



May Event

Rideau Township Historical Society

Presents

**Thomas Mackay
and the Making of Ottawa**

with Alastair Sweeny

May 17th, 7:30 p.m.

In Person at Manotick United Church, AND via ZOOM

From humble beginnings as a backwoods lumber town, within a few short decades Bytown miraculously emerged as the capital of the nation! How could this happen?

Among those whose efforts made Ottawa's rise possible, Thomas Mackay stands tall. Join us as Alastair Sweeny traces the story of this prominent builder of Canada's capital and his many accomplishments.



Alastair Sweeny is a Canadian publisher, historian and author. Alastair is co-author and producer of History of Canada Online, Canada's First People, and author of several books including most recently Thomas Mackay: The Laird of Rideau Hall and the Founding of Ottawa (2022).

**To register for ZOOM attendance visit
www.rideautwphistory.org, or scan the QR Code**



Preserving the Past to Enrich the Future



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

President's Message

Welcome to Spring everyone. By the time you read this, perhaps the temperatures will be more reasonable for this time of year, and the rains that bring May flowers will have eased a little.

We have just **two programs left in the RTHS Winter/Spring series**. Our next meeting is May 17th at the Manotick United Church in Manotick. Alastair Sweeny will be speaking on "Thomas Mackay and the Making of Ottawa". This will be a hybrid meeting; members and guests are encouraged to attend in person, but if this is not possible, a Zoom meeting feed will be available. Please refer to the poster in the newsletter. The last meeting of the series will be an excursion to Smiths Falls where there are three museums of interest: the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario, the Heritage House Museum, and the Rideau Canal Visitors Centre. More details of the visit will be available in the June newsletter.

I must return to our **general plea for volunteers**. It seems that the tasks of the Society have once again fallen to the few. Board members are fully occupied with a variety of different tasks such as book publications, special projects, events, newsletters, communications and the RTHS website. A couple of issues I will raise with the Board next week is the possibility of delegating an individual to organize a single event: from a speaker and location, to a report for the newsletter. Another possibility is reducing the complexity of our meetings; perhaps from April though October our meetings would be in person while meeting from November through March would be via Zoom. Exceptions would be our Christmas party in December and the AGM in January.

We are always looking for **suggestions** for topics that may be of interest to the Society. The Sweeny presentation came via the Ottawa Historical Society. Other suggestions have included the Fenian Raids and "Boyd Block" homes which are unique to our region. We are currently working on the schedule into next year, and we welcome your input.

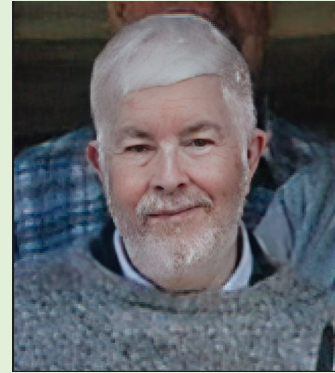
Look forward to seeing many of you on May 17th in Manotick.

Doug Culham



In Remembrance

Peter Randall Satterly



Long-time RTHS member Peter Satterly passed away on 14 April. Not only was he a member of our Society, but he volunteered at the Rideau Branch of the City Archives as well as with the C. Robert Craig Memorial Library of railway history.

Born 20 April 1947, Peter was the son of the late Jack and Eileen Satterly. He grew up in Toronto, where his father was a senior provincial scientist. He attended Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute, then Trent University in Peterborough, where he held double undergraduate degrees, in agronomy and music. He later completed a Master of Library and Information Science at the University of Western Ontario.

Early employment as a Canadian Pacific Railway dispatcher gave Peter a lifelong passion for railroading, although professionally he worked in Ottawa as a librarian for several federal departments. As befitted a railway enthusiast, he lived on Flag Station Road, south of Manotick, although he passed his last years at Billingswood Manor in Ottawa.

Peter was a man of wide interests, a supporter of natural biodiversity, and an annual chronicler of amphibians and birds. He knew rural Ontario well, and delighted in driving most of its back roads. The family cottage on Lake Simcoe was a source of joy for him, as was his collection of teddy bears, each one personally named.

Perhaps his greatest interest was in the people he knew. He was a gentle soul, a faithful and supportive friend to many. He was a devoted member of the choir of Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church in downtown Ottawa. He is survived by his sister Elizabeth Howland of Marion, Massachusetts, and nephews and nieces in the U.S.

