

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU

BOX 143, OLD CHELSEA, QUE., J0X 2N0

1985

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

NEXT MEETING: Monday, Nov. 25 at 8.00 p.m. in the Chelsea School

Charles Lynch is back! The famous columnist, best-selling author, speaker, radio commentator, harmonica virtuoso and Gatineau resident is now a governor of the Heritage Canada Foundation. A lively evening is guaranteed when he addresses the Society this month.

Last Meeting

Such a meeting! The Society created a traffic jam at the Chelsea School as at least 275 people gathered to hear the Chairman of the National Capital Commission. The gilt on the lily was the Philemon Wright School Band presenting a splendid concert climaxed by a fanfare ushering in Mrs. Pigott and three senior members of her staff.

Mrs. Pigott shared her dream of The Capital and talked of plans for the future-- which may well include a user-pay policy in the Park. She offered to help restoration of the Old Chelsea Cemetery if West Hull would contribute and the Society would help. She underlined the role of volunteers in the Capital, stimulating one member to suggest that the NCC could profitably work through volunteer groups like the Society, as well as with individuals. The questioning, comments and criticism were spirited, and might be going on yet if we could have stayed.

Membership

Why do we want to increase membership? What do we mean by asking our members to assist actively in signing up new people? From our last extraordinary meeting we can draw a lesson.

We advertise our meetings beyond the newsletter, to bring out new people who, by joining the Society, will receive regular news of our activities and of the history of the Gatineau. They become more conscious of our history, interested in it, supportive of its preservation. And the size of our active membership makes a big difference to our effectiveness; when we make representations about saving history, or when we speak in public, it matters very much if we are just a few enthusiasts or if we really represent the community. Widespread public commitment is the best defence of our past.

And yet, of the estimated 100 guests at that meeting, how many

paused by the membership table at the entrance to join? One. What a chance we missed! The Executive is happy to make great efforts to provide meetings which will interest the community, but it is our members who are in the best position to suggest to guests or neighbours that they become a continuing part of our work. Can we please try harder? Since our November meeting is the last of the year, we are offering membership valid until December 31, 1986, for the annual fee of \$8. Please make a point of adding to our circle at that meeting.

Can Spring be Far Behind?

If you happened to spot the Treasurer, Secretary and President clawing the soil of our cemetery late last month, they were not grave digging. One hundred red tulips, the gift of the Royal Canadian Legion, were being lovingly planted around the entrance stone and the graves of Richard Thomson and his wife. (We had no response to our September request for donations of plants from gardeners, but we shall ask again in spring. If you expect to have any, please give your name now to the Treasurer or Secretary.)

Pictures Please

We have seen you with your camera photographing the Society's activities-- especially at the Auction. But we haven't seen the results. Will you please put them aside for the Annual meeting when we would like to share the pictures taken over the years of the Society and its members. If you have 35 mm. transparencies, please put them in a standard carousel for projection. If you have prints, could you please put them on a board for display; or, if that is not convenient, safely in an album for passing around.

 Please let us know if you can bring any to the January meeting.

Have you drawings of historic places in the Gatineau you would be willing to share? We hope to make the newsletter more attractive and interesting with illustrations. Pen or pencil sketches are especially welcome for they reproduce best. If you have any, or any ideas, please call Bob Phillips (827-3164).

Program News

We have been honoured by acceptance of our invitation to the Honourable John Bosley, Speaker of the House of Commons, and distinguished resident of the Gatineau. He will address the Society on Monday evening, February 24. The talk on LaSalle's Fort is therefore rescheduled to March 24.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee-- Arthur Davison, Helen Starnes, Sheila Strang and Pat Evans-- have been working hard to propose a strong executive for consideration of the Annual Meeting. They particularly want to attract vigorous new members both for fresh ideas and for sharing the growing work of our many activities. If you are willing to serve, or can suggest someone-- even a member whose interest has so far been more latent than active-- please call a committee member.

