



The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

September 2017 Newsletter

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

A Heritage Forum

In place of the regular meeting this September there will be a special all day forum celebrating the special heritage of our villages. The event is presented by Heritage Ottawa and the Rideau Township Historical Society.

This informative event will include speakers, a walking tour of the Village of Kars, and an afternoon bus tour of beautiful Rideau Township.

The day begins at the Kars RA located at 1604 Old Wellington Street at 9:30 am and continues to 4:00 pm. Doors open at 9:00 am.

Pre-Registration

Event space is limited so pre-registration is required. The registration fee of \$20 per person includes lunch, refreshments, and access to all events.

You can pre-register on the Heritage Ottawa website (<https://heritageottawa.org>) by making a \$20 donation and entering "Heritage Forum" in the commemorative donation field.

Registrations can also be made by mailing a \$20 cheque to their office at:

*Heritage Ottawa
2 Daly Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1N 6E2*

Please include your name and email address for possible event updates.

Highlights of the Heritage Forum

- Giulio Maffini, an architect with over 30 years of experience as an entrepreneur, will discuss Manotick's experience with the City Design Guidelines for Rural Villages with a focus on the Falls House in Manotick Village.
- City of Ottawa Heritage Planner Anne Fitzpatrick will explain heritage policies with an emphasis on the Heritage Register and Designation.
- A City of Ottawa Archivist will share information on the resources available for researching the buildings, events and people who tell the stories of our rural communities.
- A brief history of Kars will be followed by a guided walking tour of the picturesque village by local resident Cameron Minor.
- Jim Mountain, Director of Regeneration Projects at the National Trust for Canada, will share his years of experience training and coaching communities on how to regenerate their Main Streets.
- A closing Bus Tour with commentary by Owen Cooke will take participants on a drive through beautiful Rideau Township, stopping at heritage sites along the way including such landmarks as St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, the Thomson Barn, the Rideau Archives, and more.
- Lunch and refreshment breaks will be provided. Please let us know in advance if you have any dietary restrictions.

RTHS Fall Programme

Saturday 30 September - RTHS partners with Heritage Ottawa to provide an all-day seminar in Kars. See full details elsewhere in this newsletter. This replaces our usual Wednesday meeting.

Wednesday 18 October, 7:30 p.m. - Pierces Corners RA Hall - Terence Currie, "The Irish Experience in the Ottawa Valley"

Wednesday 15 November, 7:30 p.m. - North Gower Client Service Centre - Bob Fowler, "Courage in Afghanistan"

Wednesday 13 December - Knox Presbyterian Church Manotick - a catered Christmas dinner.

Watch this space for further details.

The 2018 RTHS Annual General Meeting

The January 2018 meeting will be the Society AGM. The Board will be proposing a revision of the constitution and an update of the strategic plan.

These documents are included here to provide notice to the membership and allow for suggestions and comments before the January meeting.

The strategic plan is on page 10 and the constitutions on pages 7 - 9.

Excursion to Wilno

Article by Peter Satterly

Photos by Maureen McPhee and Owen Cooke



A bright red bus was waiting for us at the North Gower Client Centre. Skies were clear with a light breeze from the west. We boarded the bus and left at 08:50 for Wilno via highways 416 and 417.

At Hwy. 60, we turned west and passed through Renfrew and observed the old buildings along the main street. After passing the downtown area, we turned onto Hwy 132 to head west towards Dacre. Hwy. 132 was part of the colonization road, the Opeongo Road. Owen had passed out a map showing the colonization roads in eastern Ontario of 1863. A very interesting map from my perspective since I also travel along one of the colonization roads, the Monck Road which goes between Bancroft and Rama on Lake Couchiching, to go to our cottage on Lake Simcoe near Orillia.

Dacre was at an important crossing point of roads: the Addington Colonization Road which came north from Napanee, through Kaladar (Hwy. 7) and Denbigh (Hwy. 28 – Mississippi Colonization Road), and the Opeongo Road which proceeded from Renfrew through to Algonquin Park. Originally Upper and Lower Dacre, it was the largest settlement on the Opeongo Road beyond Renfrew, and was located along Constant Creek. Owen told us that Constant was the name of an important Indian chief in the area.

