

# GATINEAU VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Feb — Mar 2004

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Number 2004-01

## Coming Events

Monday, Feb. 16, 7:30 PM  
Wakefield Mill Inn

### **GVHS Annual General Meeting**

The 2004 AGM will be held at the Wakefield Mill Inn, with guest speaker, Innkeeper **Robert Milling**, who will discuss the issues and challenges involved in heritage reconstruction. The evening will also include Society awards and elections of officers.

Monday, March 15, 7:30 PM  
Chelsea Community Centre

### **The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) Oral History Project**

Special guest, **Mr. Ronald Ratcliffe** is the Oral History Project Coordinator for the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN). He shares in the QAHN belief that it is through the awareness of our heritage and how heritage connects us to our humanity, that will strengthen our communities in this corporate, materialistic age. Oral History can help make this connection possible by promoting heritage appreciation and individual creative self expression in our youth and others.

The Oral History Project is a response to the expressed needs of the diverse English linguistic minority communities and will involve all the regional communities in locating and identifying the oral histories and collections that pertain to the Anglophone heritage of Quebec. The material will then be archived to the highest bibliographical and preservation standards to promote the communication between informants, interviewers, researchers, and the public.

## *Wakefield's Cultural Landscape*

*(By Marc Cockburn, GVHS Newsletter editor)*

### Introduction

Recent public discussions over the location of the proposed commercial centre at Wakefield's entrance has focused attention on the attractive qualities of Wakefield's natural and cultural landscape. If nothing else, the debate has solidified a general consensus among residents and the business community, that protecting the assets that contribute to Wakefield's identity should not be taken for granted and should be preserved.

The following article is intended to help define the elusive nature of Wakefield's cultural landscape, to highlight some of the important work already accomplished by GVHS members in making the community aware of its cultural heritage, and demonstrate how commercial development can be compatible with the preservation of heritage value. Finally it offers some suggestions about how the Municipality of LaPêche could adopt tools that would assist the community to conserve its historic places.

### Defining Wakefield Cultural Landscape

Wakefield's cultural landscape represents the combined works of nature and human activity. It illustrates the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by the natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces. These inherent forces are reflected in Wakefield's historic places, which includes historic buildings, streetscapes, waterfront, parks, cemeteries and memorials. Together these places tell the stories of local, regional and national significance. They illustrate stages in the evolution of our community and region. They reflect developments in local architecture, agriculture, education, transportation, rural medicine, and social development. Many of these places can be associated with significant historic events, or cultural and spiritual traditions and ways of life. They can also be

*(continued, next page)*

associated with the lives of persons of historic importance to Wakefield and to Canada.

Wakefield's landscape is an assemblage of various natural and built components. Some examples include:

- The buildings and structures adjacent to the former rail yard are reminders of an era when the railway was the dominant means of transportation along the Gatineau.
- Another by-product of the railway expansion, was to make the village accessible for leisure activities. The existence of many former cottages within village limits, in particularly along Manse Road and at the bottom Rockhust Road are the result of Ottawa's leisure-class being attracted to Wakefield arcadian qualities.
- The cozy attractiveness evident in the streetscape along Burnside Road is the result of early 'urban sprawl' as agricultural lands along a former cart paths where sub-divided to accommodate rural residents moving into the village.
- The unique modular cinder-block construction (for example, Wakefield School) scattered throughout the village, is indicative of a post-war building boom when building supplies were in short supply.
- The buildings erected by Wakefield's early merchants, like the Earle, Patterson, and MacLaren families, stand as reminders of Wakefield's function as an agricultural centre.

These are only a few generalized examples of how Wakefield cultural landscape evolved over time. It might even be possible to typify Wakefield's early architecture as reflecting of a simple way of life, based on a rural subsistence economy. The evidence is shown in the clean lines, inexpensive materials, and the emphasis of function over style.

