



Rideau Township Historical Society

November

Newsletter

2023

*Preserving
the Past
to Enrich
the Future*

November Event

Rideau Township Historical Society

Presents

Drill Halls & Armouries in Eastern Ontario

with Owen Cooke

**Wednesday,
Nov. 15
2023
7:30 P.M.**



**City of Ottawa
Client Services
Centre,
North Gower**

*The former Manotick drill shed, later repurposed
as the Carsonby Cheese Factory. Sketch by Atsuko Cooke*

Drill halls – or amouries – were once a common feature throughout Canada. Their presence had several impacts on communities and citizens: they could be the sole symbol of the federal government in communities which had nothing else; they were examples of public architecture; and, perhaps most importantly, they were a home for the small militia units which provided the basis for Canada's contribution to two World Wars.

Join us as Owen Cooke explores the history of these once familiar structures.

Owen Cooke is an archivist and military historian, retired from the Directorate of History, Department of National Defence. He has lived in North Gower since 1974, is a long-time member of the Rideau Township Historical Society (RTHS), and a volunteer at Rideau Archives.

**This is a FREE, IN-PERSON and ZOOM EVENT
ALL ARE WELCOME!**

For more information, or to attend via ZOOM visit rideautwphistory.org,
or scan the QR code on this page



Preserving the Past to Enrich the Future



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

President's Message

Through the fall, RTHS has been looking ahead to the subjects, speakers and venues for our Winter programming. In November, Owen Cooke will be speak about armouries and drill halls of eastern Ontario. While defence may seem more global today, it was very much a local issue 150 years ago. The buildings constructed for this purpose are part of the legacy of that era. The poster on page one of this newsletter provides information on how you can register for this event.

We are planning our Christmas gathering for December, (see the "Save the Date" notice below) and our AGM/Bring & Brag event in January..

If you missed the book launch of "North Gower: A Village History, 1820 – 2020"; it was terrific, with over 90 in the audience and about 60 online at the Alfred Taylor Centre in North Gower. The authors: Susan McKellar (team leader), Ruth Wright, Owen Cooke, and Bill and Georgie Tupper are to be congratulated and applauded for their efforts. The book is expected to be published by the Society in early December, and pre-orders are currently being accepted (see more information below the report on the book launch event.) An ideal Christmas present, this book could also be of interest to those outside the village as it is characteristic of many small villages and towns in eastern Ontario.

An interesting sidebar to the event: when the audience was asked how they heard about the event: approximately 80% indicated it was through flyer that was sent via Canada Post to the North Gower community. While RTHS has been moving away from print media to an online presence over the last few years; perhaps a "goode olde" handout can still be useful in specific circumstances. RTHS event posters can also always be found in this newsletter, on our website and Facebook page, as well as on notice boards throughout the community. See the "Connecting with RTHS" section below for links. ~
Doug Culham



RTHS in the Community



RTHS had a publications table during the September "Taste of Manotick" event. This photo shows RTHS volunteers Maureen McPhee and Sandy McNiece promoting the Society's extensive selection of books focused on various aspects of the history and heritage of the former Rideau Township.

Report on Our October Event

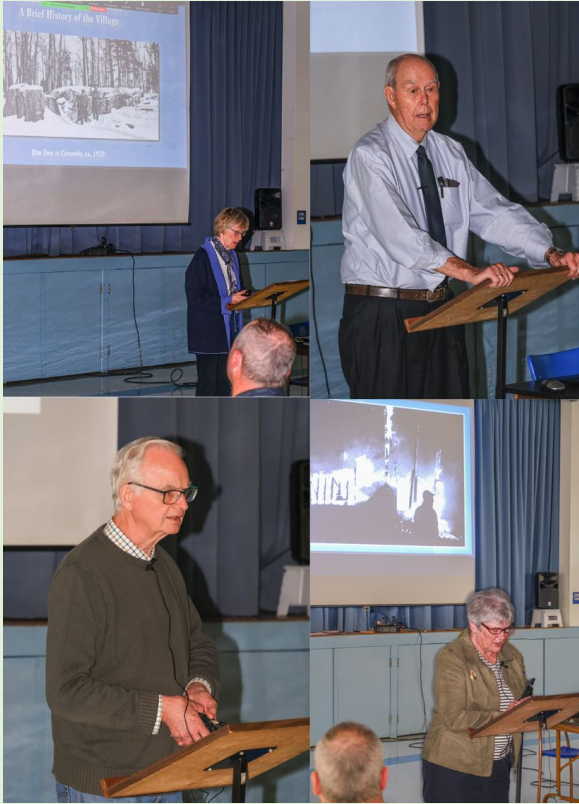
North Gower: A Village History ~ 1820-2020 *A Preview of Forthcoming RTHS Publication*

