



**September Meeting Details**

Rideau Township Historical Society  
*Presents*

**RECONCILIATION and  
the WRITING of CANADIAN HISTORY**

*with*

**IRA BASEN**

*Award-Winning Journalist, Author, and Educator*

**September 21, 7:30 p.m.**

**Manotick United Church**

“History is the story that a people tells about themselves” wrote Ira Basen in a May 2022 opinion piece in the *Globe and Mail*. Becoming intrigued in 2021 by a growing controversy among historians relating to reconciliation with indigenous peoples, he interviewed widely to explore what he saw as a fundamental question: *What role should historians play in advancing the cause of truth and reconciliation, and what stories will they tell?*



Holding a graduate degree in History, Ira Basen has had a 40-year career as a producer with CBC radio on shows such as *The Inside Track*, *This Morning* and *The Sunday Edition*. His articles have appeared in major publications, including the *Globe* and *Saturday Night*.

Join us on September 21 when Mr. Basen will share his findings and observations on historians and reconciliation.

**This is a FREE event open to the public.**  
**Attendance via ZOOM is also available by registering at:**  
**[www.rideautwphistory.org](http://www.rideautwphistory.org) or scanning the QR code at right.**



SCAN ME



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

## President's Message

Hello Everyone.

I trust that most of us have had a safe and healthy summer. Summers seem to pass all too quickly.

### Changes at RTHS

The fall will see some changes to the Rideau Township Historical Society in terms of both the composition of RTHS executive and the style and format of programming. Beginning in September, our Fall/Winter program will use a hybrid meeting format. Essentially, you as a member or guest will have the choice either to attend the meeting in person at a designated venue or take part via Zoom. Prior to each event, you will receive an invitation to attend indicating the location of the meeting (Manotick United Church for September) as well as the Zoom coordinates. The hybrid meeting style has the advantage of extending the reach of the Society to programming that was not available before Zoom, while at the same time reintroducing the social interaction that was lost during the long pandemic isolation.

### September's Presentation

Our speaker for September is Ira Basen, a long-serving Toronto-based CBC-radio producer who has agreed to travel to our region to meet with us. His presentation on "Reconciliation and the Writing of Canadian History" will explore how the need for reconciliation with indigenous peoples is redefining not only how history is written, but also how its stories will be told both at a national level and locally. Our meeting on September 21<sup>st</sup> will provide an important opportunity for discussion of how organizations with a historical focus, such as our own, will move forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Please come and attend the meeting in person or go to the RTHS Website and register to receive the Zoom invitation.

### RTHS Executive Opportunities

Over the coming months, several RTHS Executive positions will become vacant as current members have asked to retire for a variety of reasons. Therefore, I will be reaching out to the membership and beyond seeking to fill these positions. The duties are not onerous or difficult. While they require commitment, they also provide a rewarding opportunity to work with others in areas of shared interest. I will be looking for a Secretary, and Directors for Publications and Programming. If you're interested in – or would like more information about – any of these positions, (or know of someone who might be), please contact me (rideautwphistory@gmail.com.)

For more information about the Society and topics of interest please visit the RTHS website, which is updated regularly. Rod Brazier has recently put up a very interesting article titled: "School Gardens". It is a fascinating read.

*Doug Culham, RTHS President*

## In Memoriam

Rideau Township Historical Society has lost one of its life members - **Mary Emma Armstrong**. Mary passed away on July 4, 2022 at the age of 89. She was born and raised on a farm just south of North Gower. She generously shared her knowledge of local and family history. Mary pursued a career in nursing at the Ottawa Civic Hospital for 37 years, and was nursing coordinator of the Operating Room at that location. In retirement, she was an avid traveller, May Court Club volunteer, Nursing Alumnae member and was particularly talented and artistic in the area of cross-stitching. Mary had a myriad of interests and she made many friends wherever she went. We offer condolences to her sister-in-law, Marion Armstrong, her nieces Lauree and Krista and their families, and to her extended family and friends.

## Coral Lindsay History Award

Rideau Township Historical Society would like to extend their congratulations to the 2022 recipients of the Coral Lindsay History Award. The successful candidates this year were **Andrew Collier** from South Carleton High School and **Calin Kairouz** from St. Mark High School. We wish them well in their future studies and careers.

## Kars Village Bicentennial Celebrations

July 16th marked the 200th anniversary of the village of Kars. Rideau Township Historical Society members were there to join Kars in their bicentennial celebrations. Susan McKellar prepared and led two Walking Tours of Old Kars, highlighting some of the older structures and associated historical information.



Photo Credit: Ruth Wright

Doug Culham docked his boat in Kars, and accompanied by Sandy McNiece, gave many short boating excursions along the Rideau waterway to eager participants – a very popular attraction on a hot day! Bill Tupper graciously offered interesting and knowledgeable commentary along the way.



Our Captain, Doug Culham

Inside the RA, RTHS had tables set up with display boards, photos, Tweedsmuir history books and artifacts such as an antique doll and carriage and christening dress which were donated by former Kars residents. RTHS publications were also available for purchase.



Figure 1 Photo Credit: Ruth Wright

All-in-all a very successful day!

Thanks go to Susan McKellar, Sandy McNiece, Doug Culham, Bill Tupper, Owen Cooke, Bonnie Symons and Ruth Wright for their assistance and participation.