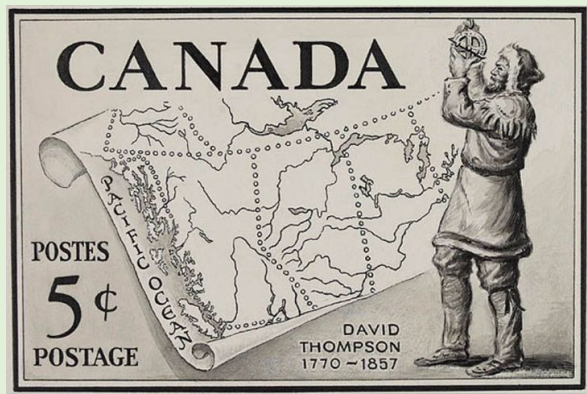
Elizabeth Howland and Owen Cooke

Report on Our April Event

David Thompson

an exploration of the life and achievements of Canada's greatest land geographer

with Richard Van Loon



Canada Post Stamp Issued in 1957

On April 19th Richard Van Loon spoke to the Society on the exploits of explorer, surveyor and map maker David Thompson.

At the turn of the 19th century, David Thompson was first an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company and then the North West Company. Over the next two decades he was sent out to explore and map much of Canada and what is now the American northwest. It is estimated that Thompson travelled more than 90,000 km for the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. Thompson mapped, with astonishing accuracy, more territory than more famous explorers such as Champlain or Alexander Mackenzie.

Initially, Mr. Thompson worked for the Hudson's Bay Company but in 1797 he moved to the North West Company and for the next 15 years, Thompson led expeditions from Sault Ste. Marie in Ontario to Astoria, Oregon on the Columbia River.

Mr. Van Loon highlighted two expeditions: first the expedition around the western end of Lake Superior determining the location of the boundary between Canada and the United States and mapping alternate all Canada routes to the great plains; and second, from Rocky Mountain House through the mountain ranges of the Rocky Mountains to the great rivers flowing west to the Pacific.

Mr. Thompson travelled as the First Nations did at the time, adopting their means of travel, foraging off the land and building and using canoes for river travel. David Thompson's maps were incredibly accurate based on navigation techniques using a sextant and a time piece for calculation of latitude and longitude.

Mr. Thompson retired from the North West Company in 1815 and moved to Montreal and later Upper Canada. He continued on as a surveyor, locating the boundary between Canada and the United States in the region of Cornwall, Ontario.

David Thompson's great legacy are his maps, atlases and books of land from the Great Lakes through to the Pacific. Many of these are still with us to day.

Doug Culham

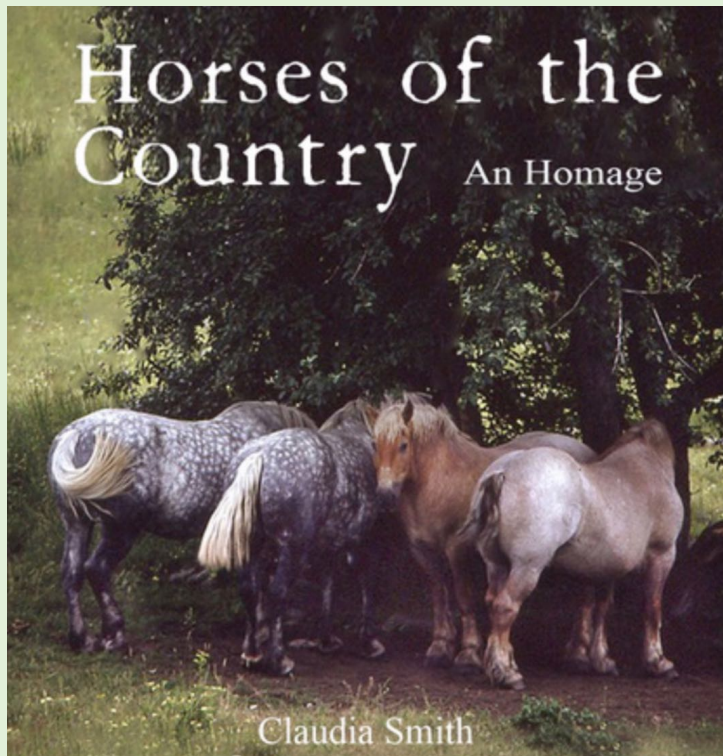
Below: "David Thompson's traverses while employed by the Hudson's Bay Company (in red) and the North West Company (in black)".



Book Review

Smith, Claudia. *Horses of the Country: An Homage*. Impression Printing, 2021. 202 pages.

Reviewed by Shannon Jaspers-Fayer



This is the second in a series of reviews on newer books available on the shelves of the Rideau Archives Library. Members of Rideau Township Historical Society are invited to borrow these and other books from the Rideau Archives Library and members of the public are welcome to come visit any Tuesday to consult the library materials.

