

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU

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

1986

MAY NEWSLETTER

**NEXT MEETINGS: SATURDAY, MAY 24,
AT 2.30 P.M. AT THE CHELSEA
PIONEER CEMETERY (rain or shine)
MONDAY, MAY 26, AT 7.30 P.M.
AT THE GRANGE, CANTLEY**

Rededication of the Cemetery

Two important meetings this month! The first is the long-awaited rededication of the cemetery, to take place on Queen Victoria's birthday. It will mark the conclusion (or near-conclusion) of our hard summer's work last year when the new paths and landscaping were completed according to our Master Plan. It is also the culmination of weeks of intensive planning by Pam McDougall's Cemetery Committee.

The key to the ceremony is the new and permanent name which we have adopted for the Cemetery. We honour all our pioneers, the heroes who opened this country and the hero who served it with such bravery and distinction overseas. For the ceremony we shall be honoured by the presence of distinguished guests, including Jean Pigott, Chairman of the National Capital Commission, who not only gave us such valuable help in our work but who has an ancestor buried here; and Lieutenant General J.E. Vance, Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff, representing the Armed Forces and particularly the Royal Canadian Regiment. General Vance will present us with two handsome benches to be placed by Private Thompson's grave as a lasting gift from the RCR. There will be an Honour Guard from the Petawawa Battle School; soldiers dressed in Boer War Uniform (courtesy of the National War Museum); a piper;

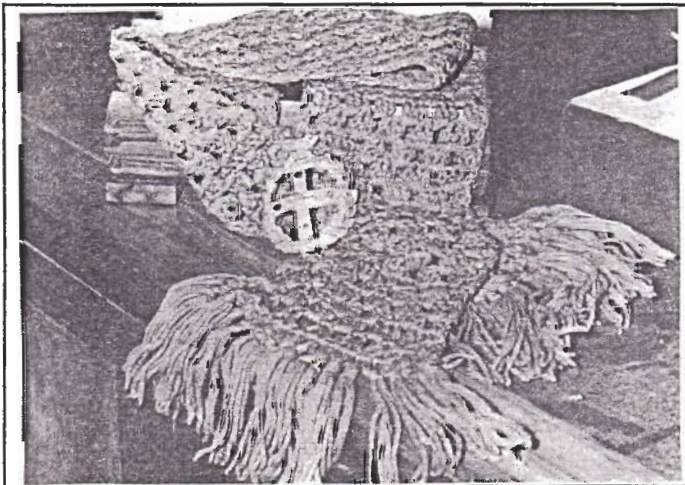
members in Victorian costume to explain the history of pioneer families whose graves are here; and, of course, the original Queen's Scarf, the only scarf in Canada knitted by the Good Queen herself. (At least we hope that all these complicated pieces will at last fall into place!)

Neither the speeches nor the ceremony will be long, and we shall be walking from place to place as it progresses. (A truly moving occasion!) We hope that you can share in this memorable moment of thanksgiving, for it is you, the members, that have made it possible for us to carry out this responsibility on behalf of all Canadians. Some points to remember:

- please come early. It will take time to park and walk to the Cemetery, and we must begin with military precision at 1430 hours when the Honour Guard will be inspected.
- please bring a folding deck chair if you would like to repose in comfort during the ceremony. No chairs will be provided.
- whatever you do, do not park on the highway, or on the Cemetery entrance road. The closest places are on Church Street, just across from the Cemetery, or on the grounds of the Anglican Church about 350 metres south on Route 105
- the Cemetery is about one kilometre north of Chelsea (flashing light and Shell service Station) on the west side of Route 105; there will, at last, be a sign with the name of the cemetery and our familiar axe. (We hope.)

We offer a special welcome to descendants of those buried in the Cemetery. If you are a member of such a family, will you please identify yourself on arrival at the table near the entrance.

The other news of the Cemetery is that our application to have it classified as an historic site under the Québec Cultural Property Act has been long under consideration, with the warm support of West Hull and the NCC. We hope that a favourable decision may be made before the rededication. With all the gratifying local and national interest in this project, we must acknowledge our occasional setbacks. The Royal Canadian Legion has not responded to our invitation for participation, on the grounds that helping to preserve the memory of the only Canadian winner of the Queen's Scarf "would create a precedent". The Minister of Veterans Affairs has not acceded to our request for a little more equitable sharing in the annual \$500 maintenance cost for this outstanding veteran's



last resting place than the present \$25 contribution. Sic transit gloria.

On this great occasion our gratitude to our heroes of the past can justifiably be mixed with pride that, when others did not care, the Historical Society of the Gatineau has done its job.