After reaching Dacre, we turned north on Hwy. 41, passing Renfrew County Road 64, the Opeongo Road, continuing north on Hwy. 41 to Eganville at the junction of Hwys. 41 and 60. Owen told us that one of the features of Eganville was the propensity for burning churches. He pointed out the Catholic and Lutheran churches, both of which had been burnt down and replaced by modern buildings. I was impressed with the very artful steeples for these two churches. I was also intrigued by some of the old store fronts as we went through the downtown. I have always been intrigued by Eganville, knowing that two

young fiddlers and step dancers, the Pilatskis, came from Eganville. I had seen them at fiddling contests at Lanark and Pembroke.

We continued north on Hwys. 41 and 60 until Hwy. 41 branched off to the north to go to Pembroke and followed Hwy. 60 west towards Golden Lake and our destination at Wilno. As we continued, we passed Killaloe, which, as Owen pointed out, has the reputation as being the coldest town in the province. As we passed Killaloe, Owen told us of the road that ran parallel to Hwy. 60 called the German Road, which was mentioned in the book, *A Harvest of Stones*. The first church along this road was St. Stanislav, the first station in the forest. It was burned in 1916.

As we approached Wilno, we observed St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral, the largest of churches. It was an impressive building on top of the hill a few miles east of Wilno.



On entering Wilno, the village being at the bottom of a hill, we saw the museum, which was to our right at the bottom of a long hill beside the old right of way of the Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound Railway, the railway built by the lumber baron J.R. Booth.

The museum consisted of a number of pioneer buildings: a house, blacksmith shop, etc. which had been donated by families in the area. The main farmhouse was donated to the Wilno Heritage Society on Feb. 1, 2004 by the Burchat Homestead Fundraising Committee and moved to Wilno Heritage Park on Nov. 2, 2006 where it was restored by the Society and friends of the Polish Kashub Culture. It was opened on Aug. 2, 2008 as part of the 150th Anniversary Celebrations for the Arrival of the First Kashubs in Canada in 1858. I was impressed as to the roominess inside the building and the bedroom area on the second floor. However, when I considered a mother and father and 3 or 4 children, I realized that for all those people, the house would be rather cramped!

In addition to the farm house, there was a welcome centre and heritage store, a log shed and stage, a timber frame shed, Wilno Blacksmith and cabinet maker's shop and a scoop roof shelter and crosses. Our hostess, Shirley Mask Connolly, Curator of the Kashub Heritage Village, noted that these buildings were furnished with representative furniture. A brochure given to us notes that settlers lived a life of subsistence on the land, built their homes from the pines that towered over them, at the same time clearing fields in the forest. The homes were furnished with home-made tables, chairs, benches, dish dressers, cabinets, chests, cradles and beds, generally made of softwoods and crafted into utilitarian pieces. Most families made their own simply-fashioned furniture.



The most well-known Wilno Furniture makers were John Kosloski who built furniture from the mid 1870s through to his leaving the area in 1903 and John Borutski who came to the area in 1884 and died in 1910. Master cabinetmaker, John Borutski was trained in the Kociewien region of Prussia (Pomerania), in or near his home village of Lniano. There is also evidence that Kosloski had helpers/apprentices including Frank Lipinski. Other apprentices were likely John Chippior, Vincent Chapeskie and, perhaps, Frank Voldock.

After our visit to the Heritage Village, we all boarded the bus to take the trip to the Wilno Tavern, which, as it turned out, was across the road! We then enjoyed a traditional Polish meal of cabbage rolls, Polish sausage with sauerkraut, perogies, mashed potatoes and shredded beets. For dessert, I had a piece of blueberry pie. The piece must have been close to one quarter of the pie!



We then returned to the bus and went east of town, past St. Mary's Cathedral to a lookout which included plaques on the history of the area, to the Polish soldiers who fought in several wars, and a large cross. From the lookout, one could see Golden Lake to the east and Round Lake to the north.

