

GATINEAU VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Oct — Nov 2004

Box/C.P. 1803 Chelsea PQ J9B 1A1 (819) 827-4432

Number 2004-05

Coming Events

Monday, Oct 18, 7:30 PM
Chelsea Community Centre

*Lebreton Flats: From a Childhood
Perspective - Yesterday and Today*

The Society is pleased to welcome **Mr. Pierre Charlebois**, who will speak about his childhood experiences while growing up on Fleet Street on the Lebreton Flats.

The Lebreton Flats are considered one of Canada's oldest industrial and residential neighborhoods, but from the 1960s until recently, this area has remained essentially unused. As planning officials now consider redeveloping the Lebreton Flats into a new "vibrant mixed-use community", many former residents have been reminded of the former vibrant community that once existed there. What was it like before 1960? Join us and find out!

Thursday November 11, 11:00 a.m.
Chelsea Pioneer Cemetery

Remembrance Day Ceremony

Members and friends of the Gatineau Valley Historical Society are invited to attend one of the most poignant of the thousands of Remembrance Day ceremonies held across Canada on November 11th. The HSG has hosted the Remembrance Day service at the Chelsea Pioneer Cemetery since 1986 to keep alive the memory of Private Richard Rowland Thompson, Queen's Scarf, who is buried in the tiny cemetery. As in past years, Private Thompson's old regiment, the Royal Canadian Regiment, stationed in Petawawa, will form a guard of honour.

(More coming events on page 6)

GVHS Involved in Improvements to Chelsea Cemeteries

(by Allan Richens & Carol Martin)

The Municipality of Chelsea is putting some effort and money into the upkeep and rehabilitation of the **Old Chelsea Protestant Burial Ground**, the oldest cemetery in Chelsea and one of the oldest in the region. After sitting in legal limbo for many years the municipality seems to be finally in possession of the "designated historical site."

Last year, after a little prompting by Allan Richens of the GVHS, the municipality engaged J.P. Laurin Monuments to restore the bases of several tombstones. This year the site was surveyed and some students on a work project painted the surrounding fence.

(Continued on page 2)

THE ALCOVE UNITED CHURCH TO CLOSE

*A service of Thanksgiving and Closure will
take place on Monday, October 10th.*

(by E. Lois Wilson)

One hundred and fifteen years ago, **North Wakefield**, now **Alcove**, was a thriving and growing community, where the large pioneer families of **Pritchard, Hamilton, and Townsend** were putting down roots, as were other smaller families.

While early local history indicates that there was a small log building erected by **Andrew Pritchard** and used by Methodists and Anglicans at different times, no permanent church had been built until **Mrs. Mary (Edey) Pritchard**, Andrew's widow, shared her vision of a church on the main highway, now Chemin River, overlooking the Gatineau River. Mary's vision was matched by her generous donation of property for both a church and a manse, followed by the many gifts of time and labour by community workers, who would become the first members of this new church **erected in 1889**.

(Continued on page 4)



(From page 1) Work will continue on the entrance way to make it much more attractive to visitors. Carol Martin prepared the text for two new large descriptive panels, in English and French, which are now in place alongside the entrance way. (see text opposite)

The **Chelsea Pioneer Cemetery** has had some maintenance help from neighbours **Clem St. Pierre** and **Peter Jessen**, who cleaned up fallen branches after a wind storm, and **John Pomeroy**, who did some brush and tree trimming. Marilyn Lidiard of the **Gatineau Valley Gardeners** has kept flowers blooming in front of the cenotaph, and **John Green** is paid by the Society to carry out regular small maintenance jobs. Now it's time to refurbish our sign by the highway, look for the new one in 2005!



Shown in the photograph during the work last month. L. to r., Bernard Fournier, municipal employee; Carol Martin, Director GVHS; and Julien Gervais, municipal employee.

The following is the English-language version:

Old Chelsea Protestant Burial Ground

This is Chelsea's oldest cemetery, established in the 1830s and used continuously for nearly 170 years. Thomas Brigham purchased the 100-acre "north half" of Lot 14, Range 8 and received title to it on September 3, 1835; the cemetery occupies less than one-half acre of that property.

