



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU
BOX 485, CHELSEA, QUE, JOX 1N0

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

**NEXT MEETING: MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 15, AT 8.00 P.M. AT
THE OLD CHELSEA COMMUNITY
CENTRE.**

The longest history in the Gatineau belongs to the rocks and "the oldest hills in the world", but how much do we know about them and how they came to be? **Anne Joyce** has an absorbing story to tell with slides about "Land Forms in the Gatineau". We have never had a perspective like this. It will help us recognize our geological past and enrich our autumn walks and drives in the countryside.

HISTORIC TOURS

They are starting! After a year and a half of discussion, research and planning, the Historic Tours Committee under **Carol Martin** is launching our first historic tour on Saturday, October 4. It will begin at Jacques Cartier Park in Hull at 9.00 a.m. and focus on Aylmer.

The tour bus guide will open your eyes to history and places you have never really noticed on the familiar road to Aylmer. Then

we are taking advantage of Heritage Aylmer's Annual Antique show for a stop there before starting a walking tour provided by the town's historians. We pause for lunch at the historic Symmes Hotel, resume the town tour, and return to the starting point by a different route by 4 p.m.

It will be a memorable day which will give a whole new perspective to one of the most historic and interesting towns in the National Capital Region, but it will take place **ONLY** if the minimum number of participants register not later than Thursday, September 25. The \$25 charge per person includes transportation, ticket to the Antique Fair and lunch at the Symmes Hotel, including service charges and gratuities. The authoritative and current history of Aylmer by **Diane Aldred** will be available at a discount to participants.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you can come. Even if you are not certain, an indication of your intention would help our planning, and you can withdraw without penalty until September 26. You can register at the September meeting, or phone **Rae Moore**.



The Historical Society lunching at the 1832 Symmes Inn.

THE AUCTION

Once again, records fell. It is hard to tell if the crowd was our biggest, but we had more articles than ever before, more specially commissioned contributions in art, crafts, restaurant meals and special gifts, and higher gross revenue. We also had a higher number of people making donations for an income tax-receipt instead of asking for a 50% return. The result was by far the best net profit in our history: \$3,900.

We all owe a great debt to **David Castleman**, to his Auction Committee and to the many volunteers who worked so hard and effectively in promoting and running the auction. It provided not only our essential revenue but a great day thoroughly enjoyed by all who played any part in it. The Auction Committee has already met to start planning for August 15, 1987. The format of the past four years seems still to be a winner, but many ideas are being used to make it run ever more smoothly in future. If you have suggestions, this is the time to make them to **David Castleman** (827-1610).

One idea we'll share now: mark your name on the chairs you bring to sit through our outdoor events. Someone at the auction walked off with two folding chairs: if you inadvertently did, will you please call **Rae Moore** (827-1995).

PROGRAM

Please remember that we are now meeting on the third Monday of each month. Thanks to **Tony German**, the planning of the whole season was almost complete by the Auction where a program was distributed. Here is a summary of it.

Oct. 20: Dr. Hubbard on Rideau Hall
Nov. 17: Dr Hillmer on King
Jan. 19: Annual General Meeting
Feb. 16: Shirley Woods on Lumbering
Mar. 16: To be announced
Apr. 20: To be announced
May 25: Twenty-fifth anniversary celebration

THE MUSEUM

This has been one long story of uninterrupted success. One of the most gratifying developments was an unsolicited grant of \$300 from the Municipality of LaPêche. This kind of support from the community is a huge boost to our morale, for which we are very grateful to **Mayor Hervé Leblanc**, the man who cut our opening ribbon with the broadaxe.

Though our early planning was based on the continued operation of the steam train which has not materialized, our attendance figures have been encouraging. We have made enough money, chiefly from the sale of buttons, to make it self-sufficient without having to draw from our treasury for operations. The Museum Committee will be meeting shortly to consider plans for development in 1987, and they are already looking to the possibility of using our funds for acquisitions to our collection. In the next *Newsletter* we hope to have a "want list" on which we shall be inviting the help of members.

The Museum is more than a creditable collection to help make old Gatineau come alive. It is a superb example of co-operation with government, especially the NCC. We think we can organize and operate a museum more economically than government can, but we could not have done it as well without the unfailing co-operation and courtesy of NCC officials, including **Chairman Jean Pigott**, the Mill's **Julie Dompierre** and her colleagues, and long-time supporter **June Creelman**, to mention only three.

The Museum, is also a showpiece for the voluntary movement itself. We owe much to the volunteer guides who manned the premises each weekend. Above all, we shall always be in debt to Committee Chairman **Ray Daly** who spent countless hours seeing this through from gleam in the eye to successful fulfilment, and to Honourary Curator **Stuart Geggie** who created something of excellence.

Members still have the chance to visit on Saturdays and Sundays between noon and 4.30, and on Thanksgiving Day when it will close its doors for the season. It's less than half an hour from Ottawa, up the Autoroute and 105, turn left on Mill Street in the centre of Wakefield, and walk up from the Mill or park by the back door of the MacLaren House.

MEMBERSHIP

Although the renewals of many valued supporters were slow, we have now surpassed our previous record, with 318 paid-up memberships. This represents over 400 individual members.