Shannon Jaspers-Fayer is completing a work term assignment at Rideau Archives. She is a senior student at Redeemer Christian High School in Nepean, and her family lives near Kars. Shannon's theatre reviews of Cappie productions have already been published in the Ottawa Citizen.

If you did not appreciate horses before reading *Horses of the Country*, you certainly will upon completion. Rural historian Claudia Smith's eighth book, *Horses of the Country* offers a uniquely Ontarian perspective on horses from the late 1700s to their decline in the early 1900s. Sources from personal collections and historical newspapers dominate her work and many stories and anecdotes create a vivid picture of historical Ontario life.

Claudia Smith grew up in Quebec loving horses. Now based in Lanark, she has authored books on the history of maple syrup, country roads, firefighting, school days, barns and other stories. She has also contributed over 180 articles on rural life for *The Lanark Era*.

Smith takes the reader through various aspects of life with horses. She begins with a brief history of their use in Ontario and goes on to describe care and stabling, farm and draft horses, veterinarians, blacksmiths, road conditions, parades, carriages and more. Even if you do not know horse breeds, you will come to appreciate the French-Canadian horses, affectionately called "Little Iron Horses," as well as Percherons, Clydesdales and Shires.

Horses were more than just muscle on a farm; they were the basis of transportation, logging and firefighting. Milk, ice, bread and mail delivery were central to Ontarians and horses were the means by which all this was possible. With flair and good humor, Smith takes stories, newspaper advertisements, anecdotes and vintage photographs and ties them all together into a comprehensive representation of rural life.

The work is punctuated with quotes from newspapers and personal accounts, though references are not always provided for these excerpts. Photographs from numerous collections, including Smith's personal one, display threshing machines, parades and, of course, horses. The dates range from the late 1800s up to present day, though most are from the early to mid-twentieth century. Newspaper clippings of advertisements and ink prints also appear throughout *Horses of the Country*.

Smith provides vivid images and moments from Ontario's history. Young people try to sneak past sleeping tollkeepers and farmers peer out the window to check whether the mail carrier has put away his sleigh yet. People dance on floorboards stuffed with horsehair and stagecoaches bounce their way down hot, dusty roads. Smith recounts tales of cheating horse dealers, illegal horse races down main street and the pranks children pulled on their schoolmasters. Through the story of horses, Claudia Smith tells the story of rural Ontario.

Horses of the Country is an approachable read. The tone is light, and the work focuses on stories and descriptions rather than diagrams of equipment or in-depth information on maps and procedures. Smith follows the story of horses from their integral part in society through their decline as automobiles and tractors began to take over. She continues to describe their role in society today as organisations such as The Leeds County Draft Horse Club seek to celebrate horses and educate people about their history.

I recommend *Horses of the Country* to anyone interested in either horses or daily life in early rural Ontario. It celebrates the animals and provides an account of the days when they dominated many aspects of daily activities. Members of Rideau Township Historical Society are

welcome to borrow *Horses of the Country* from Rideau Archives Library, and it is available for public research at the Archives any Tuesday.



Doors Open at Rideau Archives

6581 Fourth Line Road, North Gower
In-person
June 3 and 4, 10am-4pm



Doors Open celebrates Ottawa's unique urban and rural architectural heritage. This year, the Rideau Archives are taking part and invite the public to discover rural south Ottawa's rich history on June 3 and 4. See the new exhibit North Gower Township Hall Restoration 1980-1990, on the revitalization of the hall prior to the opening of the Rideau Township Archives. All are welcome!

RTHS Online

RTHS Website

Be sure to stop by the RTHS website to keep up-to-date on RTHS activities and browse new content.

This month we are featuring "Fire Fighting & Prevention in Early Rideau Township" an article originally published by RTHS volunteers in 1999.

RTHS Facebook Page

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

- The Presence of the Past in Rideau Township: 1586 Old Wellington St., Kars
- Rideau in 1851
- New Road Construction Equipment in North Gower - 1895
- The Catalyst for Dickinson Square Restoration - 1975
- S.S.#2 (Watterson's Corners) - 1918
- A Tribute to the Log Cabin
- Kars Aces Win Carleton Softball Championship - 1947
- North Gower Eastern Ontario Fastball Champions - 1973
- North Gower Continuation School - 1950
- The End of Cheesemaking in Carsonby - 1951
- The Presence of the Past in North Gower: Andrew Street
- The Presence of the Past in Rideau: 5562 Manotick Main St.
- S.S.#7 (Craig School) - 1938
- Liquor License Inspection in North Gower - 1886
- S.S.#3 (Kars) - 1960

Click on the links under "How to Connect with RTHS" on this page 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:

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!