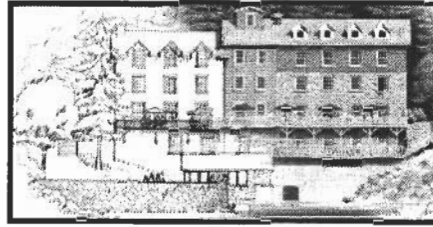
### Recent Developments

Today, these new forces continue to exert influence on Wakefield's cultural landscape. Those same arresting natural and historic qualities, which residents have come to appreciate, have prompted the emergence of the village as a destination place for tourism and has led to a boom in real estate sales

Interestingly, this recent evolution has brought about an understanding among residents and the business community that the heritage value embodied in the existing buildings and other historic places are worth preserving and that the materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses, and

cultural associations or meanings can be incorporated in new buildings. Some recent examples include:

### The Wakefield Mill Inn



The history of the Wakefield Mill is characterized by many changes. From its inception in 1838, the Mill site has seen many buildings

come and go, witnessed devastating fires and subsequent rebuilding, additions and renovations. During this time the Mill has changed hands many times and has functioned as a grist mill, woollen mill, apartments and a GVHS-operated museum. Throughout this history, the mill has been a notable feature of the cultural geography of the Gatineau and has been important aspect in the social fabric of the local community.

Today, the *Wakefield Mill Inn* is the latest incarnation of this important landmark. Opened in the spring of 2001, the Wakefield Mill Inn has once again become a focal point of the community and stands as a reminder of the past - a notion not lost on the current operators, Bob Milling and Lynn Berthiaume. By conserving the fundamental character of the original buildings, by making additions visually compatible, and by illustrating Wakefield's local history through the use of photographs drawn from the GVHS Image Bank, the Wakefield Mill Inn continues to survive as an essential historic place in the community.

### Les Trois Érables



The "Doctors" or "Geggie" Home, also called "The Maples", was built in 1896 for Dr. Hans Stevenson, for a cost of two thousand dollars. The architect was Moses Edey, who also designed the Aberdeen Pavilion in Ottawa.

The building housed the office, a dispensary, examination & operating rooms for the doctors practice, as well as the family residence. Dr. Harold Geggie, Dr. Stevenson's assistant purchased the property after the former's death in 1911.

# Wakefield's Designated Heritage Buildings

1. **THE MANSE.** This two-acre property was purchased for \$40 from David MacLaren in 1867. The house was the Presbyterian Manse until 1925, then the United Church Manse until the 1950s.
2. **DOCTOR'S HOME.** Residence of Dr. Stephen Wright about 1860, then of Dr. Falls in 1870s, followed by Dr. Stephenson in 1883.
3. **DR. HANS STEPHENSON HOME (THE MAPLES).** Built in 1896, it comprised an office, dispensary, examining room, and residence. Dr. Stephenson practiced for 27 years, to be succeeded by his son-in-law, Dr. Harold Geggie, from 1911 to 1966.
4. **RUFUS CHAMBERLIN HOME.** The Chamberlin family were associated with Philomen Wright and were among the earliest settlers in Old Cheslea. Rufus, a descendant of this family, worked at the MacLaren General Store, until he established his own business at the site of the current Wakefield General Store.
5. **JAMES ROBB HOUSE.** James Robb worked as a river foreman with Gilmour and Hughes Company before bringing his family to live on Burnside Road before the turn of the century. Miss Mary Robb was an employee at MacLaren's store for 3 decades.
6. **EDMOND'S HOME.** Formerly an Alexander MacLaren House, this became the home of Mrs. Annie Edmond upon the death of her husband who was a miller at the MacLaren Grist Mill. Mrs. Edmond was sister of Dr. Hans Stephenson.
7. **ANGLICAN RECTORY.** This house served as the Rectory from the 1920s to 1980s.
8. **GORDON WILLS HOME.** This house has been the home of many long-standing Gatineau families.
9. **DAVID MACLAREN HOUSE:** Built in the 1860s or 1870s. When the MacLaren Family left Wakefield, John Reid, and later James Smith, two business managers for the Wakefield Mill, occupied the building. The building was purchased for \$25,000 in 1951, the Gatineau Memorial Hospital, to honour the veterans of the two world wars.
10. **MACLAREN EMPLOYEES RESIDENCE (1):** Shortly after their arrival in Wakefield in the 1840's the family established the MacLaren General store at this site. More than just a dry goods store, the MacLaren Store was the center of Wakefield's communication, banking, dress making as well as municipal affairs. By 1900, extensive storage sheds, stables and other buildings had been added, include this duplex which housed MacLaren employees.
11. **MACLAREN EMPLOYEES RESIDENCE (2).** One of several residences built by the MacLarens' to house employees at the mill complex. This one escaped destruction by the Mill fire of 1910, which destroyed all the others.
12. **WAKEFIELD GRIST MILL:** Built by William Fairbairn in 1938. Bought by brothers John and James MacLaren in 1844. Gutted by fire in 1910, it was rebuilt to double its capacity in 1911.
13. **JAMES MACLAREN HOUSE:** Built about 1860. Thought to have been the home of John MacLaren prior to his death in 1874. Mill managers are known to have lived in it before and after the turn of the century. The building housed the LaPêche library in the 1960s, and a GVHS operated museum in the later 1980s.
14. **THE MILLER'S HOUSE.** Built by David MacLaren as a "guest house" for visiting family and friends. The residence became the home of the miller, including John Edmond who milled for the MacLarens from 1868 to 1911.
15. **MCGILLIS TINSMITH SHOP:** Built in the 1860s or 70s
16. **WILLIAM POOLE HOUSE AND HARNESS SHOP:** These buildings dating to the 1850's, were the southern boundary of the 1904 fire. Mr. George Poole, a staunch Methodist, donated an adjoining property for the construction of a church.
17. **THE EARLE'S AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT AND FURNITURE SHOP:** Circa 1870. Operated under the Earle name for three generations. The theatre was used as a meeting for council, elections, plays and a movie theater until the 1940s.
18. **ROBERT EARLE RESIDENCE.** Built in the 1880s. Was an Earle home for three generations.
19. **EARLE DUPLEX:** Built in the 1850s. Was an Earle home until it was sold in the 1970s with the adjacent shop to become Place 1870.
20. **ORANGE HALL:** This building was the home of the Loyal Orange Lodge, #144 and Young Orange Briton's, #99.

