



President's Message

Over the last year the Society has accomplished a great deal. Not only have we had a full program each month, but members of the Society have been active with individual projects. Much of our monthly programming has come from our own membership. In September, Maureen McPhee talked to us about “Steamboats on the Rideau”; the four authors of *North Gower: A Village History, 1820 – 2020* launched the book at our October meeting; and Owen Cooke followed in November with “Armouries and Drill Halls in Eastern Ontario”. With regard to the North Gower book, we originally planned one printing of 200 copies of this book; however, we have since returned to the printer for 100 more copies: a North Gower best seller! The book is a limited print edition and sales have been brisk.

For the future, the subject for March is Boyd Block houses – the title is intriguing enough – presented by RTHS members. In April, another member will be talking about the renovation of Dickinson House, the family home of Manotick’s Moss Kent Dickinson. Also, an RTHS member has agreed to talk to us in the Fall of next year on a series of books she has written. Members are also working on other subjects, such as the Oral History project and the Atlas project and another has expressed an interest in Rideau Township roads and sawmills. If anyone has an area of interest or a topic that they might be prepared to talk about, please let me know.

As is the tradition for the new year the January meeting will be the RTHS Annual General Meeting and Bring and Brag Program. It is always popular.

As 2023 begins to wind down let me wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2024.

~ Doug Culham

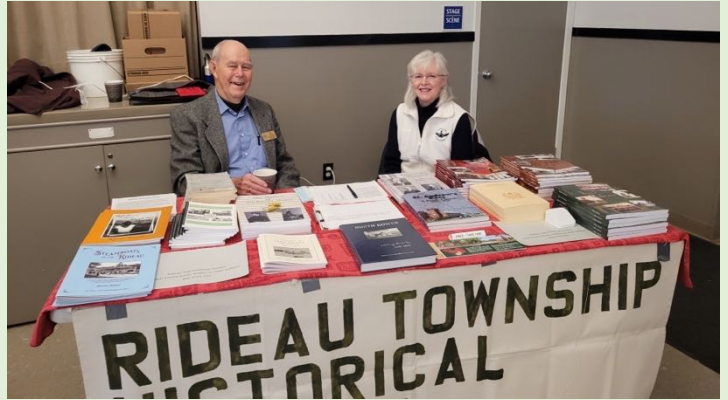
Newsletter Developments

Beginning with our January issue, RTHS will be testing a new online format for our newsletter. This simply means that instead of a PDF document *attached* to a monthly email, subscribers will receive a *link* via email. Clicking this link will take you directly to the newsletter.

Also beginning in January, the newsletter will only be distributed to paid-up RTHS members (including life

members). So, to continue receiving the newsletter, please ensure you’ve paid your 2024 RTHS membership fee. Payment details are on the last page of this newsletter.

RTHS in the Community



RTHS volunteers William Tupper and Maureen McPhee display a wide selection of RTHS publications for sale at the recent Kars Christmas market. Photo by Sandy McNiece

Hot Off the Press



Celebrating the arrival of the latest RTHS publication, "North Gower: A Village History, 1820 – 2020" are co-authors (l to r) Ruth Wright, Owen Cooke, William Tupper and Susan McKellar. Photo by Karen Craig.



Report of Our October Event

Armouries and Drill Halls in Eastern Ontario

A Presentation by Owen Cooke

Our November presentation was by one of our own members, Owen Cooke, who outlined some of his recent research on the development of drill halls and armouries in eastern Ontario. More than twenty members and guests were present at the North Gower Client Service Centre, with a further ten attending by Zoom. Owen began with a few definitions. In their earliest versions, drill halls or sheds were places where soldiers exercised, and armouries were to safeguard weapons. Initially in Canada, drill halls were constructed by municipalities or volunteer units, with some federal government funding. Armouries were separate buildings, often the commanding officer's basement, where the unit's weapons were concentrated. As more purpose-built edifices were constructed, they combined both functions and were generally called armouries, although Cartier Square in Ottawa has always been the "Drill Hall". "Armoury" and "armouries" seem to be used interchangeably, sometimes even for the same building.

Owen noted that there was no agreed definition of eastern Ontario, so for his presentation he included the counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Leeds and Grenville, Ottawa-Carleton, Lanark and Renfrew, Lennox and Addington and Hastings and Prince Edward – the last mostly because it has some really interesting buildings. He also pointed out that we could consider these buildings as examples of the federal government presence in communities that had little else, or as examples of differing schools of architecture in Canada, or, most interesting to Owen, as homes for militia units throughout the towns and cities of eastern Ontario.

