fence, turkeys and curds from a nearby cheese factory were shared.

On August 31/15 Robert located the site of the farm at Carleton Place. It is abandoned and the house is falling down. The restaurant is gone. Robert is writing a book about his incredible journey through life. It will soon be completed.

“When our time is up, all we have is our story” – Mark Twain.

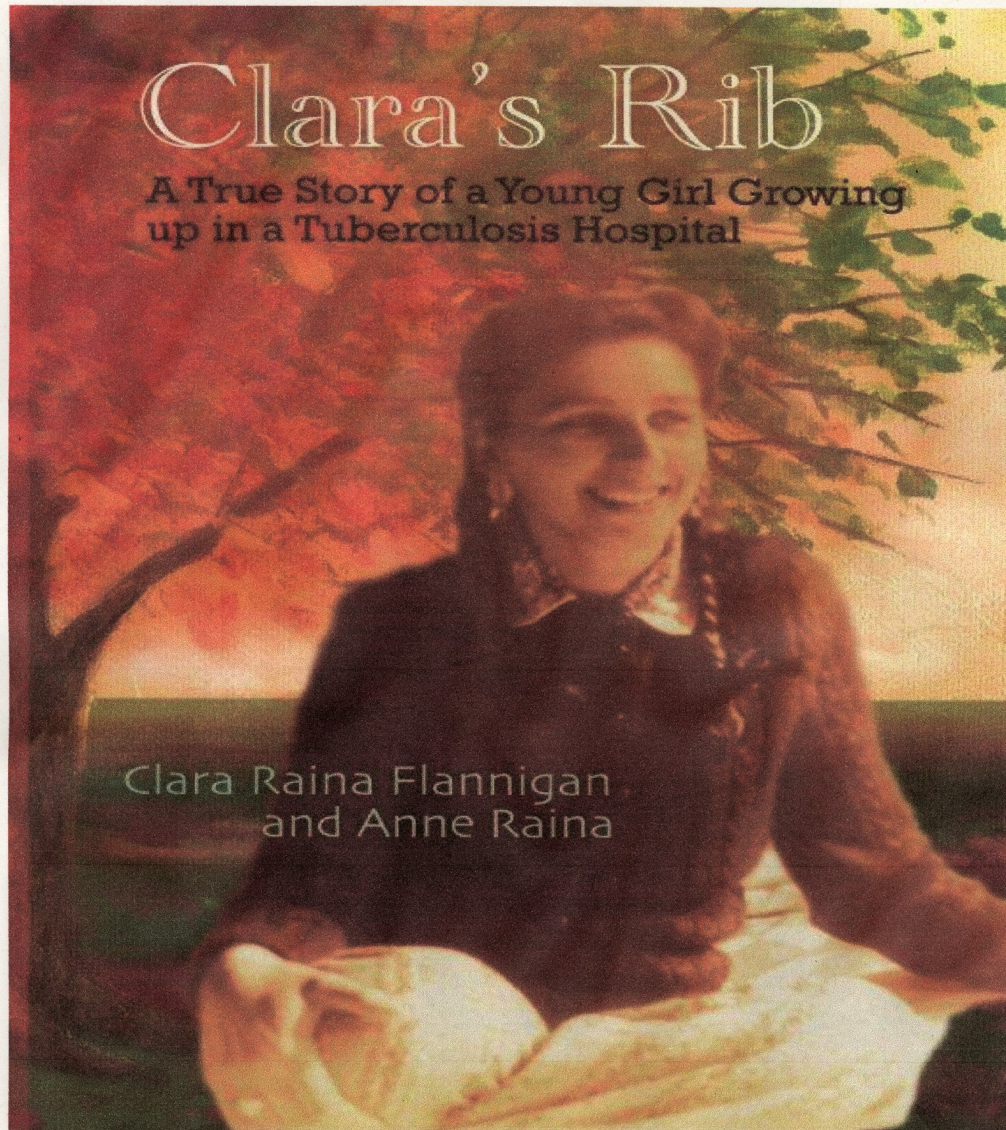
Dr. Bill Tupper thanked our most interesting speaker and presented him with a copy of the history of Carleton Place which Robert invited those present to sign.

In 1997 Robert wrote an award winning poem, Passage of Time. Laminated copies were offered for sale.

The meeting adjourned for refreshments.

BOOK TALK and SIGNING!!

CLARA'S RIB by CLARA RAINA FLANNIGAN AND ANNE RAINA



Please join us to hear Local Author Anne Raina talk about *Clara's Rib*, the true story of a young girl coming of age in a tuberculosis hospital in the 1940s and 1950s. Clara's story focuses mainly on her years growing up in 'the San' in Ottawa. Discover why, when Clara left the San for the last time, one of her own ribs was packed in her suitcase. Seven of Anne's siblings had tuberculosis, with two of her brothers and her father dying of the disease. Anne relates how she came to understand this disease that so ravaged her family.

Anne has been invited to speak about *Clara's Rib* across Canada. She was a keynote speaker at the 2012 Ontario Lung Association Conference held in Toronto – TB: Making a Difference; and has presented to Hospitals, Libraries, Museums, Medical Organizations, the Ottawa Medical School; Historical Societies, Faith Communities, Schools, Probus Clubs, Book Clubs and Community Groups. Recipient of the Canadian Lung Association's 2014 *Heather Crowe Award* for raising awareness of lung health.

Talk, Discussion, Book Signing - Local Author Anne Raina

Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at 7:30 pm

Presented by the Rideau Township Historical Society

At the Anglican Church, Burritt's Rapids, ON

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