## Other Historic Places

A.	WAKEFIELD COVERED BRIDGE (NOT SHOWN)	B.	MANSE ROAD COTTAGES
C.	ORME'S BAKERY	D.	TURNTABLE PARK
E.	WAKEFIELD STATION	F.	WAKEFIELD SCHOOL
G.	GEGGIE PARK	H.	BLACK SHEEP INN
I.	ST. ANDREWS UNITED CHURCH	J.	GEORGE PATTERSON STORE
K.	WAKEFIELD INN	L.	PEACE PARK
M.	ANGLICAN CHURCH OF GOOD SHEPHERD	N.	MACLAREN CEMETERY

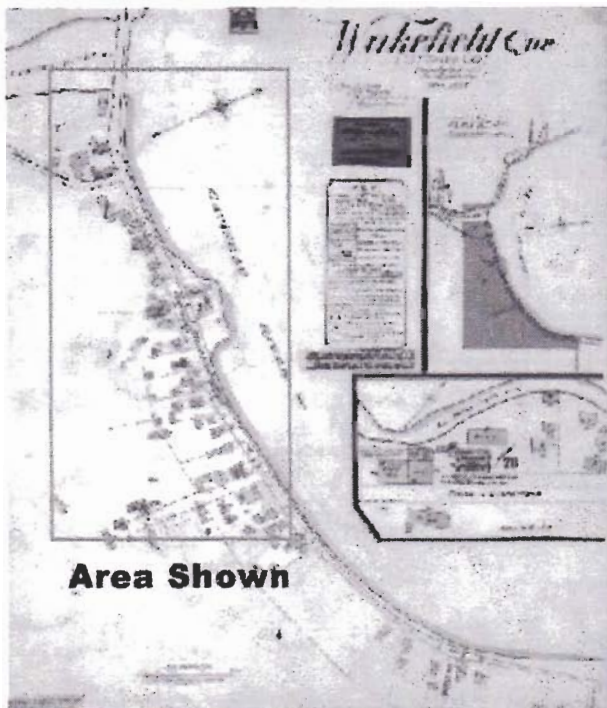
**DATA SOURCES:** *National Capital Commission; Municipalité de LaPêche; Programme Particulière d'Urbanisme (PPU), 1998 Report, Derek Wilson, and Norma Geggie*