LAST MEETING OF THE SEASON

We shall continue our tradition of a special meeting to climax a successful season and to welcome the spring. It will again be held in The Grange, Cantley. (map on page 4)

This is when we shall both announce and hear the winning song in our contest for a ballad (lament? oratorio?) about the Society and the Gatineau. The NCC will introduce activities of historic interest this summer in the Gatineau park. As a special privilege, renowned folksinger Tom Kines will give a short concert. Then there will be a slide presentation recording the saving and reconstruction of the early nineteenth century log buildings at the Phillips Place, including The Grange. All this, of course, will be accompanied by wine and cheese and other light refreshments.

Please plan to arrive by at least 7.30. Guides will help you park on the main carpark at the very end of Summer Road, and show you the way to The Grange. You are welcome to wander about the grounds and to listen to the recorded Valley Songs of Alex Sinclair before the meeting itself begins sharp at 8.00 p.m.

We hope you will join us for this joyous celebration of a good season past and much to come.

LAST MEETING

Our first meeting in Wakefield in many years seems to have been a good idea. Of the hundred people present many were from the Wakefield Community Association who had received special invitations sent to every mailing address in the village. Before the main meeting, most members called at the Maclaren House for a preview of our museum premises.

Tony German, with gavel, egg timer and alarm clock, presided over the Great Train Debate. Bruce Ballantyne began with an excellent and uncontroversial summary of the railway's history on which he is the acknowledged expert. John Trent represented the forces trying to save the train to Wakefield, underlining its importance to the future economy of the region. Richard Hofer, on the other hand, argued that the consultant plan was unconvincing, and that the project was a boondoggle of major proportions. During a pause for refreshments (it was 20 degrees that

evening), members of the audience submitted written questions to the debaters. The discussion was so lively that it had to be cut off at 10.15, leaving many participants to carry spirited exchanges in the darkened parking lot long after. No vote was taken, but there was no doubt that both sides had vocal proponents.

A press representative told us that, of the five leading business establishments he had called for details of the meeting, none had heard of it. That is remarkable and also a little sad, since each had received a personal invitation, there was extensive publicity in the village, and the Community Association had joined us in sponsorship. If the business community cannot take a greater interest in its economic future, one wonders with what justification they blame government for running everything. The initiative of the Historical Society was apparently needed.

This season we are establishing something of a record in meeting places -- five meetings in five places in three communities. That reflects the interest of the Society in serving all the Gatineau.

WITH DEEP REGRET.....

We record the death of Eric Morse, a truly distinguished Canadian who brought to life an earlier era of our history by his remarkable canoe explorations to the farthest reaches of this country. He will be remembered also for other contributions, such as his writing and his long presiding over the affairs of the Association of Canadian Clubs during its golden days. We share our warm memories and sympathy with Pam.

THE MUSEUM

Ray Daly's Museum Committee is into its daunting agenda. After long negotiations with the NCC, we have signed the lease for two-year occupancy of the Maclaren House with an annual rental of one dollar; most of our problems were not with the substance of the agreement but with its respect for the Queen's English. (The end result was a tie between the



legal profession and the Queen.) We are happy about that lease, not only because it permits us to extend our service to the community, but because it could be a model for positive co-operation between government and the voluntary sector. The Chairman of the NCC has expressed both her satisfaction and her hope that some day the splendid house will be restored with the Society as permanent tenants.

Now there is work not only for the committee and the summer students (see below), but for the rest of us.

- at the Annual Meeting, two-thirds of those present expressed a willingness to be a museum host for three four-hour shifts during the year with the help of a summer student. You will meet interesting people, learn more about our history and serve the community. **We now ask you to phone Beth MacFie at 459-3169** to arrange times at your convenience.

- we also would be happy to have volunteers for the organization, labeling and display of artifacts; please phone Beth, or Ray Daly (459-2038).

- we would appreciate the loan, from June 15 to October 15 of artifacts suitable for display, to augment the Society's collection. Please phone.

At press time we have not fixed the opening date, around July 1, and we do not normally publish *Newsletters* in summer. Watch for announcements in the local press, and be sure to visit us during the summer, if not on opening day.

SUMMER STUDENTS

The federal government has approved our application for two summer students. Their first main job will be the organization of the Museum, but they are expected to be engaged in a variety of other tasks, including travelling seminars, the cemetery and historic research. Several good candidates came forward at the last minute, thus presenting us with a new problem: selection of two of them.

TRAVELLING SEMINARS

Carol Martin's Committee has been meeting to move our extensive research material into a practical administrative format for historic tours. The present thinking is that we should launch the project this autumn with three one-day tours on alternate Saturdays when fall colours make trips an extra pleasure. If this proves successful, different tours would be offered at about the same time in 1987. We are also working on historic maps to complement the trips.

As soon as plans are fixed, we shall let you know so that you can mark your calendar. This will be an important enrichment of our year's program.

