

GATINEAU VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Aug — Sep 2005

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Coming Events

GVHS Annual Auction and Flea market
Aug 20, 2004, 9:00 am
St. Stephens Church, Old Chelsea



The 42nd Gatineau Valley Historical Society's Annual Auction will take place on **Saturday August 20, 2004** on the grounds of St. Stephen's Church, Old Chelsea.

Auctioneer Gerald Lepage will once again lead the bidding on our usual selection of antiques, collectibles, and curiosities. Other events include the flea market and bake sale, a silent auction, an antique auto display, and the sale of GVHS publications.

The Society can always use more quality antiques and collectibles for its auction. If you have anything to donate, please bring them to the St. Stephen's Church grounds on Friday afternoon or evening (August 19th), so they may be registered.

For further information contact Ernie Mahoney (459-1180), Jay Atherton (827-1703), or Marc Cockburn (459-2004). Or email us at info@gvhs.ca

Society member honoured by the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network

The Marion Phelps Award for Outstanding Long-Term Contribution to the Protection and Preservation of Anglophone Heritage in the Province of Quebec was presented to Norma Geggie of Wakefield, at the QAHN annual meeting in Montreal. Their findings in books, articles, and through the collection and display of artefacts at the local museum of the Gatineau Valley Historical Society.

In 1954, Norma came to Canada from her native Australia to fill a nursing position at the newly created Gatineau Memorial Hospital in the village of Wakefield, Quebec. In the 50 years since then Norma has been a dedicated contributor to this community.

A few years after her arrival in Wakefield she married Dr. Stuart Geggie whose family had deep roots in the Gatineau Valley. Together Norma and Stuart developed a keen interest in local history and soon began to record

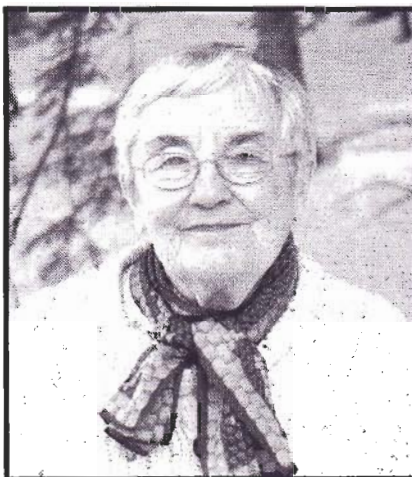


Photo credit: The Low Down

Their first book, *La Peche: A History of Wakefield and its Surrounding Areas*, was published in 1974, with an expanded version in 1980. This was followed in 1976 by *Unto the Hills*, a history of the local churches. In 1987 Norma and Stuart published *The Extra Mile*, from the journals of the hospital's founder, Dr. Harold Geggie, a fascinating 132-page account of medicine as it was practiced in rural Quebec between 1885 and 1985.

(continued on page 2)

(Norma Geggie)

Norma has more recently published a number of local history books on her own. These include *Wakefield and its People: Tours of the Village*, in 1990; *A Place A part: A Search for the Pioneer Cemeteries of the Lower Gatineau Valley*, in 1999; and *Wakefield Revisited*, in 2003. She has also published numerous articles in the Society's periodical, *Up the Gatineau*.

For many years Norma has served on the Municipality of La Peche Heritage Committee with emphasis on the built history of the region. She has been honoured with a life-membership in the Gatineau Valley Historical Society, where she is a volunteer in the Archives and has served on its board for several terms.

In the 50 years since Norma came to live in the Gatineau Valley she has made a very significant impact on the preservation of Quebec's heritage. Besides her role as a researcher, writer and editor, she has contributed to the community through her work with youth and as a literacy tutor. Currently she is leading a group that is working to get affordable housing for senior citizens in the region, and is planning to publish a tour guide for the many tourist who visit Wakefield each year.

Remember the Old Days?

Catherine Joyce's vignettes of "The Way We Were" will soon be featured in "The Low Down to Hull and Back News". Catherine is a local author of three novels set in the Gatineau Hills. Also a published poet, she has been teaching writing for over thirty years. Her profiles of local artists come out weekly in "The Low Down". In September, she will be offering a course to help local folks recount and write their own memoirs. You don't have to be a gifted writer to attend. The course is intended for the average person who has a story to tell about his or her youth and about the local history. It's an opportunity for our members to get the help of a professional writer to record their memories. Here's her description of the course:

Memoir Writing with Catherine Joyce

Come out and discover the stories you have to tell: two hours of good talk, quiet writing, thoughtful guidance and the complete freedom to explore the unique and cherished imprint of your life. Ten weeks. Wednesdays, 9:30 — 11:30 a.m. Mid September to end of November 2005. Check the Chelsea Municipal Activities Fall Calendar for starting date.

Call Catherine (city: 749-7631 or cottage: 827-9004) or email her (joyce@magma.ca) for more details.

CAMPAIGN FOR RELEASE OF HISTORIC CENSUS RECORDS FINALLY OVER

Senator Lorna Milne (L-Brampton) was celebrating this morning as the House of Commons gave unanimous consent to pass Bill S-18 an Act to amend the Statistics Act, to allow for the release of historic census records. "It is absolutely wonderful. This represents seven years of effort since I first raised a notice of inquiry in the Senate," said Milne. "The historic census finally has been secured as a public historic record for the use of all Canadians, and I could not be happier".

In 1998 Statistics Canada raised concerns about the legality of the release of the historic census records. This led to 7 years of investigation, analysis, debate, and discussion over how to permit the use of historic census records in Canada. "I want to thank all of the Ministers who have put so much effort on this file. Ministers Manley, Rock, Robillard, Emerson all put significant work on this file, and I am so pleased that Minister Emerson took swift action, building on the work of previous ministers, to push this thing through," said Milne. "It is certainly a very happy day for all Canadians".

It is expected that the 1911 census that was taken 94 years ago will be released in due time. "It is my understanding that the Archives of Canada is working as quickly as possible to put this online" noted Milne.

Special thanks also go out to Muriel Davidson, Gordon Watts, Chad Gaffield, Lois Sparling, and all of the rank and file of the Canada Census Campaign who put in so much effort to the cause.

For more information, please contact Jeff Paul, Policy Advisor to Senator Milne at 613-947-9744.

Restoring our Centre Block.

On a scorching June 11 morning, 14 sunscreened members of GVHS joined master stonemason **Bobby Watt** for a conservationist's tour of Parliament's Centre Block. Trained and recruited in Scotland, Bobby shared his insights into the building and conserving of our stone heritage. We learned the significance of selecting different types of sandstone and limestone, the architectural and artistic considerations, the quality of restoration over the years, and the quirky humour of stonemasons past. At the still scaffold-clad Library, Bobby proudly displayed new steps which he had built recently with his 2 sons. Despite the background hum of paving machines, all attending voted this a fascinating morning, and Bobby a masterful and dedicated speaker.

(Michael Cooper)