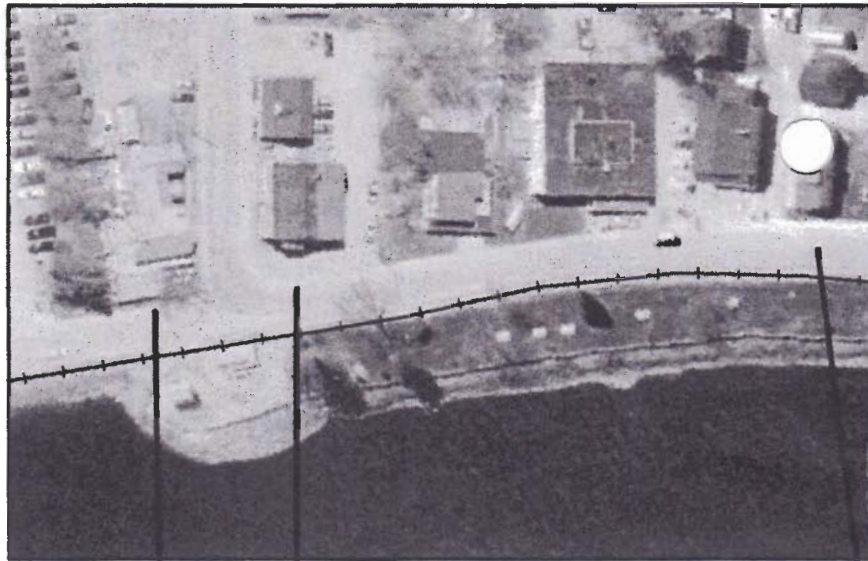
# Wakefield (Circa 1910)

1. MAXWELL RESIDENCE
2. ROBERT EARLE RESIDENCE
3. THE EARLE'S AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT AND FURNITURE SHOP
4. EARLE RESIDENCE
5. FOSTER EARLE HOTEL
6. METHODIST CHURCH
7. WILLIAM POOLE HOUSE AND HARNESS SHOP
8. ARMSTRONG'S BOARDING HOUSE
9. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (BACKGROUND)
10. PATTERSON'S GENERAL STORE
11. MCGILLIS TIMSMITH SHOP
12. EARLE'S CARRIAGE SHOP
13. TEMPERANCE HOTEL
14. MACLAREN GENERAL STORE
15. MACLAREN EMPLOYEE RESIDENCE.

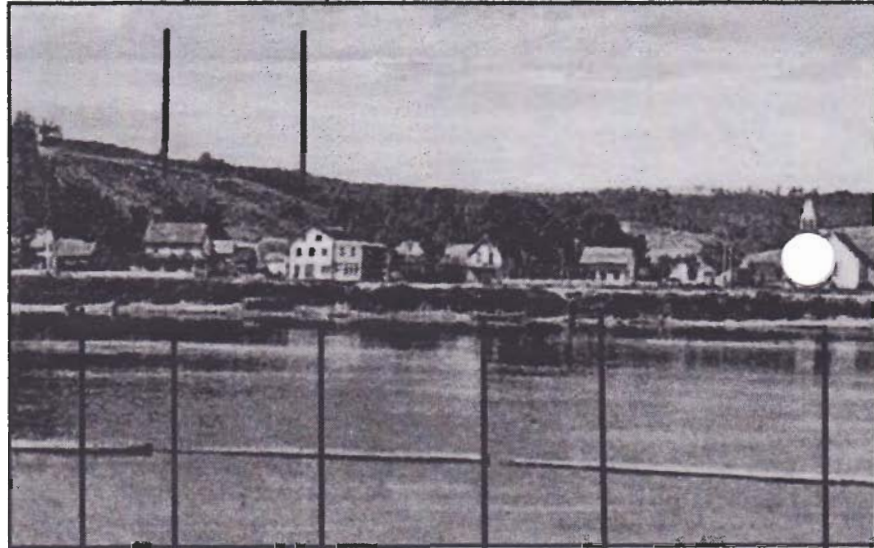
Charles E. Goad, Fire Insurance Plan of Wakefield. 1897 (Rev. 1908). NMC9262