On Thursday evening, October 19th, members and friends of the Rideau Township Historical Society attended (both in-person and via ZOOM) an event at the Alfred Taylor Recreation Centre in North Gower for an introduction to the forthcoming RTHS publication: *North Gower: A Village History, 1820 – 2020*.



Over 90 in-person and approximately 60 ZOOM attendees are welcomed by RTHS President Doug Culham

President Doug Culham opened the evening and welcomed attendees. Sandy McNeice then introduced the book's authors: Susan McKellar (team leader), Owen Cooke, Bill and Georgie Tupper, and Ruth Wright. After providing an overview of the book, Susan and other authors presented highlights of selected chapters.



Clockwise from top left, Susan McKellar, Bill Tupper, and Ruth Wright and Owen Cooke present aspects of the book

Focusing principally on Governance, Military & Defence History, Heritage, Fire Service, and Family Life, the presentations included pictures and illustrations from the book. In addition, RTHS member Robin Craig read a poem about the Craigs, and gave some background on this well-known family in the village.

Following the talk, snacks and beverages were available, and guests were able to view village photos on display, as well as a selection of historical artifacts presented by C. J. Rooney and Bill and Georgie Tupper. Our Publications Director, David (Sandy) McNiece, took orders for the book, which is anticipated to be available before the Christmas season.



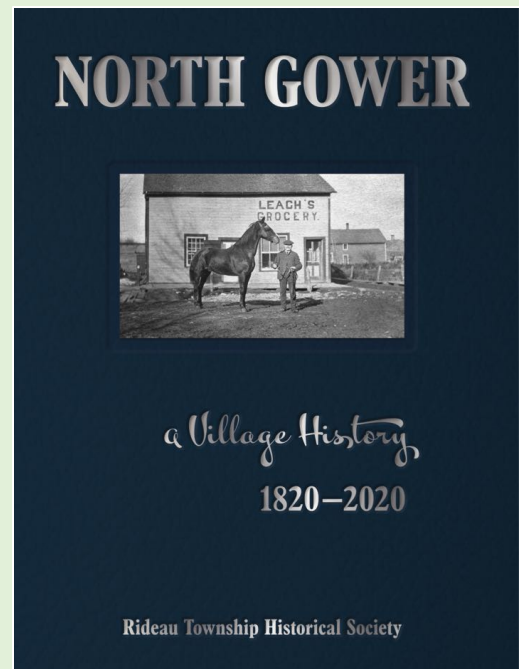
North Gower Village display by RTHS



Artifact display courtesy of C.J. Rooney and Georgie & Bill Tupper

The hard cover book, which is quite large at 400 plus pages, would make an excellent Christmas gift for anyone with ties to the North Gower area. The book highlights a journey through 200 years of history, from an obscure crossroads in the wilderness, to the agricultural and residential community within the City of Ottawa that it is today. The book includes lots of local stories, including many that may be unfamiliar to readers.

If you wish to reserve a copy, please email David (Sandy) McNiece – dmcniece@rogers.com – to have your name and contact information added to the pre-order list.