In pioneer times, every able-bodied male was a member of the militia, but the militia was generally ununiformed, unarmed and untrained, and paraded only on the King's birthday to remind citizens of their obligations. In the 1850s and 1860s, first in France, then in England and the United States, volunteer forces emerged (uniformed bodies of citizens who trained, often at their own expense.) The infant Canadian federal government encouraged volunteers as a cheap way to meet its defence obligations. These volunteer units needed drill sheds in which to train in inclement weather. The earliest were simple beam and post construction, similar to early frame barns. This construction meant that few have survived into the modern era, possibly only one in eastern Ontario, right in our own home township. The Manotick drill hall was repurposed as a skating rink, then moved by horses to

Carsonby, where it became a cheese factory. Today it exists as a furniture workshop.

Similar early drill halls still stand in

Georgetown and Aurora, Ont., although both are repurposed.



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

The first purpose-built, "modern" armoury in Canada was the Craig Street Drill Hall in Montreal, built in 1867, and since demolished, to house all of the city's militia units. Engineering innovations using iron and steel enabled the construction of unimpeded open floors on a scale quite unlike that of the old post and beam construction. In eastern Ontario, the first was the Cartier Square drill hall in Ottawa, seen here soon after its completion in 1881.



Cartier Square Drill Hall

Considered to have Second Empire and

Italianate architectural values, this heritage structure today serves as the home to the Governor-General's Foot Guards and the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa.

Further big armouries, designed for one or more infantry battalions followed in the major cities and towns of eastern Ontario. Where in the twenty years from 1876 to 1896, only twelve were built across Canada, from 1896 to 1918 more than a hundred appeared, reflecting a revitalization of the militia in the years leading up to the First World War, and, after 1911, the determination of Sam Hughes, the new Conservative Minister of Militia and Defence, to see armouries in all medium-sized communities. The Montreal Street Armouries in Kingston was built 1899-1900, and still exists to house the Princess of Wales Own Regiment. The Brockville Armouries, home of the Brockville Rifles, was completed in 1901. These stone edifices, in cities noted for their stone architecture, were built in the Baronial style, favoured by David Ewart, Chief Dominion Architect during these years. These contrast with his red brick armouries built in Belleville in 1907-1908 to house what would become the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, or the Picton Armoury of 1913, which is now a shopping concourse. Ewart's 1913-14 Pembroke Armoury is also in the Baronial style, but a much plainer brick building. Today it houses the 42nd Field Artillery Regiment (Lanark and Renfrew Scottish).

These big armouries contrasted with those in smaller communities, designed to accommodate an infantry company to a half battalion. As the militia has over the years

been concentrated in major centres, most of these company armouries have disappeared or have taken on new roles. Of greatest interest to us is one of the smallest, the

Kemptville Armoury, opened in 1914 for two companies of the 56th Regiment, the Lisgar Rifles, later the Brockville Rifles. Through two World Wars most of the area of the former Rideau Township looked to Kemptville



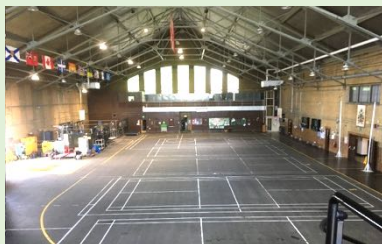
Kemptville Armoury

and Brockville and the Brockville Rifles for training. Sold by the Department of National Defence, in 1969 this former Armoury became the Kemptville fire station, and the end facade was marked by three large doors for the fire trucks. After the new North Grenville fire station on County Road 44 opened in 2009, the former armoury was thoughtfully refurbished and is now a Sea Cadet training facility, named the Private Blake Williamson Memorial Hall in memory of the young Kemptville soldier killed in action in Afghanistan in 2006.

Very similar company armouries exist throughout eastern Ontario. In Alexandria a company of the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders occupied the Armoury built in 1913. The building now houses several local businesses. The Gananoque Armoury, also completed in 1913, later served as a fire station, and is now the Firehall Theatre of the Thousand Islands Playhouse. A quite similar building, the Madoc Armoury, 1914, was home to a company of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment and, at one time, to the battalion headquarters. It is now the Kiwanis Centre.

A larger armoury in Renfrew was built within the town's fairgrounds, and at one time housed subunits of the Lanark and Renfrew Scottish Regiment. It is now a viable part of the fairgrounds, and in use as an event centre throughout the year.

We should take note of two more recent armouries in eastern Ontario. Architect Charles Sutherland designed a large Tudor-revival building for Cornwall, which was completed in 1939 as



Cornwall Armoury

home for the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders. Its size enables a very large, unimpeded space as drill and exercise floor, with offices and messes on three sides.

