



Rideau Township Historical Society

February

Newsletter

2023

*Preserving
the Past
to Enrich
the Future*

February Event

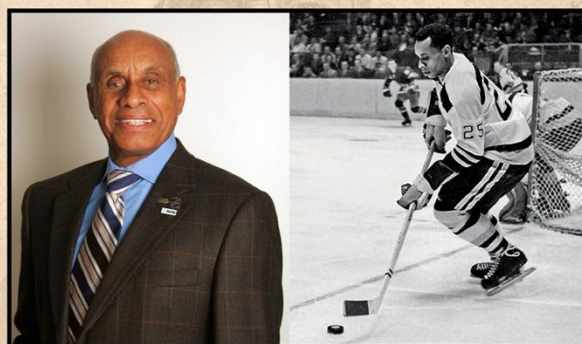
Rideau Township Historical Society

Presents

Live via ZOOM!

WILLIE O'REE

Order of Canada Recipient and NHL Hall of Fame Member



Fredericton-born Willie O'Ree was the youngest of 13 children. A multi-sport athlete, his professional aspirations originally pointed toward baseball, but after experiencing segregation first-hand during a baseball tryout in the U.S., he reconsidered his options and focused on hockey.

Willie made history in 1958 when he took to the ice with the Boston Bruins, becoming the first person of colour to play in the NHL. He played professionally for more than 20 seasons. In 1998, Willie O'Ree was named NHL Diversity Ambassador, and has since helped establish local grass-roots hockey programs that have inspired more than 120,000 boys and girls to play the game. Willie will join us via ZOOM to share his story.

February 15, 7:30 p.m.

To register for this ZOOM presentation visit: www.rideautwphistory.org
or email us at rideautwphistory@gmail.com



*Preserving and Promoting Local History
of the former Rideau Township*



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

In Remembrance

Gary Alan Bagley



Our former Membership Director, Gary Bagley, passed away on Christmas Eve, in Orillia, at age 79.

An Ottawa resident, Gary was an indefatigable researcher and genealogist, working in local material relating both to Orillia and the Ottawa area.

He was educated in Orillia schools, attending both Orillia District Collegiate and Vocational Institute and the new Park Street Collegiate, followed by an undergraduate degree at University of Waterloo and an M.A. at Queen's.

He married Lynne Webb, also a former member of our Society, who passed away in 2014. They did not have children, but doted on many nieces and nephews, and took many homeless cats into their house. Gary loved ping pong, to the extent of once breaking an arm in a match.

Both Gary and Lynne spent their working lives in the federal Public Service, Gary in social policy positions, where his expertise was much admired. Following his retirement, he was able to devote more time to research at Library and Archives Canada. He became President of the Guy Carleton Branch, United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada, and subsequently he was their Branch genealogist, vetting all applications to claim Loyalist descent. Among his other research projects was a complete index to the Orillia Packet & Times, a century and a half of local history from one newspaper.

We shall miss Gary's expertise and comradeship.

Allan Haan ~ Manotick's Person of the Year

Rideau Township Historical Society would like to congratulate one of our members, **Allan Haan**, on being named the 2022 Manotick Messenger Al Corace Person of the Year.

Allan has given generously of his time and efforts over many years for numerous community initiatives – the rebuilding of Harmony Hall (the Legion building) following its destruction by fire; fundraising for the orphanage

built by French Café owner Grace Aghostinho; fundraising for a new roof for Watson's Mill; member of Royal Canadian Legion to name just a few.

A special project dear to his heart was the establishment of the Manotick Soap Box Derby, which is now named the *Allan Haan Manotick Soap Box Derby* in his honour. Allan initiated this endeavour in 2011 and it has been very successful ever since. Thank you, Allan, for your community service and congratulations on this well-deserved award.