New members joining now pay only \$12 to be covered until the end of 1987. The 1987 membership cards are already printed.

We welcome as new members: Mr. and Mrs. W. Badgley, Elizabeth Carlton, Mr. and Mrs. F. Cayer, John Gordon, Nora Patricia Guthro, Wendy James, Mayor Hervé Leblanc, Mayor Doug Minnes, John H. Newport, James H. Shaver, Mary Sullivan and Elizabeth Woods.

PUBLICATIONS

With an NCC grant paying half the translation costs, the leaflets on the Chelsea Pioneer Cemetery and the Historical Museum are printed in both official languages. They are available free at the Museum, at meetings, at NCC outlets or by request to the Secretary.

The Society's buttons, of which we have already sold over 500, are available for \$1 each at the Museum, at meetings or from the Secretary. They are, of course, also your season's pass to the Museum. We hope you will support the sale which helps our revenue and serves to make the Society's name better known. All issues of *Up the Gatineau!*, at various prices according to the year, are similarly available.

May we make a special note of the Wakefield issue of *Ottawa Magazine*? Its splendid colour photos make it an excellent souvenir of one of the Gatineau's most historic villages. It is available, only from the Society, for \$1.50. Every cent of the proceeds helps the work of the Society, for the publishers kindly

donated copies as a gesture of support. It is therefore our most profitable publication. If you can't get to the Museum or a meeting, we will send it to you postpaid. Just write or call Rae Moore (827-1995).

SUMMER STUDENTS

It was a good season. Adrian Wilson and Marc Boyer spent most of their time helping to organize and run the museum, with some time out for the Cemetery and the Auction. They also managed to begin the first of the oral history tapings. We shall soon be receiving the extensive report of the oral history work of the two students sponsored by Outaouais Alliance.

We shall be applying for government funds to continue the program in 1987. If you know anyone who would like an interesting summer job with us, please don't leave it till next April. We would be glad to have names at any time in the hope of making an early selection. The student need only drop us a note giving background and interests. We will again be looking for people with a working knowledge of both official languages, and access to a car would be a help in recording oral history.

THE UNION MISSION CHURCH

The little Union Mission Church was built at Kirk's Ferry 60 years ago when the original structure was overtaken by the damming of the river. It has not been used for some years, but it has been preserved by a Board of Trustees which wishes to make an early decision to save it for public use. Its present land having been diminished by roadways, it cannot be developed for new use where it is.

For some months, therefore, the Executive has been considering whether it would be practicable to move it and re-erect it, possibly adjacent to the Chelsea Pioneer Cemetery. The costs, which we are trying to estimate, would be beyond the capacity of the Society alone, and so a great deal of work would be needed to find other financial resources. One possible plan is to use the old church as our meeting place for autumn and spring meetings (its splendid old pews hold over 100 people), as a permanent office and as

a sort of information centre about Gatineau pioneers, especially those buried in the Chelsea area cemeteries. The Executive will decide in early November whether to recommend a plan to the Annual General Meeting in January, by which time a final decision would have to be made. If you would like to express any ideas or views, or help in examining the project, please call **Carol Martin** (827-1633).

THE OLD CHELSEA PROTESTANT BURIAL GROUND

Many members have asked us to take an interest in this remarkable cemetery which is probably the oldest in the National Capital Region, with the oldest European grave (1801). It is a little known spot just across the road from the Parkway General Store in Old Chelsea.

We were reluctant to become involved until (a) we had finished our commitments on our own cemetery, and (b) its legal status is clarified. The latter is still far from settled, but the Mayor of West Hull has given an assurance that the municipality will never give permission for another burial there. Thus it changes from an operating cemetery to an historic place whose status will in due course be officially recognized.

The NCC has cut the grass to make the land accessible and has commissioned a study of its history. **Pat Evans** has also done much valuable work in connection with his history of Old Chelsea. We have started discussions with the NCC and the Mayor about its future. We have indicated that we would be happy to give our good offices and advice, but in the long run the most attractive solution would seem to be the creation of a local Board of Trustees to develop and manage it as a unique piece of our history.

ANTIQUE FAIR

Our friends of Heritage Aylmer, to whom we are so indebted in organizing our first historic tour, are holding their annual Antique Fair on Friday October 2 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. and on Saturday, October 4 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at The Barn, 95 Albert Street behind the Town Hall. They expect 26 dealers from Ontario and Québec selling furniture and all kinds of small items suitable for Christmas giving. The entrance fee is \$2.

Whether or not you can make the Historic Tour, this is an opportunity you will want to seize, and it's for a good cause.

HERITAGE CANADA FOUNDATION

The 13th Annual Conference of the Heritage Canada Foundation will be at the Chateau Laurier Thursday to Sunday, September 25-28, with the main sessions on Friday and Saturday. The theme is "The Role of Volunteers in Heritage Preservation", a subject on which strong views have been expressed by our Society. Complementing the lectures and workshops will be dinners in historic homes and local tours. The Registration fee is \$55. Registration applications and further information are available from the Foundation at 306 Metcalfe Street (237-1867) or by post to Box 1358, Station "B", Ottawa K1P 5R4.

R.A.J.P.