The Major E.J.G. Holland Armoury on Walkley Road in Ottawa is the most recent addition to eastern Ontario's inventory of drill halls – a failed athletic club purchased by the Department of National Defence to house engineer and service units displaced by the closure of older buildings downtown.

In conclusion, it seems that the small-town, small-scale armouries have passed away, with the militia now concentrated in larger centres. Although most armouries are heritage buildings, there are new buildings to cope with the changing needs of the reserve forces.

A spirited question period followed, until our President called time in order to have refreshments.

C.J. Rooney and Owen provided a small display of militia officers' uniforms from the 1960s and 70s.

A Little Christmas History

The Origins of Modern Christmas in Canada

From the Canadian Encyclopedia

The Christmas that is celebrated in its various ways in contemporary Canada is very Canadian in one way - that is, it is not only the product of French, British and American traditions, but of many others as well. The time frame for the origins of this modern Christmas is fairly clear, when it is considered that Christmas was hardly celebrated at the beginning of the 19th century. However, by the beginning of the 20th century, it had become the biggest annual celebration and had begun to take on the form that we recognize today.

Christmas was essentially a religious festival in the early days of New France. In 1645, French colonists gathered together in a church in Québec City to attend midnight mass and began to sing Chantons Noël, an old Christmas carol that they had brought from France. The procession of the Christ Child and display of the crèche (a physical representation of the Nativity) were primary activities.



From the Archives

GIFF's GIFT

Hereditaments and Appurtenances

On 16 November 2021, Mr. Donald Giff of Smiths Falls gifted a document to the Rideau Archives, a branch of the City of Ottawa Archives. The document is a bill of sale, or Indenture, between Stephen Burrirt and Volney Waldo for a parcel of land in the village of Burrirt's Rapids.

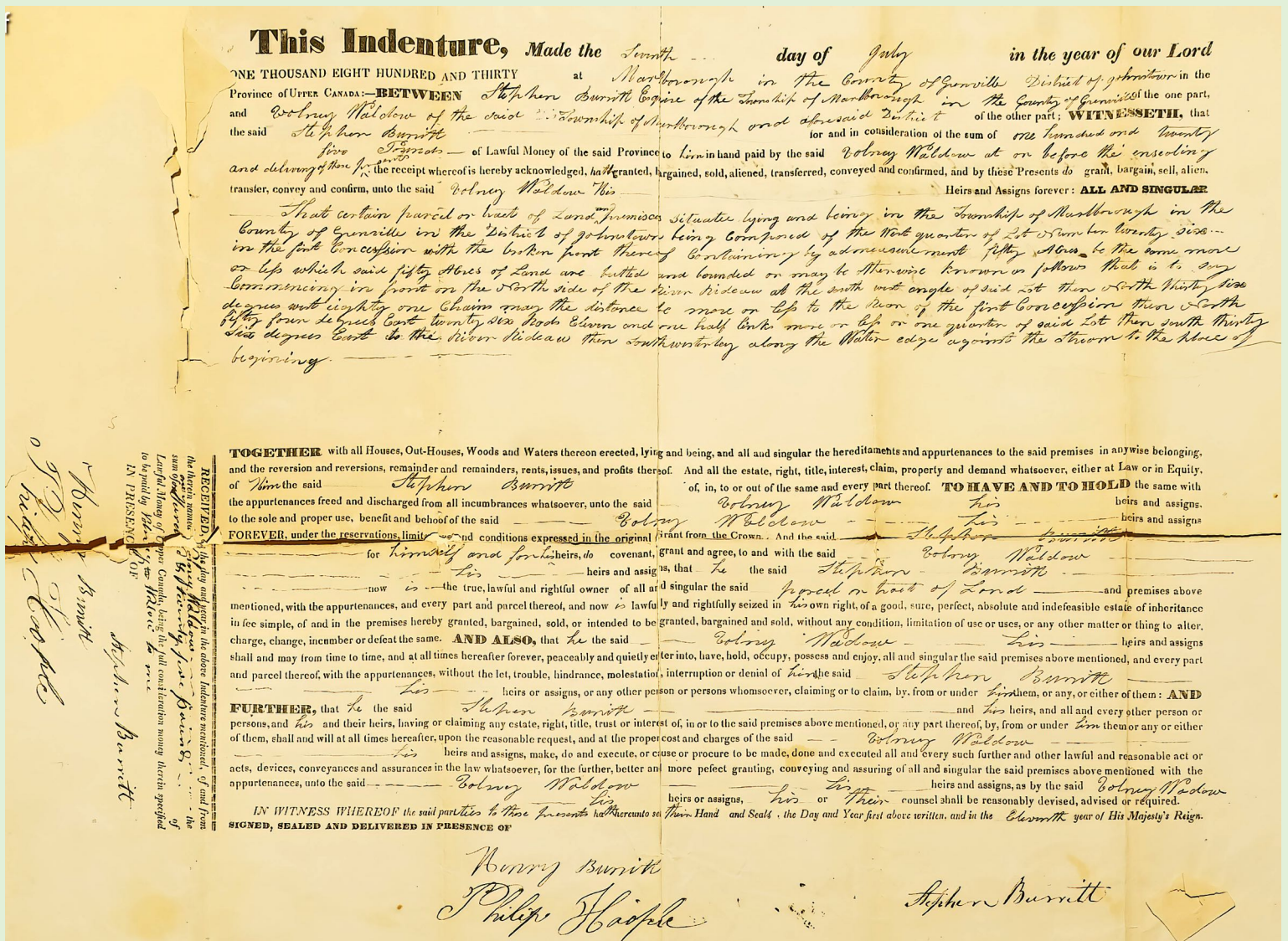
Stephen Burrirt was the first settler on the banks of the Rideau River, and the village he founded was named after him. The land he settled was compensation from the Crown for Burrirt's services both as a soldier and a spy during the Revolutionary War. The document is dated 7 July 1830 and it is in relatively good condition for its age. Giff found it in an old purse belonging to his wife (Ruby Bennett) which also held bills of sale for the wood used to build their house. It is the oldest original document in the Rideau Archives.