RTHS Research in Progress

Getting to Here:

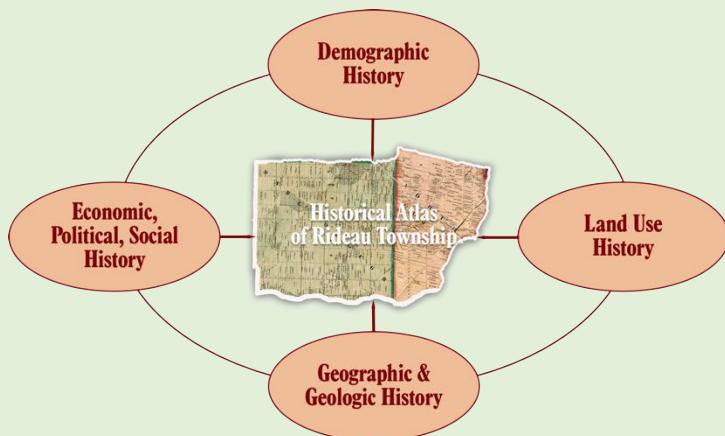
Creating an Historical Atlas of Rideau Township

If you've ever researched your family history, you know that certain types of information (eg. birth, death, land records, etc.) are generally easy to find. While it is satisfying to have this knowledge, you might wonder – as I have – “that’s great, but what was their life REALLY like?”

Now, imagine what it might be like if, in addition to the usual genealogical records, you could also easily access information about the geographic, social, political, economic and other dimensions of your ancestors “lived” environment. This is the kind of insight that adds real “life” to the lives of our ancestors! The Atlas of Rideau Township aims to do that.

One of the more original initiatives being undertaken by RTHS, the goals of the Atlas project, under the stewardship of Giulio Maffini, a member of the RTHS Board, is to create an accessible information platform that draws on and integrates a broad range of known information (historical, geographic, demographic, social, etc.) to allow the creation of a more wholistic view of history over time.

The creation of the Atlas is based on the premise that an appreciation of context is critical to a well-formed understanding of people and place at particular points in time. To that end, the Atlas platform will adopt a “Big History” approach, identifying major historical time periods and viewing those in relation to the known information categories (eg. geology, demographics, settlement patterns, economics, technology development, etc.) The image below shows just a *sample* of the historical themes that could be incorporated into the Atlas.



From a Rideau Township perspective, the building of the Rideau Canal in the early 19th century was a catalyst for change and growth. It prompted the development of land allotments, the subdivision of farms, the creation of

villages and towns, and the subsequent evolution of transportation, communication, social and economic networks, among others. When and how these developments occurred in turn had impacts on individuals and families. The Atlas platform will enable users to more easily access and analyze these elements individually and in combination.

In addition to drawing on more general information databases, the Rideau Township Atlas will incorporate prior research undertaken and published by RTHS, such as histories of Kars, Manotick and North Gower.

A project of this breadth and complexity will require outside technical assistance. To this end RTHS is in discussions with Carleton University to establish a joint project agreement to create the Geographic Information System (GIS) database for the Atlas using some seed funding from RTHS, additional RTHS volunteer work, as well as Carleton University technical research support and funding available through the university.

Stay tuned for updates on this exciting project.



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 “RTHS Remembrance Exhibits.”

RTHS Facebook Page

Here are some of the items we’ve posted on the RTHS Facebook page in October:

- The Presence of the Past articles: 6546 Prince of Wales Drive; 1137 Mill Street, Manotick; 6713 Second Line Rd. South, Kars; 2376 Church St., North Gower; 5546 Manotick Main St.
- Building the Prescott Highway
- Dedication of A.Y. Jackson Park, Manotick
- The Challenge of Pioneer Fireplaces

- S.S.#8 Marlborough (Goodstown) - 1927/28
- Rideau Communities in 1864
- Marlborough and North Gower Townships in 1864
- S.S.#4 North Gower (Todd's Corners), 1959
- Pioneer Families: The Scobies
- The Olive Dale Cheese Factory, Kars
- Patriotic Concert in North Gower
- S.S.#10 North Gower (Manotick Public School), Grade 7, 1963
- Envisioning the new Township of Rideau
- North Gower Fire, and Firefighting Family, North Gower
- The Long Island Bridge Controversy

Click on the links under “How to Connect with RTHS” on this page to check us out.



<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 in-person; tax receipts for donations will be issued at the end of the year.

Thank you for supporting RTHS!