## Report on June's RTHS Event

### Burritts Rapids Excursion

**The more we get together,  
the happier we will be!**

What a great way to convene the first in-person meeting of the Rideau Township Historical Society (RTHS) since what has colloquially become known as the “before times”.

And there we were, on a sultry June day, gathering to the dulcet tones of the Burritts Rapids Community Hall piano, marvellously played by our own Susan McKellar. Thank you Susan!



Photo Credit: Maureen McPhee

Awaiting us in the community hall addition were a series of artifacts related to Stephen Burritt and his contemporaries, lovingly curated and shared with us by Nancy Warren of the Merrickville Historical Society and Archives (whose collection is partially housed in the basement of the community hall. )

Thank you to Nancy, who worked with our own Owen Cooke to put together an exhibit that tied together the joint history of both sides of Burritts Rapids (*yes there is a split identity!*)



Photo Credit: Myra McFarlane

Once Susan had played us in, (us being about 25 members of RTHS, our friends, family and Burritts Rapids Community Members,) our President Doug Cullam

shared a few welcoming words – but just a few – because we were all waiting anxiously for our own customized guided tour of Burritts Rapids.

Our tour guide, Jill MacDonald, was kind enough to take some time away from her family on this last Sunday in June (26th) to share some history of this bit of Rideau Canal oasis which, ironically, predates the building of the canal by about 30 years! According to Jill, she is either a 5th or 6th generation Burritts Rapider, depending on who you ask.



*Photo Credit: Maureen McPhee*

Jill regaled us with stories – and answered questions -- about the early settlement – the hotel where the murder occurred, the mischief her ancestors got into, and how the tour boat that goes from Kingston to Ottawa can get through the locks with just “this much” to spare! Whew!

(For those interested in self-guided walking tours, Burritts Rapids is one of three local communities – Manotick and Kars being the others – for which tour maps are now available on the RTHS website: <https://rideautwphistory.org/rideau-communities-walking-tours/> )

As we left the island that contains most of the original structures of the town, and crossed the bridge that leads to the Rideau Township (Ottawa) part of town, we were reminded of the arbitrary nature of human borders by the plaque that designates the border between the City of Ottawa and the Township of North Grenville.

And all we had to do was cross the bridge. And was it ever worth it!

As we walked north towards Donnelly Drive, we came to the Anglican Church, which is one of the earliest constructed on the Rideau, (consecrated in 1834) and were greeted by George Hawkins, one of the Wardens of the Church. George shared with us a little of the history of the church, as a place of worship and a place of living history. Thank you George! He kindly



*Photo Credit: Maureen McPhee*

invited us to explore the cemetery at our leisure, and also invited us back.

Little did we know that members of the tour also had history with the church, and we were treated to a lively and extemporaneous discussion about what makes a building “historical”, and the sometimes competing imperatives of utility and heritage when it comes to built heritage. Food for thought for all of us there.

Once we left the church, we made our way back to the hall for some more refreshments, another look at the archival exhibit, and formal au revoirs.



*Photo Credit: Maureen McPhee*

Oh, and while we were there, members told us what they wanted to see/do next.... Here’s the list, in no particular order, and with no editing

If you want to do any or all of these things, or have any other ideas, let your executive know (and offer to help plan)!

- Personal stories from older residents
- Bring & Brag!
- Christ Church and cemetery tour
- Excursion to the train museum in Smiths Falls
- Excursion to Cumberland Village
- Excursion to Pinhey’s Point

Remember, the more we get together, the happier we will be.

See you at the Manotick United Church 7:30 p.m. on September 21st, for our September presentation event. (see above.)

## Membership

As we begin the second half of our program year, a number of our members have not yet renewed their memberships. If you are among them, please renew now, using the form attached to this newsletter, either electronically at [rideautwphistory@gmail.com](mailto:rideautwphistory@gmail.com) or by mail to Box 56, North Gower, K0A 2T0.

## How to Connect with RTHS



<https://rideautwphistory.org/>

---



[www.facebook.com/rideautownshiphistory](http://www.facebook.com/rideautownshiphistory)

---



[rideautwphistory@gmail.com](mailto:rideautwphistory@gmail.com)

---



<https://twitter.com/RideauTpHS>

# Sign me up as a member of RTHS



Members of the Society enjoy:

- Monthly meetings featuring engaging presentations, followed by refreshments
- Group excursions to historical points of interest in Eastern ON
- Local books published by the Society, and a monthly newsletter
- Opportunities to participate and contribute as volunteers

For more information visit <https://rideautwphistory.org> and facebook.com/rideautownshiphistory.

Please mail this form with a cheque for membership dues payable to: Rideau Township Historical Society, Box 56, North Gower, ON, KOA 2T0, OR pay by e-transfer to [rideautwphistory@gmail.com](mailto:rideautwphistory@gmail.com) and email a scanned copy of the form to the same email address.

Name:

---

Address:

---

City & Postal Code:

---

Telephone:

Email:

---

Date:

---

Are you a new RTHS member?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

---

Individual Membership \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Life Membership \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

Family Membership (2 adults & school-age children) \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

---

Donation \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

Other Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Receipts for paid memberships will be issued when we are able to meet face-to-face, but tax receipts for donations will be issued at the end of the year.*

**Thank you for supporting RTHS!**