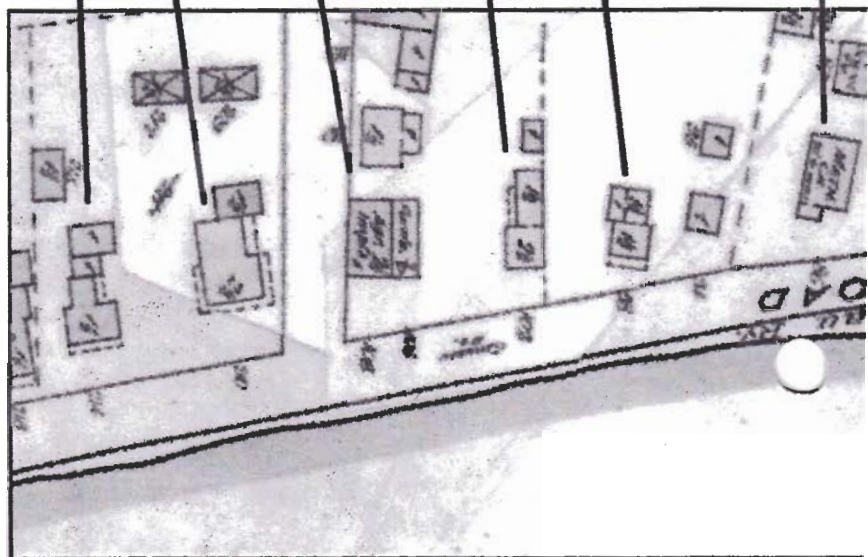
Wakefield 2001



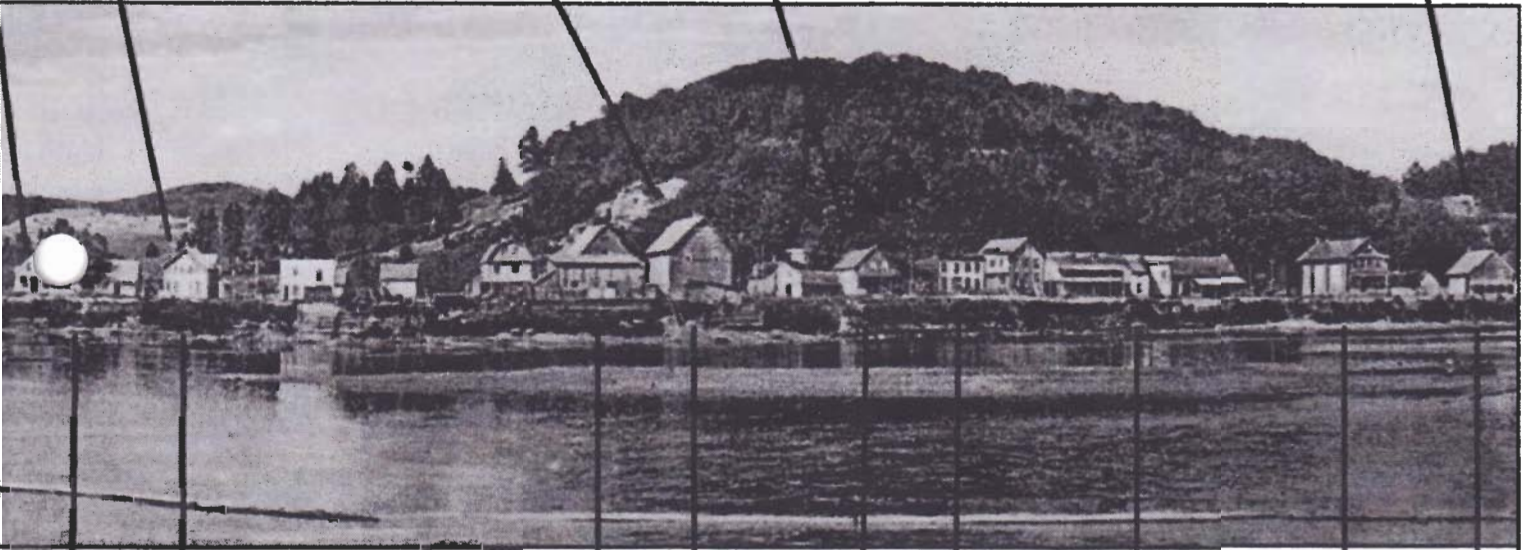
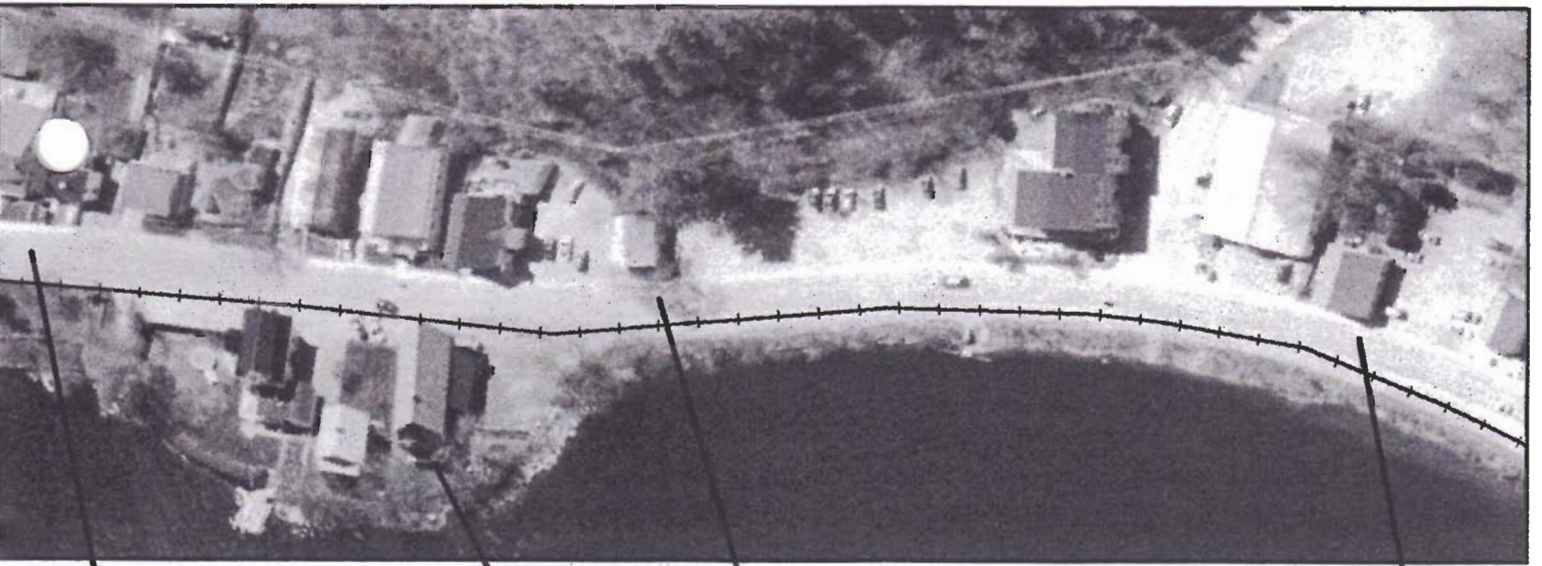
Wakefield (ca. 1910), GVHS #01369