THE AUCTION

These many other activities must not let us forget the Annual Auction. It may well be the most important project of all, for after 22 years it is still both a great event and the main source of our funds which makes all our other programs possible.

The Annual Auction and flea market will take place on Saturday morning, August 16. Viewing starts at 0830; the Auction itself starts at 0915 and ends by lunch.

It is therefore time (a) to mark your calendar; (b) to start reminding friends that they have a date with us on the third Saturday in August; and (c) to help us find materials for the antique auction.

All three are important, but especially the third. It is the variety and quality of offerings which have made the auction's reputation and financial success. The arrangements remain unchanged. Anyone may donate to the auction. Only members may donate to the flea market. Donors may elect to receive half the proceeds of the sale of their goods, or donate the proceeds to the Society and receive an income tax receipt for their full market value. Reserve bids may be placed on auction items. Unsold goods must be picked up at the close of sale; otherwise they are donated to a worthy charity. Goods will be received the previous day, but in special cases it may be possible to arrange for volunteers to take them at an earlier time. To get the best price, please be sure that items are cleaned and as attractive as possible; the Society has neither time nor resources for repair and cleaning.

We need antiques and collectibles of every kind. bottles, stoneware, tins, pictures, books, picture frames, tools, harness, old clothespins, wooden barrels, wooden wheels, wooden wagons, non-plastic toys, cooking moulds, cutlery, egg baskets, sad irons, lanterns, stained glass, wickerware, pre-1940 chairs, bird cages, chamber pots, pre-1945 magazines, inkwells, washbasins and jugs, old dinnerware, farm implements, dressing table items, non-synthetic yard goods, woodenware, scrubbing boards, walking sticks, woodboxes, churns, afghans, shawls, pre-1940 calendars, wooden cheese boxes, milking stools, old trays, silverware, fine china, candlesticks, lecterns, hair wreaths, chairs, iron bedsteads, sleds, buggies,---
- and much, much more!

We cannot handle large pieces of furniture or large appliances. Small appliances for the flea market must be in good working order.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or offers of help, please phone Auction Committee Chairman David Castleman at 827-1610.

MEETINGS

For a while we were averaging three committee meetings a week, which is a nice reflection of the vitality of our membership. The Executive, which has been coming together every other month, met on April 14, mostly to review committee recommendations and give approvals where necessary. Among new activities decided on was an outreach to schools to try to get more young people involved in our history; Jon Purcell is leading this effort; please phone him (459-3362) if you can help. Pat Evans has agreed to take charge of a special 25th Anniversary celebration a year from now. David Morisset has taken on the new role of membership director to advise the executive on the successes and failures of our campaigns and to suggest ways of increasing participation in the Society.

We had a great meeting with the Rideau Township Historical Society which is similar in many ways to our own organization. They were very kind in their comments about what is being done in the Gatineau.

MEMBERSHIP

Our period of grace for renewal having expired, this *Newsletter* is reaching only those who are 1986 members. If you know of people who have slipped up on this annual chore, please help them and us by a reminder. Though our success in attracting new members is gratifying, we have a sad record for prompt year-end renewal. And it is never too late to enlist the support of new people.

We welcome as new members Edmund Barrick, Jacques Dussault, Marraret Elpon, Renata Kolbach, Evelyn McCorquell, Dennis Peters, André and Diane Renaud, Carol Stewart and Z.F.G. Jaworski. We also extend a special welcome to the Honourable Michel Gratton, Minister of Revenue of Québec, a new supporter of our society. We are pleased to record an old friend, Jean Pigott, as a subscriber.

WOOPS!

In our last *Newsletter* we announced the rationalization of prices for old issues of *Up the Gatineau!*, overlooking the announcement in the current issue of that journal (then at the printers) of the old prices. We therefore withdraw our announcement with apologies, and invite you to take advantage of the bargain prices-- \$1.50, \$1.75 and \$2.00-- which will hold for the rest of 1986.

UP THE GATINEAU! -- ETCETERA

Our congratulations to Arthur Davison and his collaborators for the current issue, which appeared ahead of schedule and equal to his long-established quality. Ideas are already being floated for next year's 25th Anniversary edition.

Arthur is particularly anxious for members to send him reminiscences of early days of the Society or of the Gatineau -- soon. He would like to begin assembling them this year. Will you please send material to him at 445 Daly Avenue, Ottawa K1N 6H6.

This month we hope to publish the leaflet about the Chelsea Pioneer Cemetery, with design and artwork by Beth Macfie.

Beth Macfie has also done the artwork for three attractive posters for which we shall be seeking financial sponsorship.

OLD PHOTOS

Readers will gather that we have been finding a few old photographs for which we are most grateful to members. We have set up an archival file for them, and propose to keep using them in the *Newsletter*. Can you help us? We will gladly have them copied and return the originals to you promptly. Please phone Bob Phillips (827-3164).