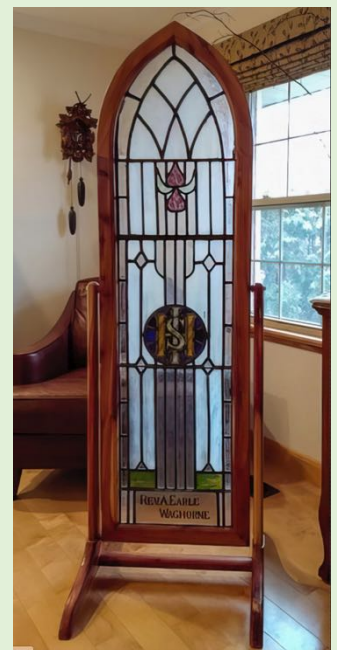
Allan Haan

Report on January's Bring & Brag Event

By Ruth Wright

On a relatively warm and clear January evening, and following the Annual General Meeting, members of the Rideau Township Historical Society shared with their colleagues the various treasures they had brought from their personal collections – and indeed they were treasures!

Leading the pack was Susan McKellar, who showed a beautiful stained glass window which commemorated her grandfather, Reverend A. Earle Waghorne. Several years ago, Susan's sister Mirah purchased this window from Mandaumin United Church (near Sarnia, Ontario) when the church was put up for sale. Mirah and her husband made a freestanding frame for the window, and Susan hopes one day to borrow it to display at her house for a time.



Mounted Stained Glass Window Commemorating Susan's Grandfather

Susan then recounted the very interesting life of her grandfather. Born in Kent, England in 1876, he worked

as a printer's apprentice, and married Edith Creasor in 1905.

Sadly, Edith died following the birth of their son in 1906. Devastated, Earle left his son with his mother and emigrated to Canada, where he worked as a printer, first in Wallaceburg, Ontario and then in Lynn Valley, B.C.

A good friend, Mirah Ball, followed him to B.C. with his young son. Earle and Mirah married in 1908 and started a family of their own.

Earle became interested in the ministry, and was ordained into the Presbyterian Church in Ontario in 1918. He became minister of a church at Mandaumin (near Sarnia, ON) in 1920. While there, he painted murals on the interior of the church, and set up a print shop in his dining room, from where he published a monthly magazine called "The Churchman."



Susan McKellar

He also composed many musical pieces, and founded a summer camp in Lambton County called Lamrecton. The camp occupied his entire family of 8 during the summer months, including his wife Mirah, who was the designated cook!

A man of many talents, Earle also built organs. He developed and patented a design for an electro-magnetic device for use in a pipe organ. He built an organ for his own church and for one in Chatham. When called to Riverside United Church in Windsor in 1938, he organized the congregation to build a much-needed organ there as well. Rev. Waghorne died suddenly of a heart attack in 1942. Clearly a very accomplished individual and very deserving of the tribute window in his honour!



Next to present his prized possession was Robin Craig. Robin showed a picture of a beautiful tall case clock which has been in his family's possession since it was built by John Fry from Melksham, Wiltshire County (England) sometime between 1740-1750. John Fry was a Quaker minister as well as a clockmaker, and his eldest son founded the J. S. Fry & Sons Chocolate Company.

The first owner of the clock was James Hall (Clackmannanshire City, Scotland) who then passed it on to his son James Hall II. James II immigrated to Lanark County, Canada with his family in 1820. His son, James III practiced in Lanark as an engineer and Provincial Land Surveyor before moving to Halifax (with the clock) about 1829. He relocated to Peterborough about 1835, where he served as Mayor, and later was a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada (1848 – 1851), and the Parliament of Canada (1874 – 1878).



Robin Craig

An interesting family story tells of James rescuing the portrait of Queen Victoria from a fire in Montreal in 1849 but Robin does concede that it was more likely to be Sir Sanford Fleming who was married to James' daughter Anne Jane.

The next recipient of the clock was EDH Hall and then Basil Hall, both Peterborough residents. Basil's wife, Daisy, moved to Ottawa in 1952 to live with her daughter Mary Craig (Robin's mother) who then took possession of the clock and housed it in Ottawa and Becketts Landing. Robin is now the proud owner of the clock (since 1998) and has kept it in his home in North Gower and presently in Perth.



Robin's mid-18th Century Clock

Robin had pictures of the weights in the clock (chunks of lead) and the pendulum which is also a chunk of lead with a brass facing. A true family heirloom!

Myra MacFarlane related a legend that every time a clock owner died a hole was drilled in the back of the clock so his/her soul could get to Heaven. Wonder how many holes are in Robin's clock??