Then we returned to Wilno and took Renfrew County Road No. 66 which took us to Hopefield, where we joined the Opeongo Road. To the right at the intersection, a dirt road continued west, part of the original Opeongo Road. It was a typical up hill and down dale, winding road which continued west to connect with Hwy. 60. Owen told us that there were two sawmills left at Hopefield, one to the west (Etmanskie mill) along this old portion of the road and one to the east (Kuiack mill) which was on our left after we turned east.

We continued on County Road 66 and came to Brudenell. On the left was St. Mary's "Our Lady of the Angels" church. The church was built between 1868 and 1871, an enormous achievement for the 200 families of the congregation. Across the road was the old rectory, which at one time housed four priests.

Owen told us that Brudenell was established in the aftermath of the Crimean War and was named for Lord Cardigan, commander of the Light Brigade of cavalry, who famously said, "Here goes the last of the Brudenells" at the beginning of the Charge – "Into the Valley of Death Rode the Six Hundred" Although once a thriving village of over 100, the hamlet now has only 2 permanent residences – the rest are summer homes. The frame building was Costello's Hotel, once described as "the sin bin of the Opeongo."

The next point of interest was the radar station at Foymount. It was once part of the southern extension of the Pine Tree Line of early warning stations, built in 1952 but closed in 1974. It is still the highest populated elevation in Ontario and boasts a CBC repeater station. Unfortunately, we were not able to visit the location, just whizzing by in the bus!

Continuing southeast along the Opeongo Road, we came to Lamberts Road and Clontarf. The cement-block Baptist Church was built in 1914 and now holds only an annual

fund-raising memorial service. The graves in the nearby cemetery suggest this was a German congregation.

St. John's Lutheran Church was built about 1890 to replace an earlier church. Services here were in German until the 1920s. Now there are only monthly summer services, in English.

Further down the road, we whizzed by St. Clement's Church. Under the clapboard is log. The church was built in 1892 and holds services in the summer. In the winter the services are held in parishioners' houses.

After passing St. Clement's Church, we continued to the intersection with Hwy. 41 and Dacre. Returning along Hwy. 132 past Dacre, we continued to the road that went to Mount St. Patrick. Mount St. Patrick was the location where the original Catholic priest, Rev. Michael McNulty, settled, starting a religious community. He established a network of chapels throughout the area, a wise idea considering the difficulty in travelling in the area. We stopped and walked the short distance to the cemetery and St. Patrick's "Holy Well", a small building with a well. Using a dipper on a long pole, one could obtain some of the water. Interestingly, the container in which you put the water said, "For external use only!"

After returning to Hwy. 132, we continued east to Renfrew. Of personal interest to the writer of this account, was to see the original right-of-way for the old Kingston & Pembroke Railway. I have seen it on other occasions when I have travelled the road and was able to see it again. On the south side of the highway, somebody has made a gravel road along it for a short distance, which made it easier to see.

After passing partway through Renfrew, we turned south on the Burnstown Road. Owen pointed out some of the large houses on the south side of town, which were built by some of the wealthy lumber barons of the region.

At the south end of the Burnstown Road, Owen pointed out the general store on the left, part of which had been turned into a publishing house for local history books. However, the publishing house had now ceased to exist because of the high cost of publishing. This writer's recollection is that it is the venue for musicians to play at the Burnstown "Hotel".



The Holy Well at Mount St. Patrick



Group picture at one of the Museum buildings.

We returned to North Gower at around 5:30 pm.

Canada 150 Pioneer Tea

On Aug. 19 at 1:00 p.m. RTHS hosted a Canada 150 Pioneer Tea at the Dickinson House Museum. Guests enjoyed a 3-tiered serving of traditional tea treats, featuring heritage recipes. Fiddle music added to the old-fashioned ambience of this nostalgic 1860s afternoon.

As is usual for the various teas held at the Dickinson House it was sold out in advance. The tea treats were excellent. *Photo by Maureen McPhee.*



An Honour for Stuart Clarkson

Stuart Clarkson works for the City of Ottawa Archives. He comes to the Rideau Branch on Tuesdays to assist the volunteers in their work. This year he was nominated for a City Manager's Award of Excellence, an honour we all thought was well earned.

