

# THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU

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

## MARCH NEWSLETTER /1986

**NEXT MEETING: MONDAY,  
MARCH 24, AT 8.00 IN THE OLD  
CHELSEA COMMUNITY CENTRE**

You have probably driven over it, not suspecting that below the pavement, fill, tangled pipes and wires was the outline of one of Canada's earliest structures. With dogged determination in digging for stones--and funds--the Cataraqui Archeological Research Foundation has brought to light La Salle's fort. Archaeologist Bruce Stewart, Executive Director of the Foundation, is kindly coming from Kingston to share this absorbing story. Please see the drawing on the last page.

### LAST MEETING

It is not at every meeting that we have reporters from three newspapers and TV, a still photographer and a TV cameraman. Modesty obliges us to admit that the attraction is not the worthy work of our Society, but our distinguished speaker. When the Honourable John Bosley and Mrs. Bosley accepted our invitation last summer, we had in mind only the history of the office of Speaker of the House of Commons, but recent developments at The Farm added a certain new dimension of interest.

Mr. Bosley's short address was a witty, anecdote-filled look at the Speaker's work from early times in England to current Canadian politics. It was delivered on the first day of the new rules which the Speaker had used to eject an honourable member for improper language. The audience, during both the address and a long question period, learned a lot about the working of the House of Commons, including the fact that the Speaker's Apartment has had no bedroom since 1916.

That omission gives a Speaker an understandable interest in a country residence. In response to expressions of concern about the preservation of the history of The Farm, Mr. Bosley said that as a tenant he was not responsible for decisions on alterations made with the authority of the Official Residences Council and the administration of Public Works

Canada.

*The News* thought some of our members rude in their questioning, a view not shared by the executive or, happily, by our guest. Whatever the quality of our language, no members had to be ejected.

### THE FARM

Following the Annual Meeting's lively reaction to current pictures of work in progress at The Farm, the Executive decided that the Society had a responsibility to raise its voice in defence of our history. John Maclean wrote a story for the West Québec Post and we were given a half-page "op-ed" in *The Citizen*. Other stories followed in *The Citizen*, and *Post*. Canadian Press picked it up and distributed it across Canada, the CBC gave coverage on four programs, CTV ran it, and even the *Toronto Star* gave it special coverage. We have not caught up with other coverage, but it seems we have raised our voice.

As for the substance, our main complaint is the government's stealth and secrecy in dealing with a building of such historical importance. We still do not know what is going on, or why. John Maclean's quotation from the Chairman of the Official Residences Council seemed to dismiss the issue as simple winterizing-- which leads to more questions about what that Council is doing. We were led through the labyrinth of Public Works to its only authorized spokesman, Monique Lortie of the Public Relations Directorate. At the time our calls, her staff said she was at a meeting, but Ms. Lortie herself told the press she was sick when we phoned. (In case you think we have here-- to use a House of Commons phrase we learned from Mr. Bosley-- "a terminological inexactitude", we should acknowledge that the two excuses are not mutually exclusive.) The rest is silence. Despite the lively public interest shown in the future of the building Prime Minister King gave the people of Canada, Ms. Lortie has still not reached her phone, nor has anyone else in the Official Residences Council, in Public Works Canada, or in local constituencies thought it

worthwhile to give us or the public any information about what is happening to King's legacy or why. Does that close the subject?

We don't think so.

### WHAT DID YOU DO TO SAVE OUR HISTORY?

The executive can do a lot, but one thing it cannot do is to ask **your friends** to join the Society. Have **you** asked anyone to join? Have **you** responded to our request to send the Secretary (827-1995) names of people whom we should approach? If so, we thank you, for you are making our time-consuming job easier. If not, can you really wonder how the government gets away with destroying our history?

Our Secretary and Treasurer are working very hard for us.. Please don't give them unnecessary work in following up renewals. We would really appreciate having all memberships (\$8) brought up-to-date by March.

We are pleased to welcome these new members: Jay Athereton, Dr. J.D. Allen, Marlene Brennan, Kathleen Buckley, Shirley and Jim Brown, Maurice Belanger, Mrs. Joan Brownrigg, Mrs. C. Clyde, Geoff Chrysler, Phil Cohen, Blaney Derby, Judy Grant, Richard Hoffer, Valerie D. Hiscocks, Mrs. A.R. Krapf, Mary Lynott, Mrs. Ivan Lusk, Lindsay McClinton, Mrs. J.L. Morton, Weldon Markus, George Markus, George Moennich, William Pritchard, Michael P. Ryan, Barry Robillard, Donald E. Skillen, Mr. and Mrs. H. Thomson and H. Ward.

**But Michel P. Ryan, where are you?** Because we received your fee, but not the form which shows your address, you are not reading this. If any friend can help with identification, please phone Rae Moore at 827-1995.

### WITH DEEP REGRET....

we record the death of Arthur Reid, pioneer member of the Society and uncle of executive member Carol Martin. We have also been much saddened by the death of Mrs. Meredith in such tragic circumstances. We offer their families our sincere sympathy.

### THE NEW MUSEUM?

The strong response of the Annual Meeting to the museum idea has pushed it forward. Confident of the willingness of members to volunteer for museum duty, the

executive has orally informed the NCC of our readiness to review a written proposal. Ray Daly is chairman of a strong Museum Committee which has begun planning for a very modest start this summer, with our exhibits open on weekends in the Maclaren House, Wakefield. Please phone Ray (459-2038) if you would like to contribute time or talents, or lend exhibits.

