

Gatineau Valley historical society N e w s l e t t e r

GVHS 45th

ANNUAL AUCTION & Flea market

Saturday, August 9th 2008 @ 9:00 a.m.

St. Stephen's Church Grounds, Old Chelsea, QC

We need your antiques and collectables!

If you have any items to donate, please bring them to the St. Stephen's Church grounds on

Friday, August 8th — 2:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. — for registration.

Auctioneer Revel Stewart will lead the bidding on our usual selection of antiques, collectibles, and curiosities. Other events include the flea market and bake sale, a silent auction, and the sale of GVHS publications.

A tax receipt for the full amount of the selling price will be given or 50% in cash — your choice.

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Low 150th ~ Show and Tell September 15th 2008, 7:30 p.m.

To help celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Municipality of Low, the GVHS is pleased to hold its September meeting at the **Low Heritage Hall**.

The aim of the evening will be to show images from the Low Scan Days and the GVHS Image Bank, and to have area residents tell us the stories associated with the many vivid images of Low.

~ Speakers TBA ~ ~ Refreshments ~

Everyone welcome!

Seaway Valley Excursion — June 14, 2008



Thanks to the Gatineau Valley Historical Society organizers, who with Don Kenny and his wife Enid of Long Sault, Ontario, led our group of twenty on an unforgettable tour in memory of the St. Lawrence Seaway's lost villages, as well as on visits to other historic landmarks in South Stormont County. And, Enid and Don even served us lunch in their lovely home.

Don and his many friends were great guides and gave us a day of memorable activities and a new appreciation for the history of this area of Ontario, about a hundred km south of Ottawa. The tour was an appropriate choice for this year, as it marks the 50th anniversary of the Seaway's construction, said to be one of Canada's greatest engineering feats when it was officially opened by the Queen on June 26, 1959.

The massive Seaway project, begun in the summer of 1955, involved the flooding of nine villages which were eventually merged into two new towns called Long Sault and Ingleside. To accomplish this 530 homes were moved and 6500 residents displaced. Our visit to the Lost Villages Historical Museum evoked the sadness and stress that must have accompanied these displacements — the loss of family homesteads, as well as familiar schools, churches, and other community structures and neighbourhoods.

Other stops on our trip included the Seaway's hydro dam, half in Canada and half in the United States; the Cornwall Community Museum located in the Wood family home, built of stone around 1840; the old St. Andrews West church in Cornwall Township, its adjacent meeting hall and former church dating back to the 1700s, as well as the pioneer cemetery and memorial park across from it.

Anita Rutledge

Wakefield Elementary School Heritage Fair Projects

Grade 5 students from Wakefield Elementary School presented their Heritage Fair projects at the Gatineau Valley Historical Society's Annual Dinner on May 26th. Led by Grade 5 teacher, Karen Jones, the Heritage Fair was launched at the historic Wakefield Mill on March 26th with a presentation by the Gatineau Valley Historical Society (GVHS).

Students explained their projects and answered questions from society members as they displayed their posters, newspaper articles, old store receipts, farming & logging equipment, photos and scrapbooks at Vorlage Ski Hill. Students selected topics based on their own interest and conducted research with the assistance of Ms. Jones. All the projects were related to various aspects of Gatineau Hills history.

Many students chose to interview family members - discovering interesting facts and mysterious artifacts in their family background. Others chose to interview local community members to learn about local sports history and farming. Still others used the GVHS Archives in Chelsea to find old photos and documents related to their topics.

Some students used multi-media displays to explain how milling technology changed life in the Gatineau Hills, while others showcased huge saws and grappling hooks to illustrate the dangers of logging in the early 20th century. One student provided samples of local maple syrup with details on the importance of sugar bushes to the regions history.

A display on the history of the 1st Wakefield Scouts required Society members to wear gloves to handle historic scrapbooks, in order to protect them. Another presented a handwritten receipt from the General Store given to Dr. Geggie in the 1950's with the explanation that cashiers needed to be able to add up a long list of items in under one minute, or they couldn't work at the store. A perfect replica of the Wakefield Train Station was on display with details on the importance of the railway to the development of the region. Other displays included historic clothing, background on local homesteads, agricultural tools, one-room schoolhouses, the steam train and profiles of interesting local community members.

"The project was a huge success", says Ms. Jones, "It really helped students connect with their community and discover that not only is history important, it is also fun".

After a delicious spaghetti supper for the students, the evening ended with a speech by John Hobday, a board member for the Historica Foundation, an organization devoted to Canadian history education. Mr. Hobday thanked the budding historians for their efforts to keep history alive and presented Heritage Minute DVD's to four local area schools for use in the classroom.

Amanda Dexter



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Marc Cockburn

GVHS and the Canadian Leadership Conference in Chelsea

On June 16, the GVHS was one of the local organizations selected to participate in a whirlwind day-long Chelsea visit by members of the Governor General's Leadership Conference.

The Conference, begun in 1983, takes place every four years and brings together future Canadian leaders from business, labour, government, NGOs, Aboriginal communities and the cultural sector for a two-week experience of visiting different communities in a particular region. The members are then divided into smaller groups for community visits in various regions across the country.

From June 6 – 20, a group of fifteen members followed an itinerary that began in Montreal and traced a circuit into the Saguenay, Abitibi, Rouen-Noranda, and Val d'Or, arriving in Maniwaki and Wakefield on June 15. Their visit to Chelsea, on June 16, came at a point when they had been travelling for 10 days, and had to be exciting and memorable!

Their introduction to this community began with dragon boating on the Gatineau River and breakfast at the Cascades Club. Then they boarded their bus for a visit to the Meech Creek covered bridge, the historic landmark that is Chelsea's logo (and historical context and information provided by Carol Martin of the GVHS, accompanying the group on this part of the tour). Next came a visit to the Chelsea Foundation lands and a presentation by Soccer Chelsea (Chelsea is an outstanding community in terms of soccer participation by its residents), and a presentation by the Chelsea Chamber of Commerce. Next came a visit to the GVHS Archives, where Carol and

Marc Cockburn described the GVHS activities linked to the Chelsea cultural affairs program and the wider mandate of the organization. Volunteers Linda Bardell, Bob Hughes, Adrienne Herron and Erik Rask demonstrated and described photos from the Image Bank and the GVHS Website during an informal question and answer period.

More activities filled the balance of the day — ACRE, the NCC, Camp Fortune and the Nordik Spa — for this energetic and interested group. We are delighted that the GVHS was selected to showcase our activities to this group!

Carol Martin

Upcoming meeting Dates

Monday, October 20th — Monthly Meeting — Chelsea — Speaker TBA

Tuesday, November 11th — Remembrance Day Ceremony,
 Pioneer Cemetery, Chelsea

Monday, November 24th — Lapeche, Heritage Plaque Presentations

December TBA