The awards event was held at the Shaw Centre at the breakfast for the nominees. Stuart was nominated, but wasn't a finalist. However, we all had a good breakfast.

In the picture, from the left are Tyler Cox (Paul Henry's boss within the City organization), Stuart Clarkson, Ruth Wright, Georgie Tupper, Susan McKellar, and Owen Cooke.



The Dickinson House this Summer

Dickinson house has experienced a good season to date. Dickinson Day and the "Gathering In The Square" were very popular with over 700 visitors through the house.

The "Through the Decades Fashion Show and Tea" was a great success and many thanks are due to the volunteers and students who not only served the tea, but also acted as models.

The Domestic Skills Saturday in July attracted fewer visitors than expected, however the work demonstrated by

the volunteer quilters and spinners proved popular with those visitors who came. The "Art-in-the-Park" Saturday proved very popular, not only with the participants from the Manotick Art Association, but also with visitors. The Pioneer Tea held in August was also a great success. The fiddle music provided by Reid and Kelsey Warren was certainly the highlight of the event. Many thanks to those two young musicians.

A report on the summer's activity would not be complete without acknowledging the work done by our summer students, James Gravelle, Cameron Hill, Isabella Stevenson, Alec Stevenson and Talia Gellatly.

North Gower Farmer's Market

On Saturday, August 12th, RTHS set up a display at the North Gower Farmer's Market in order to help celebrate Canada 150 and to improve awareness of history in the area.

Thank you to Laura and David Tupper who generously donated their tents along with time and effort to set up and dismantle the same. At the outdoor booth were display boards (brought over from the Rideau Archives) showing photos of Manotick, Kars, North Gower, Carsonby, Malakoff, Pierces Corners, Burritts Rapids and Becketts Landing in the days of yesteryear.

Our presence was greatly enhanced by the contributions of Garry and Mary Montgomery. Garry brought his wagon mounted with antique 'hit and miss' engines and demonstrated the grinding of corn into meal and a water pump.

Mary showed how her antique circular sock knitting machine (invented in the USA in 1849 and first used to make socks for soldiers during the Civil War) could knit a pair of socks or leg warmers in a matter of minutes.

Brian Wright displayed 2 antique tool chests and tools which belonged to Allan Brown who helped to build the

first fire hall in North Gower. Jane Anderson was on hand to sell our publications; Owen Cooke did a vigorous business selling used books; 2 summer students came in costume to lend a hand. All in all, it was a very successful endeavour and our thanks go out to all who participated and visited the venue.



The Canada 150 display at the North Gower Farmers Market. Photo by Susan McKellar

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.

Richard Garlick and the Bottom Bible

Visiting Rideau Branch at the end of last month, and leaving behind some much appreciated gifts, were brothers Ian and Richard Garlick. Their ancestor, Richard Lathan Garlick, had been one of the first settlers in North Gower Township but was active on both sides of the Canal.

Walter Shanley's report in 1851 for the planned Bytown and Prescott Railway mentions an intended station in Osgoode Township at Garlick's (now Osgoode Station) about a mile from his wharf, which Walling's 1863 map shows on the eastern shore of the Rideau River. This wharf was connected with the steamer Garlick had built, said to be the first on the Rideau.

The gifts, a donation to the Archives, consist of a family Bible, two tintype photographs, and some genealogical papers. The Bible, a Vermont Bible published in Battleboro in 1818 by John Holbrook, now lacks the first 24 pages but nevertheless is an impressive duodecimo volume of wove paper produced by stereotype, which at that time were state-of-the-art papermaking and printing techniques in America. How the Garlick family could have obtained this 1818 Bible is a matter of interest and conjecture.

The key, perhaps, lies in the first inscriptions written into the Family Record portion of the Bible, recording the birth of the three children of Isaac Bottom, another early settler in North Gower. His father Ensign Elijah Bottom had been a military pensioner settling six miles above Prescott by 1789 who received an additional 100-acre parcel in Oxford Township around 1800. Isaac's family kept in contact with the area of Shaftesbury, Vermont over the years, with

his eldest brother William later marrying Laura Huntington of the place. Isaac settled in North Gower by 1825 and married Richard L. Garlick's daughter Eliza.