In law our executive must consist of a fixed number of officers and directors, but there is no limit on the number of "advisors" we can have. In practice we all work together as a team of equals. We meet for a strict 2 1/2 hours about five times a year, and committees meet more briefly between times. In that way we spread the load, and all who who serve apparently find it a rewarding and interesting experience-- a way to enjoy the activities of the Society more fully. Will you join us?

UP THE GATINEAU

Issues of 1975-77 and 1981 are out-of-print and 1981 soon will be, but photocopies are available for \$2 each by writing or phoning Sheila Strang (Box 143, Old Chelsea, JOX 2N0: 827-0420). Cheques must include postage: 1-.68; 2-.90; 3-\$1.12; 4-\$1.35; 5-\$1.57; 6-\$1.80.

And it's time to think of the 1986 edition. If you can contribute any material, please phone Arthur Davison at 235-1064 before January 15.

What are the Neighbours Up To?

Our Society is part of a network of associations of similar interests; we share newsletters and occasionally meet. Here is a recent sampling.

Heritage Ottawa last month ran a booth at the Country Flea Market at the Coliseum to raise operating funds. It has just launched the sale of "spiffy" T-shirts. It is planning public tours of the market area to parallel the highly successful Action Sandy Hill walks.

The Aylmer Heritage Association had 26 dealers at its annual antique fair last month, another successful money-raising venture.

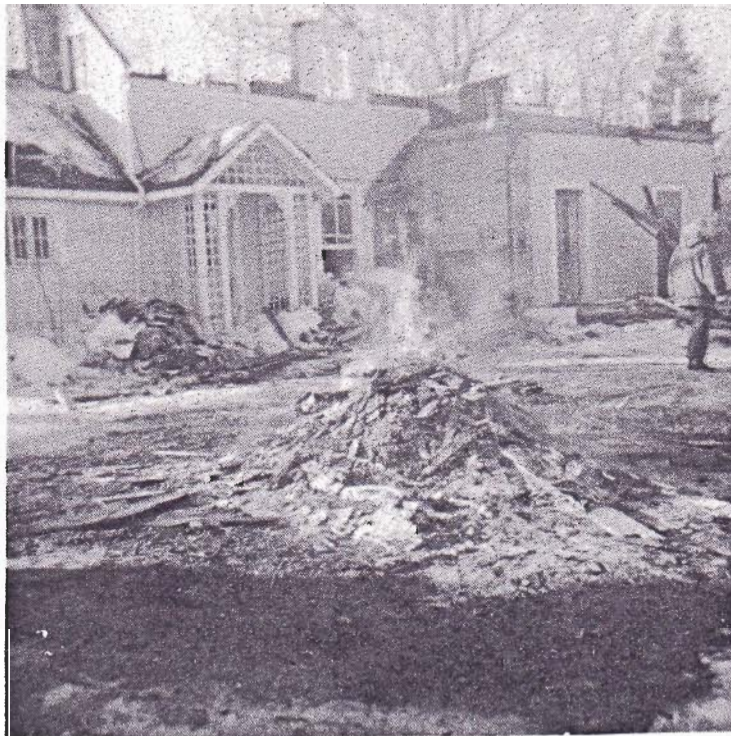
The SD & G Historical Society now has six publications for sale. It has been raising funds through the Cornwall Charity Bazaar. Unfortunately they had to cancel their planned bus tour for lack of member support-- an experience for us to explore.

The Gananoque Historical Society, which shares honours with Ottawa for informative newsletters, has monthly meetings: recently on the story of the local steel works, and on two recent local histories.

Outaouais Alliance plans to revive "The Wrights of Spring" next April. Have you any ideas for our participation?

The Heritage Canada Foundation has established a "Relationship Interface and Friendliness Committee" to improve relations with members. We welcomed the friendliness, though we did not know what relationship interfaces are. Since relations between the Foundation and community groups like ours have dwindled to almost nothing, we look forward to its report next autumn.

Can you identify this photograph? It appears to depict the destruction of a page of our history by some unfeeling vandals. What on earth could it be?



And, finally, the season...

To all members who may be unable to be with us for the final meeting of the calendar year, the Executive offers its warm wishes for this season and for the year ahead. We hope the times will be good for you, and for the Society.