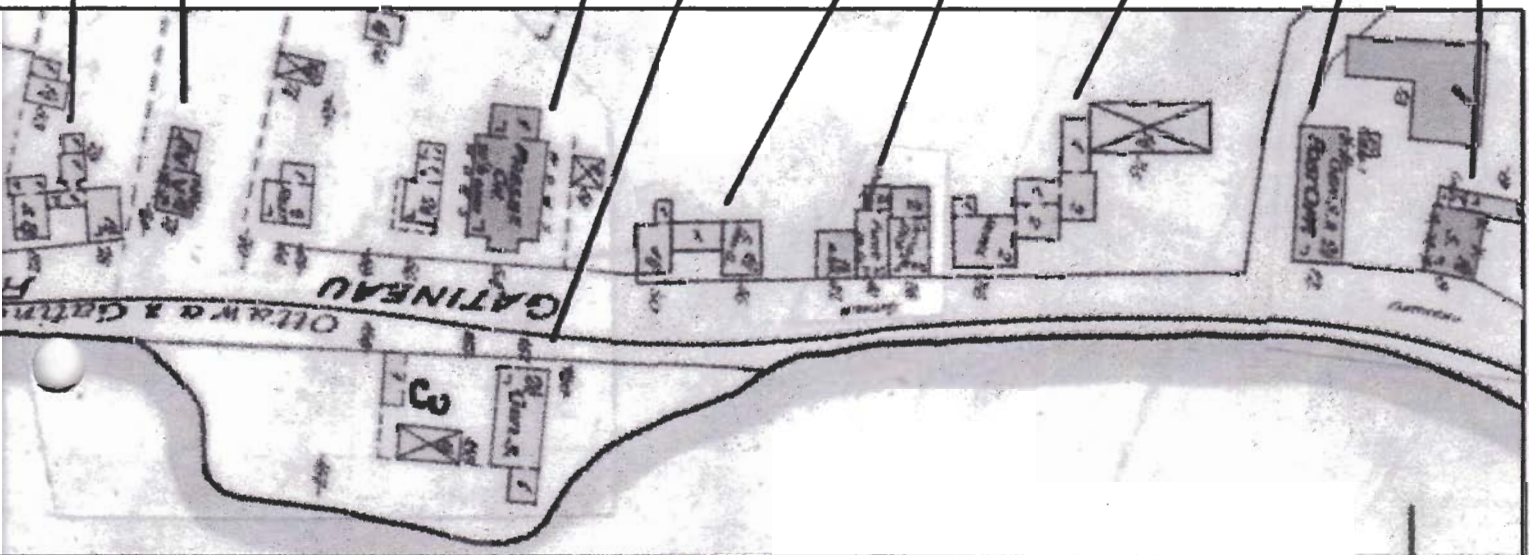
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**Legend**