Sometime over the next few decades, the Bible ended up in the hands of Eliza's brother, named after their father Richard Lathan Garlick, and thereafter it descended through the youngest Garlick sons over three generations, all adding additional birth, marriage and death details.

Along with this book, the brothers gave two photographs printed directly on metal, one hand-tinted depicting the profile of a young man, likely the brothers' grandfather Lathan Jacobs Garlick, taken around 1880. The other shows a studio portrait of a couple, by all appearances a slightly older Lathan and his wife Sarah Jane Allen, taken around the time of their marriage in 1887.

The donation also features correspondence sent to their uncle Clarence Garlick in 1936 by Nettie Farnum Watson, then compiling her family history entitled *Garlick Genealogy : Henry Garlick of Milford, Conn. to Seventh Generation*, which she ended up depositing in the New York Public Library in 1948.

The Garlick brothers included a photocopy of Watson's work, along with a newspaper extract indicating that the old Yankee settler Richard Garlick was killed in 1863 (the year of Walling's map) by a train, walking from his home in Osgoode along the very Bytown & Prescott line that supported his wharf.

Stuart Clarkson

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

(Draft)

Note that revised or added text is printed in red and proposed deletions have a line through them.

Rideau Township Historical Society

Constitution

1. Name

This Society, founded 18th September 1974, shall be called the Rideau Township Historical Society. It shall be an affiliate of the Ontario Historical Society.

2. Objectives

- (a) To arouse and stimulate interest in the story of the people and places of the former Township of Rideau and historical subjects in general.
- (b) To collect, classify, edit, and preserve, information relating to this Township.
- (c) To disseminate material so collected by publishing, holding meetings for the presentation of papers and discussion, and by marking historic sites.
- (d) To aid and cooperate with those bodies pursuing the same goals in the former Rideau Township.
- (e) The organization shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other gains to the organization shall be used in promoting its objectives.

3. Membership

The Society shall be composed of Active, Life and Honorary Members.

- (a) Active Members shall be those who pay an annual fee which is determined from time to time.
- (b) Life Member shall be those who pay a life fee which shall be determined from time to time.
- (c) Honorary Membership: may be conferred by the Society on persons considered worthy.

4. Executive Committee

Officers shall be elected at the inaugural meeting and at each annual meeting as follows:

- President
- Vice President(s)
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Publications Editor and Custodian
- Membership Director
- Communications Director
- **Program Director**
- **Dickinson House Director**
- ~~Three Directors~~
- **One Director at Large**

who together with the immediate Past President shall constitute the Executive Committee. Vacancies on the Committee occurring during the year may be filled by the Executive Committee.

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Note that revised or added text is printed in red and proposed deletions have a line through them.

5. Duties

- (a) The Executive Committee shall perform the duties customarily attached to such posts.
- (b) The Executive Committee shall submit an annual budget to the Society for approval at the annual meeting.
- (c) The Executive Committee shall seek approval from the Society, at a regular monthly meeting, for those financial matters not included in the annual budget.
- (d) The Executive Committee shall serve notice of its motion by means of the monthly notice of meeting, which shall be sent to all members.

6. Powers

The Executive Committee shall have authority over the affairs of the Society except for those decisions referred for approval, to the Members in good standing, at a meeting called by the President. Should the President neglect or refuse to call a meeting, five members in good standing shall be entitled to call a meeting.

7. Quorum

Five (5) members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a Quorum for an Executive meeting, and fifteen (15) members of the Society for any general or special meeting.

8. Sub-Committees

Sub Committees, such as:

- Programs
- ~~Membership~~
- Publications
- ~~Historic sites~~
- ~~Property~~
- ~~Library~~
- ~~Museum~~
- ~~By-Laws~~
- **Dickinson House**
- **Communications**

may be appointed by the President, upon the advice of the Executive Committee. The Officer responsible for the subject shall chair the sub-committee unless otherwise determined.

An Executive Committee nominating sub-committee, shall be appointed by the President before the end of the calendar year, and shall consist of the immediate Past President and at least two members of the society in good standing.