The well-preserved old burial ground is a typical 19th century Protestant community cemetery, located in the heart of the village, with tombstones in family groups and fenced plots. The ornate cast iron gates, marked "CHELSEA 1891 CEMETARY," were likely erected to enhance the entrance after the old High Street (now Old Chelsea Road) was re-routed.

Burials: Approximately 100 people are named on the monuments (several repeat names) with a further 100 to 200 in unmarked graves.

Thomas Wright - founding family, Township of Hull; earliest gravestone in the National Capital Region.

Asa Meech - preacher and farmer for whom Meech Lake is named.

Andrew Wilson - publisher of Ottawa's first daily newspaper.

"Budge" & Judy Crawley - award-winning film makers.

Graham Spry - social activist and businessman.

The founding families who used this cemetery came from the British Isles and the United States; several monuments also mention these origins. Many of the surnames seen on these stones are commemorated by Chelsea place names, such as Meech Lake, the hamlets of Kirk's Ferry and Burnett, and various streets.

In 1989, the cemetery was designated a historic monument and officially named the Old Chelsea Protestant Burial Ground. The Municipality of Chelsea owns and maintains the site.

A complete cemetery listing can be found at Scott Naylor's *Cemetery Grave Markers - Pontiac Co., Gatineau Co. Que. Portion of Lanark Co. and Ottawa west of the Rideau River, Ont.* website: <http://www3.sympatico.ca/scott.naylor/Graves/NewIndex/GraveMarker1.HTM>

Report of 43rd Annual Auction

Date: 21 Aug, 2004, 0900-1300

Location: St. Stephen's Church Grounds, Chelsea

Weather: Sunny, cool (19°), breezy

Auctioneer: Gerry Lepage (Ashton Auction Services)

Number of Donors: 26 for regular auction and 34 solicited donors for silent auction. Also, several anonymous donations. Appearances by Chelsea's mayor, Jean Perras, who bought bake table items and wished us well, and new MP, Dave Smith, who came with his wife and two children! Some very generous donors, including one over \$1500, two over \$500 in value; also one bidder who spent over \$1800. Almost all donors gave goods, in exchange for charitable donation receipt, instead of asking for half of the amount realized from sales.

Number of Registered Bidders: 82 (compared with 94 last year). Many other bargain hunters browsing the flea market, book table, bake sale, etc.

Residency of Bidders: Mainly Chelsea (43), Gatineau (14), La Pêche (10), Ottawa (10); also Val des Monts (1), Cantley (2), and one visitor who listed a home address in Pennsylvania.

Memberships: Six new members including MP David Smith. Two renewals.

REVENUE

Bake Table	387.25
Flea Market	619.55
Books	143.86
Silent Auction	955.00
Auction	<u>4,429.50</u>

EXPENSES

Ret. to donors	466.25
Ads-News	236.60
Ads-WQP	401.64
Ads-Droit	401.64
Auctioneer	200.00
Supplies	<u>41.99</u>

Totals: **\$6,535.16**

\$1,571.93

Profit: **\$4,963.23**

THANKS to everyone for a successful auction!

It can sometimes be difficult to distribute thanks for the success of an event well done by a large number of people, for fear of leaving someone out. Nevertheless, there are many GVHS members and community volunteers who made significant contributions towards making this annual project a success.

Many thanks to **Theresa Winfield** and **Jay Atherton** who managed the whole affair, brought the volunteers together, and solved the small and large problems as they occurred.

Allan Richens looked after publicity, and solicited donations for the silent auction ♦ **Klaus and Carol Decker** picked up and registered items for the auction ♦ Also helping with pick ups and registration were **Sharon and Don Macleod**, and **Alice Chandler** ♦ **Nicole Jasmine** looked after the smooth operation of the flea market with help from **Chris Cooke, John Parker, Dolores Maples and Frank Kessler** ♦

Bob Martin and Joe Fitzpatrick registered the bidders ♦ **Rene Nielsen** captained a stalwart team who prepared goodies and managed the bake table ♦ **George and Sylvia Shawcross** took care of the book sale ♦ Five hard-pressed members (**Gudula Marshall, Dominique Alie, Linda Bardell, Alice Phillipe, and Jay Atherton**) served as spotters, capturing the numbers for the trio who prepared the bills, **Carol Martin, David Castleman, and Adrienne Herron** ♦ **Bob Hughes** led the hardy group (**Richard Herron, Lois Wilson, Preston Wilson**) who showed the goods and encouraged bidding on items ♦ **Margaret and Harold Reid, with Mary Armitage** manned the GVHS publications and membership table.