Josephine Norton brought with her some artifacts relating back to her family's coal mining days in Northumberland County in England. One was her father's carbide lamp which was used to test for the presence of gas in the mine. After putting dynamite in holes in the coal face, her father would go down with his lamp to test for gas following the explosion. The roof at these times was very unsafe and on one occasion a large piece of coal rock fell on him and struck the lamp (which explains the dent in it). He was trapped under the rock until some coworkers fortunately spied the shiny metal heel clips on his boots and came to rescue him. Although injured, they bandaged him up and he valiantly got on his bike and rode home. Made of tough stuff in those days!

Josephine also had 3 different 'disaster glasses', which were made to commemorate coal mining disasters. Her paternal grandfather was killed in the pit in 1910 when her father was just 6 years old. As the homes were owned by the coal pit owners, his wife and children were left destitute, so sale of the 'disaster glasses' which were etched with names and dates of the disaster helped to raise money for them. It was interesting to note that her grandfather had the only home with an indoor bathroom.



Josephine Norton

Her great uncle, William Straker, C.B.E., was a pioneering general secretary of the Northumberland Miners' Association, a precursor of the National Union of Mine-workers. At one time there were 170,000 members in the coal miners' union and it gradually dropped down to 100. Since the world is switching to other forms of heating, the coal miners union disbanded in 2018.



Brian Earl, a railroad enthusiast and model railroad aficionado followed. He brought with him a chunk of steel rail which was out of the last run of steel rail produced by the Cisco Steel Company in Cape Breton

which closed in 2011. He also had a switchman's lantern. These lanterns were used on the front and caboose of the train to signal train movement before electric and computer technology. This particular lamp was given to his father by CPR. His father, who was CEO of the wheat board, collaborated with the railroad companies to ensure that there were empty box cars available for shipping during harvest time.

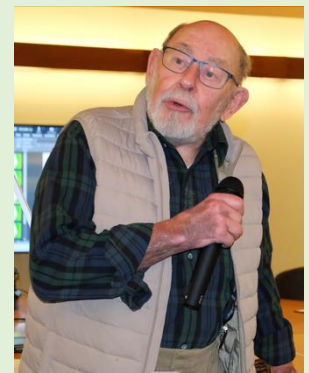


Brian Earl

One item of which he is very proud is a replica of the last railroad spike produced at the Sherrit-Gordon mine in Lynn Lake, Manitoba on November 9, 1953. This information is engraved on the spike and it was made from the first nickel mined at Lynn Lake.



Chuck Gruchy passed around a sharply tapered steel spike about 6" long with a hole up near the top. One individual guessed correctly that it was a nautical device. It is indeed a spike called a "fid" and is used for splicing rope cable, a very difficult and 'hateful' chore. This particular fid was suitable for rope 2" in diameter and was given to him by the bosun of the CGS Quadra.



Chuck Gruchy



Owen Cooke recounted the tale of Edward Edwin Dodds, an American war hero. Owen stumbled across his commemorative plaque in a graveyard in the hamlet of Canton, near Port Hope, and found it significant in that he was awarded the U.S. Congressional Medal of Honour.

After some investigation he found that Edward Dodds was born in Canton and was living in Rochester, N.Y. when he enlisted at age 21 as a private in the 21st New York Volunteer Cavalry in August 1863. He was promoted to Sergeant in May 1864.

At a particularly vicious battle at Ashby's Gap in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia campaign, Sergeant Dodds demonstrated extreme heroism by coming to the aid of his wounded captain who was trapped under his dead horse. He managed to hoist his captain onto his own horse, mounted behind him, and got them both to safety amidst enemy fire.



Owen Cooke

Dodds was subsequently wounded and lost his right arm at the shoulder. He worked as a reporter in Rochester and returned to Canada in the 1870s where he became clerk of Hope Township, and also became U.S. consular representative for the Peterborough area. His congressional Medal of Honour was awarded in 1896 and upon his death in 1901, he was buried in the family plot with his parents. There were 29 Congressional Medals of Honour awarded to Canadians during the Civil War and Sergeant Dodds is possibly the only one buried in Canada.