9. Meetings

- (i) The annual meeting shall be the first meeting of the calendar year, for:
 - (a) the election of officers;
 - (b) the presentation of an annual budget and;
 - (c) the consideration of reports (with the exception of the financial report which will be presented at the second meeting of the calendar year).
- (ii) Every member shall be given at least seven days notice of all meetings.

(Draft)

Note that revised or added text is printed in red and proposed deletions have a line through them.

- (iii) The regular monthly meetings of the Society shall be held at suitable locations throughout the former township as may be determined by the Executive Committee from time to time. **Occasionally meetings may be replaced with excursions farther afield.**
- (iv) The regular monthly meetings of the Society shall normally be held on the third Wednesday of each month, from September until June inclusive. Meetings in July and August shall be held at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- (v) Members of the society in good standing, may place motions before the society at the regular monthly meetings provided that notice of motion shall have been given **to the Secretary in time to be provided to the members,** at least two weeks in advance.

10. Financial Examiner

A Financial Examiner shall be appointed by the Executive Committee prior to the Annual Meeting. The Financial Examiner shall examine and report on the Society's financial accounts at the February meeting each year.

11. Amendments

The Constitution may be amended at an Annual or regular monthly meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of the members in good standing, present, provided that notice of motion shall have been given to the members at least two weeks in advance.

12. By-Laws

- 1. ~~No office shall be held by the same person for more than three years.~~ **The offices of President, Secretary and Treasurer shall not be held by the same person for more than three consecutive years.**
- 2. Amended and approved:
 - AGM 1992/01/15
 - AGM 2005/01/19
 - AGM 2018/01/17**

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

The mission of the Rideau Township Historical Society (RTHS) is to stimulate interest in and enthusiasm for the history of the people, communities, institutions and industries within the boundaries of the former Township of Rideau, as well as historical subjects in general.

MISSION

RTHS will be recognized as a well-established Ontario heritage society with an active membership that, while working in cooperation with others:

- Provides high quality historical programming and interpretation to engage the public;
- Researches and publishes authoritative works of local history; and
- Serves as a community resource on heritage, enhancing knowledge of historical matters and encouraging the establishment of heritage destinations.

VISION

- Importance of telling the story of historical development within the former Rideau Township and elsewhere.
- Responsibility to engage local residents and the public.
- Importance of partnerships with like-minded organisations, to maximize effort and use of resources.
- Importance of marking and preserving historic sites.

VALUES

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 to 2023 - Key Results Areas & Related Strategic Objectives

1. Excellent Programming & Publishing

- 1.1 To seek out high quality speakers on a broad range of topics.
- 1.2 To organise excursions to sites of historic interest at least once per year.
- 1.3 To encourage research into the history of Rideau Township.
- 1.4 To continue publishing a range of authoritative works of local history.

2. Effective Promotion & Communication

- 2.1 To regularly promote, advertise and report on RTHS activities using local newspapers, social media, public notices and newsletters.
- 2.2 To maintain a committee to work with the Communications Director, including members from outside the RTHS Executive.
- 2.3 To improve joint communications with other heritage organizations.
- 2.4 To have RTHS booths at events such as fairs, conferences and community celebrations.

3. Attraction of Adequate Funding

- 3.1 To establish a committee responsible for grant applications and fundraising, the Chair of which will be a member of the RTHS Executive.
- 3.2 To recruit an individual with expertise in grant applications.
- 3.3 To hold targeted fundraising events.
- 3.4 To maintain a fair but sufficient membership fee.
- 3.5 To charge an entrance fee for certain key RTHS-sponsored public events.

4. Heritage Destinations

- 4.1 To raise funds to restore Dickinson House and continue its operation as a living museum.
- 4.2 To continue to cooperate with Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. in further developing Dickinson Square as a heritage destination and exploring appropriate forms of governance.
- 4.3 To explore the feasibility of a second museum in the former Rideau Township.
- 4.4 To explore the marking and preserving of other historic sites.

5. Increased Membership

- 5.1 To develop and implement a strategy for recruiting new members.
- 5.2 To continue use of social media and communications technology to connect with members and the public.
- 5.3 To invest in youth through history scholarships and by engaging them in learning about local history and carrying out historical research projects.