And thanks to any other volunteers whom I may have missed. Heartfelt thanks to all of you.

Marc Cockburn, President, GVHS

The GVHS greatly appreciates the generous donations for the silent auction from the following businesses and individuals:

Del Trudeau
Larrimac Golf Club
Chelsea Freshmart
Café Soup'Herbe
Les Fourgères
Chelsea Smokehouse
Chelsea Hardware
Mayor of Chelsea
Harky's Garage
Chelsea Post Office

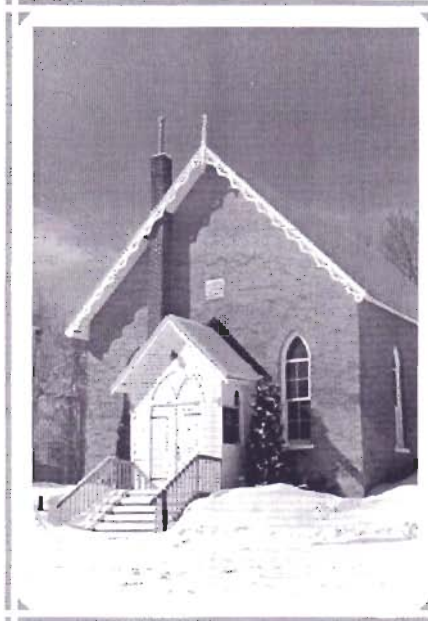
Épicerie générale du Parc
Boulangerie dans un village
Chelsea's Pub
La Gigale
Lafleur de la Capitale
National Capital Commission
Greg Christie's Ski & Cycle Works
Doozy Candles
Gleneagle Firewood
Marché des Artisans

Jamboree
End of the Line
The West Quebec Post
Café Chez Éric
Café Alpengruss
The Low Down to Hull News
La Tulipe Noire
Le Moulin Wakefield Mill
Les Trois Érables
Wakefield General Store
David Smith, M.P.

(From page 1) While many of the families had come from a Presbyterian background, Mrs Pritchard was a devout Methodist, whose own tradition included riding on horse back to the Aylmer Methodist church for communion, at least four times a year. Without any division over denominational preferences, the Alcove church was dedicated a Methodist church, while its red brick structure spoke of a Presbyterian tradition.

On February 4, 1925, the Official Board of the North Wakefield Methodist church voted to join with the Presbyterians and Congregationalists across Canada, to form The United Church of Canada. That Union took place on June 10th, 1925.

Many people witnessed this congregation's struggle through two great wars, the depression, and an outbreak of diphtheria. Changing times, affecting employment from lumbering and farming to industry and technology added to the demise of the community itself. In more recent times, the moving of families into the city continued the process. Through it all, the worshipping community came together supporting the local ministry, missions abroad, and local residents during times of crises, illness and death. Declining active membership and financial support has now added its toll on this small faith community. In the early years, when monetary funds were not available to support the minister, clergy salary was often paid in the form of produce from the fields, beef or pork from local stocks, and hay for the horse. In the end, they always managed to uphold their commitments and still contribute to the wider community and world.. In the last few years, as elderly members have left, and financial support has fallen off, it has become



very clear that a choice was looming before the congregation: they could continue until their funds were depleted, and fewer people doing all the Board work, or they could close now and continue to contribute to the ministry of the Gospel through the Rupert and Wakefield congregations, bringing their human, financial and spiritual gifts with them. With heavy hearts, the choice to close was made.

So, it is with a mixture of sadness and thanksgiving that the congregation comes to this last service. For some, this is the only church they have ever known, their faith stories were rooted here. It is also with thanksgiving for the years that have been, the church's role in personal faith journeys, and the freedom of letting go of that which hinders meaningful ministry. The congregation now looks forward to sharing their energy, spirituality and supporting gifts within the two remaining congregations of the area's United Church.