- BUILDINGS
- DESIGNATED BUILDINGS
- GVHS SIGNS
- FLOOD-PLAIN
- STREETSCAPES
- RAILROAD





The house remained as the Doctors home in the Geggie family until 1980. At that time it was transformed into a beautiful bed & breakfast country inn, while keeping the original features of a neo-Queen Anne Victorian mansion.

Current hosts Jim Fitzgibbons and Joanne Hunter have made a great effort to maintain the architectural integrity of the building in recent renovations and have highlighted the buildings social meaning through the use of photographs drawn from the GVHS Image Bank. Because of this, Les Trois Érables continues to tell the significant stories of the community

### Wakefield General Store



The most interesting change to Wakefield's cultural landscape has been the rebuilding of the Wakefield General Store. The

original store, first established by Rufus Chamberlin in 1923 and taken over by the Nesbitt family in 1965, has served as a meeting place for locals and visitors since its earliest days.

Although the original renovation plan attempted to incorporate the existing building in the new design, the constraints imposed by its location within the Gatineau river floodplane set the standard for what was possible to achieve. Heritage architect, Allan Hopkins, therefore designed the new building to include some of the original building's character defining materials and forms and incorporated adjacent architectural elements. As well, by recalling the store's historic associations and meanings through use of photographs drawn from the GVHS Image Bank, the new Wakefield General Store has maintained its function as one of the community's historic meeting places.

### The Society's role in conserving Wakefield's heritage

The GVHS and its members have been active participants in preserving and recognizing the historic places of the community. The Society has sponsored the 9 historical interpretation plaques scattered through the village. They continue to produce *Up the Gatineau!* and other publications which provide historical background about the evolution of the cultural landscape of the Gatineau Valley. The Society's Archives and Image Bank has become a comprehensive source of information and documentation related to the cultural heritage of the region. Furthermore, Society members are active participants in the LaPêche Mu-

nicipal Heritage Committee, providing the research toward the designation of the municipalities historic buildings, including some 25 buildings in Wakefield.

Currently, the designation program is based simply on the age of the building, and only those buildings that are over 100 years old are recognized. However, the committee acknowledges that the current practice of simply recognizing historic buildings does not limit changes or guarantee their survival. The Heritage Committee would like to expand its mandate to include all historic buildings and places regardless of their age and to develop tools that would help the community manage its historical assets.

### Tools to help conserve Wakefield's heritage places

As a first step, the Municipality should commit resources to list Wakefield's historic places in the **Canadian Register of Historic Places**, a national, searchable register containing listings of historic places of local, provincial, territorial and national significance. To be listed, historic places must be formally recognized by an appropriate authority within a federal, provincial, or local jurisdiction prior to being nominated.

Secondly, the Municipality should consider adopting the **Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada**. These standards, developed by the Department of Canadian Heritage, have been developed to assist local governments and property developers involved in heritage conservation projects.

As a third priority, the Municipal Heritage Committee should expand its role to assist Wakefield's private sector take advantage of existing and future incentive funding programs.

Along with adopting these tools, the municipality should update its Plan Particulière d'Urbanisme (PPU) to ensure that current municipal by-laws and zoning regulations are compatible with the community's expressed desire to conserve the cultural landscape of

### Membership

We welcome the following people who have joined the GVHS since September: Richard Savard, Preston Wilson, Stephen Savauge, Derek Cooke, Terrence Gray, Theresa White, Susan Bennett, Jennifer Goldstone.