The document establishes a price for land at that time and demonstrates the "complexities" of language in legal documents of that era – which may have contributed to lawyers having a bad reputation for not being clear and concise.

In transcribing the document to render it more accessible I have tried to follow, to the extent possible, the peculiarities of language, spelling and capitalization. The array of fonts, typefaces and handwriting cannot be transcribed exactly on a computer, but I have tried to make the copy relatively like the original.

The surname "Waldo" is frequently misspelled, and I have used the spelling found on his tombstone in the Closed Section of the Anglican Cemetery, Burrirt's Rapids, which is the oldest in Rideau Township and, consequently, the oldest in the city of Ottawa.

The original document is displayed below, with the transcription on the following pages.



THIS INDENTURE *Made the Seventh day of July in*

the year of our Lord ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY at
Marlborough in the county of Grenville District of Johnstown in the Province of Upper Canada

--- WITNESSETH --- *Stephen Burritt Esquire of the Township of
Marlborough in the County of Grenville of the one part, and Volney
Waldow [sic] township of Marlborough and aforesaid District of the
other part; WITNESSETH, that the said ---- -Stephen Burritt ----- for and in
consideration of the sum of one hundred and twenty five Pounds ----- of
Lawful Money of the Said Province to him in hand paid by the said Volney
Waldow [sic] at or before the [inscrolling?? encscrolling??] and delivery of these
presents^s the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged hath granted, bargained,
sold, aliened, transferred, conveyed and confirmed, and by these presents do
grant, bargain, sell, alien, transfer, convey and confirm, unto the said Volney
Waldow [SIC] His Heirs and Assigns forever: ALL AND SINGULAR*

That certain parcel or tract of land ^{and} premises situate lying and being in the
Township of Marlborough in the County of Grenville in the District of Johnstown being
Composed of the west quarter of Lot Number twenty six -in the first Concession [SIC,
concession] with the broken front thereof Containing by admeasurement fifty acres be
the same more or fles [SIC, less] which said fifty Acres of Land are butted and bounded
or may be otherwise known as follows that is to say commencing in front on the North
side of the River Rideau at the south west angle of said Lot then North Thirty Six degrees
and eighty one chains may the distance may be more or lefs [SIC, less] the rion
[??rear??] of the first Concession [SIC, Concession] then North fifty four
degrees east twenty six rods Eleven and one half links more or lefs [less] or one
quarter of said lot then south Thirty Six degrees East to the River Rideau then
Southwesterly along the Water edge against the stream to the place of
beginning -----