A service of Thanksgiving and Closure will take place on October 10th. During that service, a representative of Ottawa Presbytery will preside over the 'disbanding' of the Alcove congregation, and the 'forming' of the new two-point charge. Following the service, there will be a 'family' Thanksgiving dinner where present and former members will gather, at the Rupert Community Hall, sharing fellowship and memories.

GVHS Director E. Lois Wilson is a retired United Church Minister who entered the ministry from her home church in Alcove. She is the author of *Alcove United Church 1889-1989: A Historical Reflection on a Community of faith and life.*

MY GATINEAU VALLEY HOME (By Loretta McLaughlin Ringer)

I was born in Venosta Village
But I've traveled far and wide
Far from the home where I grew up
Just to see the other side

No matter where I wander
No matter where I roam
My thoughts are always with me
Of the times I spent at home

The people were so friendly
We had a lot of fun
The work it was exhausting
Forever on the run

The farm that I grew up on
Was a rugged piece of land
With eight of us to till the soil
We kept it all in hand



Venosta Station (1915)

They say you can't go back
I don't believe that's so
My roots are very deep
It's back to home they go

When my journeys are all over
And it's time for me to rest
Take me back to the Gatineau valley
The place I love the best

When the snow has finally gone
And the flowers are all in bloom
Lay me down to sleep forever
Underneath the shining moon

The William Fairbairn House *Going on the road again!*

Dan Bédard, President of Wakefield Harbour development confirmed last month that he was accepting bids from the public to purchase the William Fairbairn House. The 130-year old structure currently sits on Wakefield Harbour property which is to be developed into condominiums. The Fairbairn House is considered surplus to their needs. Sealed bids with proof of the ability to relocate the house to another location were being accepted to the end of September, with the move happening in November. **The money for the house will go to the Gatineau Memorial Hospital Center Foundation.**

The William Fairbairn House was relocated to its current location in 1993 from its former site just below the present fire hall, by the late Andy Tommy who owned the property at that time. He did this at his own expense, since no one was willing to save the old farm house from being bulldozed to make way for the highway A5/105/366 intersection. The house remained unused until Andy sold the property to the late Dave Rinn who renovated the house and it became part of his Wakefield Marina.

The house was not formally designated an 'historical site' by the Municipality of LaPêche, mainly because of uncertainty surrounding its relocation. The house's historical significance is that it was the second house built by William Fairbairn who constructed the Wakefield Mill in 1838. This homestead was built in the late 1860s to replace the first house which was constructed of logs and situated closer to the river. The house and farmland was passed to the Stevenson family and later the McNally family who farmed the property until 1989.

(E. Mahoney)



British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO) Conference

From Friday to Sunday, September 17-19, those interested in researching their British Isles family roots gathered at this conference, held at Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa.

The GVHS had a book table at this event, thanks to Harold & Margaret Reid, Dave & Eileen Castleman and Bob Martin, and can claim modest success (\$66 in book sales). GVHS members Lois Wilson and Carol Martin attended the conference. The conference this year featured Irish roots. In addition to interesting case histories and information about research strategies in Ireland, three of the seminars dealt with broader issues genetics and family history, including questions of ethics connected with giving out medical information.

Kyle Betit summarized some developments in genealogy over the past 10 years, stressing that new information is constantly being made available. Automated electronic indexes, searchable databases and digital imaging on-line of record collections are constantly being added; records in some countries are being opened up. The internet has been a boon to genealogists, and genealogy has also been commercialized.

BIFHSGO will have summaries of some conference papers on its website at <http://www.bifhsgo.ca/>
(Carol Martin)

A little history updated -- Diamond Jenness name on Mars as well!

Our most recent edition of **Up the Gatineau!** carried an article by Duncan Marshall about Canadian anthropologist Diamond Jenness and his Gatineau connection. Readers may be most interested to learn that, in addition to the Chelsea road and various Canadian features carrying the name of this outstanding scientist, a place on the planet Mars now carries the Diamond Jenness name.