#### GVHS Membership Reminder

Please check your membership status code, which is located on the right hand side of the mailing label on the envelope of this Newsletter. If the code is 2003/12, please renew your membership by sending a cheque for \$25 (2 years) or \$15 (1 year).

## RECITATION

## Bridges of Meech Creek Valley

At the January 19, 2004 GVHS meeting, long time Society member **Doug Cowden**, treated attendees to a recitation of two poems he wrote about the Meech Creek Valley. Doug's forebears came to this valley in the 1840s, cleared the land of its maple and pine, built a home, and the farm provided a livelihood for subsequent generations. The land is now gone back to nature.

### Tribute to Meech Creek Valley

There is no place on earth like the Meech Creek Valley  
A creation by the hand of God.

Where I was born and spent many happy days  
as I roamed its hills and dales  
Covered in yellow, red and gold  
and saw evening's purple haze.

Where you heard the drumming of the partridge,  
the melodies of the frogs,  
a mother duck's call to her goslings,  
the slap of a beaver's tail,  
the sheep and cowbells tinkling  
as the evening drew to a close.

Where you heard in the spring and fall  
the Canada geese a-calling  
and where the brook trout hid in the cold spring pools.  
Where the covered bridge was a refuge from storms  
and gave lovers a place to spoon  
and where neighbours were the best you ever had.

Oh how I yearn for the beauty of this valley again  
to stroll its lanes and byways again  
and hear the steam train's whistle echoing  
through the hills and dales

I experienced much happiness in this valley  
whish I once called home  
But alas this valley will never be the same  
and I mourn the loss of the beautiful  
Meech Creek Valley.

### Doug Cowden's list of structures across Meech Creek (from south to north)

1. Outlet dam at Meech Lake.
2. Carbide Willson dam.
3. Log bridge halfway between Carbide Willson dam & Cowden bridge
4. Cowden Road Bridge
5. Log bridge at Ernest Brown's farm
6. Bridge at Cross Farm (Pine Road extension to the old fox farm)
7. Covered bridge on Cross Loop Road
8. Bridge at Route 105
9. Crossing in Farm Point village
10. Railroad bridge
11. Bridge at River Road (old Highway 11)

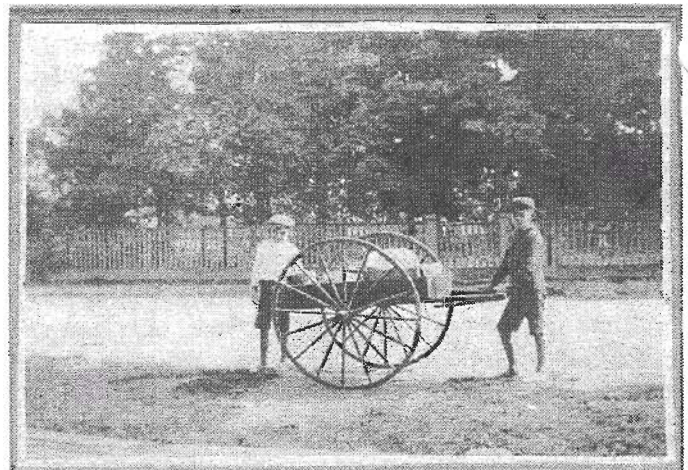
*Along the road to yesterday I wander in a dream  
and linger on a wooden bridge that spans the old stream  
I see the names carved in its timbers gray  
that bring back memories of other days  
when life was young and gay.*

*Old covered bridge of childhood days  
covered with dreams for me*

*The road back to you is a long, long road  
but that's where I long to be  
joyful, carefree and happy, dreaming the hours away.  
Old covered bridge of my childhood days  
back in that yesterday.*

*I'd love to see just once again  
back near that old homestead of mine  
the old bridge that is still there, with a road winding down,  
and live again those happy hours with friends of long ago.  
Back near that old homestead of mine,  
back home with folks I knew.*

### Do You Know?



This photo of two boys with a cart, standing by a fence, may have been taken in Chelsea in the early 1900s. The boy (with white shirt) on the left is Harold Augusta Scanlon, born October 8, 1894, and adopted by William Henry Scanlon and his wife Mary Loveday Helman, who were living in Chelsea at the time of the 1901 census. Does anyone recognize the other boy in this photo, or know anything more about Harold Augusta Scanlon? His daughter, who lives in BC, is trying to trace his birth parents and their details. If you have information that might help, please contact Societ Archivist Jay Atherton at 827-1703