### WHATEVER HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO HERITAGE DAY?

That is quite a story. Members will recall that it was launched by Heritage Canada a dozen years ago as a community event, with local societies being given encouragement to launch all kinds of projects for every age. This year the NCC issued an impressive information folder announcing that last November it had convened a committee of "Ottawa's heritage institutions" to organize Heritage Day-- and it listed not a single voluntary or community organization! It was a committee of bureaucrats. Although the Chairman of Heritage Canada, also in November, wrote us that the Foundation would not be "involved in community heritage issues", the Foundation was not only a member of the Ottawa Committee, but provided a list of 74 things that community organizations were supposed to organize for Heritage Day. It arrived one working day before Heritage Day. But that's not all. The bureaucrats had a ceremony facing Parliament Hill, with v.i.p.'s, King's Royal Yorkers guarding them with honour, musket volleys, fifes and drums. It was apparently quite a party-- but nobody came.

Better luck next time, dear friends.

### THE CEMETERY

We will soon be awaiting a reply to our December letter to Veterans Affairs Minister Hees about participating in the cemetery project, but meanwhile diverse communications have been established. From London comes word that the Royal Canadian Regiment-- whose April newsletter will carry our story on the Cemetery-- is beginning work on two splendid benches. The gift of the Regiment, they are intended to be placed to let visitors rest peacefully before the Thompson grave. They have also volunteered an Honour Guard, in period dress and schooled in the drill of the time, to participate in our proposed rededication ceremony.

From the Royal Canadian Legion, alas, only silence for our great military hero.

We have drafted a leaflet about the Cemetery for widespread distribution, but we are temporarily delaying publication in the hope of some word from Québec about our application to designate it an historic site.

### CORPORATE ELITE?

With the excellent help of Stuart Geggie, we have made a long-needed review of our financial administration and tax law relevant to our charitable status. The conclusion is that we are now in sound shape, but we should be formally incorporated under federal law. This could be an important step in protection of officers of the Society and seems especially advisable on the possible eve of opening a public facility (the museum). Steps are therefore being taken to complete incorporation before summer.

### A SONG IN YOUR HEART?

The competition for a song for the Historical Society was announced in the last *Newsletter*. (Is this a first in Canada?) Now something new has been added: **\$100 in prize money!** The sponsors did not really expect that you needed mercenary motivation, but they liked the idea of this contribution to Canadian culture. The closing date is May 1. You may send music and words, or tape with accompanying written words. You need not be a member of the Society, before you enter.

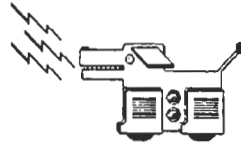


### HI-TECH

We are grateful for the response from two members with Mac 512's, Pam Morse and Eric Fletcher, who have offered to help with our publications. Those familiar with the system may be interested to know that the President now types most correspondence, newsletters, membership lists and Annual Review with MacWrite and keeps permanent files of discs and hard copy made by dot matrix printer. Copies of the discs and print-outs go to Pam for checking, then on to a laser printer for camera-ready copy. Some day we hope to shift to higher quality Microsoft Word.

Those not familiar may ask--why bother? Mostly because it gives our readers a better product, easier to read and refer to. In the future we may have access to better technology for photo reproduction. The system saves scarce time, and since all the equipment is volunteered, it costs no more to do it this way.

We can produce up-to-date membership lists monthly for use of all committees, instead of relying on old lists, laboriously typed once a year. We should also have high-quality records



for future generations of researchers. We'll be experimenting for a while until we get the best system with the best results.

### GENE-O-RAMA

The Ottawa Branch of the Ontario Geneological Society will hold a Gene-o-Rama (sic) at Carleton Univeristy March 7 and 8. The program will include presentations on researching in Irish, English and Norman records, research through photographs and newspapers and computer demonstrations.

### GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

This is not a financial appeal, for the Society's finances at the moment are sound. We should nonetheless always think to the future and the demands it will make on our resources as our activities in the service of history expand.

We would be grateful if members would consider two kinds of giving to the Society. One is the bequest. Members might wish to remember the Society in their wills by gifts in money or in kind as a permanent remembrance of the donor's love of history. The most modest of monetary gifts would be gratefully received, or someone may wish to establish an endowment for a special purpose such as an annual bursary for historical research with the donor's name, or a fund for museum acquisition. Other types of gifts, whether property or artifacts, will also be gratefully received, and they are likely to become increasingly relevant with our determination to establish a permanent Historical Museum of the Gatineau. A member wishing to mention the Society in his or her will is invited to discuss the matter privately with the President or other member of the Executive in case we can help with suggestions on appropriate forms of gift.

The second type of gift is a remembrance from others when a member dies. It has become increasingly customary to suggest to mourners that tributes take the form of charitable gifts which respect the deceased's personal interests in a lasting way. We therefore commend to your attention the possibility that the Historical Society of the



Gatineau be named as a suitable recipient on such occasions.



### FORT FRONTENAC, Kingston

This is a plan, drawn in 1685, of La Salle's fort. Long lost beneath buildings and the main road leading from the Causeway into the city, it is now being brought to light by Bruce Stewart and his colleagues.