Randy Boswell's article of September 22, 2004, in the *Ottawa Citizen*, carries a heading: "Ottawa man 'astounded' to learn NASA named Mars rock after father." Boswell explained that NASA has named several Mars landmarks for Canadian places, after the rover *Opportunity* crossed that planet's 53rd parallel in the summer, and his story continued with further comments by Stuart Jenness. Duncan's article, in Volume 30, is called "A Gem in the Gatineau Valley".

QAHN NEWS

HERITAGE TRAIL GUIDES

The **Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network** has released another in its series of **Heritage Trail Guides** for the **Lower Gatineau**. These guides provide a brief but comprehensive description of Old Chelsea, New Chelsea, Kingsmere, the Meech Creek valley, and Farm Point. Further north, Wakefield, Alcove, Farrelton, Low and the Paugan dam are described.

GVHS members Jay Atherton and Ernie Mahoney assisted author Dwane Wilkin of QAHN in preparing the pamphlet. Copies are available in local libraries and tourist information centers in Wakefield and Low.

QUEBEC HERITAGE WEB

QAHN recently launched the **Laurentian Heritage WebMagazine**. As part of QAHN's new Quebec-wide Internet heritage website, **Quebec Heritage Web**, Laurentian Heritage WebMagazine is designed to serve as a window on the history of the Laurentians, a guide to the region's heritage, past and present, and a way to encourage people of all ages to visit the region in person.

Modeled on the highly acclaimed *Townships Heritage WebMagazine* (created by Townshippers' Association and now administered by QAHN), **Laurentian Heritage WebMagazine** is the second of our innovative regional Internet magazines spotlighting the province's history and heritage, with emphasis on the history and heritage of Quebec's English-speaking community. "The Heritage WebMagazine will make it a pleasure to plan trips into the regions of Quebec, where information is so often hard to find or is incomplete," says QAHN President Rod MacLeod. "It will also be a treat for desktop travelers, who can easily spend hours browsing in these absorbing, insightful pages."

Together with Townships Heritage, Laurentian Heritage WebMagazine – and in time, distinctive webmagazines for all the regions of Quebec from Gatineau to Gaspé – will constitute QAHN's ambitious, province-wide website, **Quebec Heritage Web**.

The Quebec Heritage Web project and Laurentian Heritage WebMagazine are funded jointly by Canada Economic Development and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

www.QuebecHeritageWeb.com

Coming events

Monday November 15, 7:30 p.m.
Chelsea Community Centre, Old Chelsea

Johanne Fortier, Heritage Manager, National Capital Commission : *The Historical Origins of Gatineau Park*
(To be confirmed!)

Also happening this fall...

⇒ There will be a **new exhibit at the History Wall inside Municipality of Chelsea town hall**, 100, Old Chelsea Road. *A Rich Past to Discover—Four Chelsea Heritage Homes* is an exhibit of photographs of four residences belonging to members of the Church and Hudson families in the village of Chelsea, all built around 1860-1870. Three of the homes are still standing; the fourth, unfortunately, was demolished in the 1970s. These photographs were taken from an album donated to the Gatineau Valley Historical Society in the 1990s. The exhibit is being coordinated by Municipal Archivist, Pascale Barrette

⇒ Allan Richens will once again work with Chelsea Municipal Librarian Beatrice O'Byrne to mount a **Remembrance Day display at the Chelsea Library**. This year's theme will be the Merchant Navy. Look for the opening later in October.

GVHS Board members Michael Cooper and Ernie Mahoney attended the first public meeting of the **Gatineau River Watershed committee / Comité du versant de la Rivière Gatineau**, a provincial initiative that aims to include all stakeholders from the local and regional levels to participate in the creation of an integrated watershed management plan for the Gatineau River.

At the inaugural meeting, a committee of sixteen individuals was formed from among elected representatives, local industry sector, and other interested groups. The GVHS was given observer status and will remain active in promoting the heritage aspects of the Gatineau River watershed.

Are you interested in helping out the GVHS?

Volunteer opportunities are available in a number of the Society's activities. How about writing an article for the *Up the Gatineau!* Or lend your time for scanning photographs and entering descriptive records into the GVHS Image Bank. Translation expertise is always welcome! We also need help with the organization of the Remembrance Day ceremony and the Annual Auction. If you are interested in lending us some volunteer energy, please contact GVHS President, Mar Cockburn (459-2004) or any other Executive Committee member.