Awarded a Medal of Honor.
WASHINGTON, June 8.—A medal of honor has been awarded Edward E. Dodds, late sergeant Company C, Twenty-first New York cavalry, for most distinguished gallantry in action at Ashby's Gap, Va., July 19, 1864. Mr. Dodds is the United States consular agent at Petersborough, Ont., Canada.

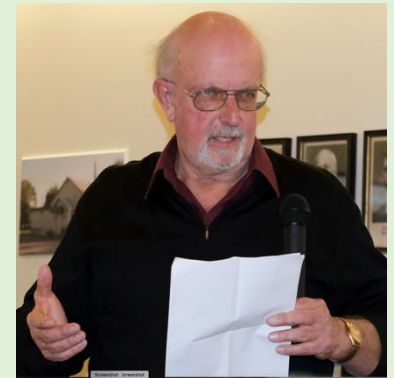


Tick-tock! Time marches on as evidenced by Sandy McNiece's 3 family clocks currently in his possession. The clocks originated in Ireland, England and Wales, and Sandy concentrated mainly on the McNiece family tall case clock which his great-great-grandfather brought from Ireland in 1821.

Sandy related the story of how the clock sat unused in the corner of his father's parlor for many years; however, one day his father was proudly showing it to a friend, and the clock toppled over on top of them. They managed to crawl out and were unhurt, except for perhaps their pride. A perfect example of why a clock should be secured to the wall!

His sister refurbished the clock transforming it from a rustic black artifact into a very lovely piece of furniture. He noted how the numerals faced inward and the number 4 was portrayed as IIII rather than IV, a common practice before 1850. There are decorative depictions on the clock and there is a lock on the case door to prevent unauthorized persons from tampering with time.

So why are they called Grandfather clocks? Well, an American, Henry Clay Work was visiting England in 1876 and noticed that the tall clock in the hotel was not working. The hotel owner told him that the clock had stopped working when its owner died. Mr. Clay subsequently wrote the song "My Grandfather's Clock" and from then on tall clocks were called grandfather clocks. Sandy ended his presentation by playing a rendition of the iconic song for us all to hear and there were many toes tapping and singing along as we enjoyed this much-loved song.



Sandy McNiece



Last, but not least, C.J. Rooney had some 'recycled' material to show. They were found in the crawl space of his home on Century Road. The home was built in 1878 and was occupied by the Waterson family and from 1920 by his wife's grandparents Lester and Lillian Acres. He showed an old ink bottle complete with Waterman label on the stopper; a cold cream container; a bottle from the J. Elwood Lee Co. in Pennsylvania; and last, but not least, a Coca Cola bottle with straight sides which was made between 1916 and 1918. Don't see many of these nowadays!



C.J. Rooney

Time unfortunately ran out, so Bill Tupper, Allan Haan, and Doug Culham signed up for next year. Thanks to all who contributed to make this a truly delightful evening. Can't wait to see what next year will bring!

RTHS Online

The February update of the RTHS website includes the description of our February event featuring Willie O'Ree, as well as a new "Item of Interest" article entitled, "Theodore De Pencier: The Intriguing Life and Times of the Pioneer Surveyor of Marlborough Township."

The RTHS Facebook page continues to add a new post daily (Monday to Friday). A sampling of posts this past month include:

- The projected road to Manotic (sic) and North Gower from Hackett's Corner (today's Riverside & Hunt Club area.) (1874)
- Class photo of North Gower S.S.#3 & Osgoode S.S.#19 (1922/23)
- Opening of the new Presbyterian church in Manotick (1877)
- The founding of Burritt's Rapids
- River cleanup at Kars (1970)
- Class photo North Gower S.S.#6 (North Gower village) (1951/52)
- Community-builders: Elijah & Lela Scharf of Manotick
- Heritage Homes of Rideau Township: The Lindsay family farm in Kars

Click on the appropriate link in the table in the next column to check us out.

How to Connect with RTHS



<https://rideautwphistory.org/>



www.facebook.com/rideautownshiphistory



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 and email a scanned copy of the form to the same email address.

Name:

Address:

City & Postal Code:

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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!