TOGETHER, with all Houses, Outhouses, Woods and Waters thereon erected, lying and being,
and all and singular the hereditaments and appurtenances to the said premises in anywise
belonging, and the reversion and reversions, remainder and remainders, rents, issues, and profits
thereof. And all the estate, right, interest, claim, property and demand whatsoever, either at
Law or in Equity, of Him the said ----- *Stephen Burritt* ----- of, in, to or out of the same
and every part thereof. **TO HAVE AND TO HOLD** the same with the appurtenances freed

and discharged from all incumbrances whatsoever, unto the said *Volney*
Waldo[SIC] *his* heirs and assigns to the sole and proper use, benefit and behoof of the said
Volney Waldo [SIC] his heirs and assigns FOREVER, under the reservations, [limit *****
ations] and conditions expressed in the original grant from the Crown. And the said
Stephen Burritt for himself and for his heirs, do covenant grant and agree, to
and with the said *Volney Waldow* [sic] his heirs and assigns, that the said *Stephen Burritt*
now *is* the true, lawful and rightful owner of all ad [SIC] the said *parcel or tract of Land* ---
----- and premises above mentioned, with the appurtenances, and every part and parcel
thereof, and now *is* lawfully and rightfully seized in *his* own right, of a good, sure, perfect,
absolute and indefensible estate of inheritance in fee simple now is lawfully and rightfully
seized in *his* own right and in the premises charge, change, incumber or defeat
the same. AND ALSO that *the* said *Volney Waldow* [SIC] his heirs and assigns
shall and may from time to time and at all times hereafter forever, peaceably and
quietly enter into, have, hold, occupy, and at all times hereafter peaceably and
quietly enter into have, hold, occupy and possess and enjoy all the said premises
above mentioned and every part and parcel thereof with the *appurtenances without*
the let, trouble, hindrance, molestation, interruption or denial of *him* the said *Stephen*
Burritt ----- and ----- *his* ----- *heirs or assigns, or any other person or persons*
whomsoever, claiming or to claim, by, from or under him, them, or any other of them :
AND FURTHER, that *he* the said ----- *Stephen Burritt* - - - - - and *his heirs*,
and all and every other person or persons and *his* and their heirs having or
claiming any estate, right, title, trust or interest of, in or to the said premises
above mentioned or any part thereof, by, from or under *him*, them or any or
other persons and his and their heirs any part there of heirs, having or
claiming any estate , right, trust or interest of, in or to the said premises
above mentioned or any part thereof, by from or under him them any or
either of them shall and will at all times hereafter, upon the reasonable
request and at the proper cost and charges of the said -----*Volney*
Waldow[SIC] ----- *his* heirs and assigns make do and execute or cause or
procure to be made, done and executed all and every such further and other
lawful and reasonable act or acts, devices, conveyances and assurances in the
law whatsoever, for the further, better and more perfect granting,
conveying and assuring of all and singular the said premises above mentioned
with the appurtenances, unto the said ----- *Volney Waldo*[SIC]----- his

heirs and assigns or their counsel shall be reasonably devised, advised or required.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the said parties to these presents hath hereunto set their Hand and Seals , the Day and Year First above written and in the Eleventh Year of his Majesties Reign .

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED IN PRESENCE OF

Henry c. Burritt *Stephen Burritt*

Philip Hao ??? pl ??

As part of the indenture, there is at the bottom left, an additional note at right angles to the main text reading as follows:

RECEIVED ON THIS DAY AND YEAR IN THE ABOVE INDENTURE MENTIONED, OF AND FROM THE THEREIN NAMED VOLNEY WALDO --- THE SUM OF ONE HUNDRED + TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS OF Lawful Money of Upper Canada BEING THE FULL CONSIDERATION MONEY THEREIN SPECIFIED TO BE PAID BY VOLNEY + WALDO TO ONE STEPHEN BURRITT IN THE PRESENCE OF

HENRY BURRITT

PHILIP (HAOPPE ??)

Article submitted by Charles Gruchy, Rideau Archives Volunteer

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 an article on *“Restrictions on Christmas Goods in Wartime.”*

RTHS Facebook Page

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

- The Presence of the Past articles: 6161 First Line (original granny flat); 6810 Rideau Valley Dr. S (St. Andrews Presbyterian church; 6607 Fourth Line Rd. (Thomas Craig Store); 1145 Mill St., Manotick);
- Rideau Youth Perform in Aid of New Hospital (1954)
- Christ Church Restoration (Burritts Rapids) (1960)
- S.S.#5 North Gower (Arbourdale) (c.1955)
- S.S.#2 North Gower (Watterson's Corners) (c. 1960)
- Early Lawmaking in North Gower (1933)
- Rockdale Cheese Factory (Reeve Craig)
- Construction of the Swing Bridge at Manotick (1867)
- Tales of the Past in North Gower Township
- New "Jail Farm" Near Burritts Rapids
- Replacement of the Church St. Bridge (North Gower) (1961)
- Hunters and Farmers (1960)
- Poppy Symbolism and Sales (1921;1924)
- Townships Win Victory Honor Flags (1918)

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

Thank you for supporting RTHS!