



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU LA SOCIÉTÉ HISTORIQUE DE LA GATINEAU

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Newsletter / Bulletin

HSOG 10/26

October-November / octobre-novembre 1991

Please note: **NO MEETING
IN OCTOBER**

Next Meeting

Monday, November 18, 8:00 p.m.

Chelsea Community Centre
Old Chelsea

"SHOW & TELL"

Members are invited to bring a piece of personal memorabilia to the meeting and share their thoughts on its historical significance with their friends. Old books, documents, photographs, etc. - all contain hidden stories. Let's hear about them.

Refreshments at 7:30

Remembrance Day Ceremonies

Again this year the Historical Society will be sponsoring a ceremony of remembrance at the Pioneer Cemetery in the Village of Chelsea on the morning of November 11. The Society owns and cares for the little cemetery, which holds the graves of Private Richard Thompson, recipient

of the Queen's Scarf for valour during the South African War, and sixteen pioneers of the area. The November 11 ceremony is intended to honour the memory of Private Thompson and the sixteen pioneers.

Military honours will again be undertaken by a contingent of the Royal Canadian Regiment, Battle School at Petawawa, as well as representatives of the Medical Element at National Defence Headquarters. (A symbolic gesture - Private Thompson was a medical orderly.) Wreaths will be laid on behalf of Barrie Moore, M.P., the Mayor of Chelsea Municipality, and the Historical Society of the Gatineau.

Coordinator of this traditional ceremony is R.A.J. Phillips. Members are invited to attend. The ceremony will begin at 10:40 a.m. on Monday, November 11. The entrance to the Pioneer Cemetery is on the west side of Highway 105 at the north end of the Village of Chelsea.

Annual Meeting Scheduled for February

The Society will return to its original format this year, holding its Annual General Meeting in February - on February 17, **Heritage Day**, to be exact. The annual report will be

mailed to all members in advance of that date.

Photo Prize to be Awarded at General Meeting

The Board of Directors of the Historical Society has agreed to present a prize for the best photograph commemorating the Gatineau River log drive and logging activity on the river - marking the fact that this autumn sees an end to this traditional activity.

The prize - as yet undetermined - will be presented at the Annual General Meeting, on Heritage Day, February 17, 1992. Contestants need only send their photographs care of the Secretary of the Society, Muriel How, at the address shown on our masthead.

Good luck!

Nominations Committee Appointed

At its last meeting, the Executive received and accepted the resignation of Fergus Maclaren as Vice President, and approved the appointment of Jay Atherton as his successor for the remainder of the 1991/92 term. The Executive also appointed a



Nominations Committee, consisting of Joan Gherson and Al Richens, with a mandate to bring forward a slate of candidates for vacant positions at the Annual General Meeting, now scheduled for February 18, 1992.

Program Committee

Colin Chisholm, Valerie Hiscocks, and Christopher or Constance Carr have agreed to serve as a Program Committee for the next year. Any member with suggestions for our program is invited to contact Colin Chisholm at 827-0512.

Auction - Final Tally

Yvonne Jurgens, the Society's Treasurer, has announced that the final accounts for the Auction held on August 17 indicate a profit of \$3,324.31. Congratulations to all involved in this year's event!

Aylmer Heritage Association Antique Fair

In 1974 the Aylmer Heritage Association was formed and in that year held its first antique fair. Seventeen years later it is still the single most important fund-raising event for the Association.

This year the Fair will be held on Friday, October 18, from 6 to 10 p.m. and on the 19th and 20th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at The Barn in Aylmer, 95 Albert Street.

Patrons of the Fair will find good

quality Canadian and European furniture, silver, china and glass antiques and collectibles.

Homemade refreshments will be available. For information, contact Esther Waring (827-3653).

UPDATE:

Fairbairn/McNally House Saved

Members will recall the interest in the past in the future of the Fairbairn (McNally) House located just north of Wakefield and threatened by the construction of the Wakefield bypass. The following article, written by our friend Ernie Mahoney, is taken from the September 18 issue of *The Post*.

A small piece of Wakefield history is on the move - literally.

The village's oldest house, known to historians as the William Fairbairn house and to locals as the "McNally Place," will be moved almost directly across from its present site at the junction of Hwy 366 and 105.

Purchased by Andy Tommy and recognized by the elaborately carved fantail over the front dormer window, the house is slated to become part of the new complex that will provide services for the Hull-Wakefield tourist train project. Tommy is also the contractor for the train project.

On Monday [Sept. 16], the front porch was being removed to facilitate the move and also, according to Mike Tommy, to prevent any theft of the beautifully carved wood that adorns the porch.

The historic house and slightly

over five acres of land were expropriated by the Ministry of Transport to make way for the link road that will connect the Wakefield by-pass to the new Brown-Fournier Bridge over the Gatineau River, just north of the village. It replaces the old covered bridge that was destroyed by fire in 1984.

The Fairbairn house, believed to be the first house built of sawn lumber in the village, has great historical significance.

It was the home of the Scottish settler, William Fairbairn, who built the first grist mill in Wakefield in 1838. The mill was purchased in 1844 by David Maclaren and his sons, David and James. The family later developed the site into several mills and built a stately brick home adjacent to the mills in the 1860's.

Stuart Geggie, curator of the Maclaren Mill and Museum operated by the Historical Society of the Gatineau, said Fairbairn's original house was a traditional log cabin built in the early 1840's on the banks of the Gatineau River, just south of the bridge.

"It is not unreasonable to think that Fairbairn built his house in the 1860's," Geggie said.

Geggie explained that the house and farm were passed to Findlay Stevenson, another early pioneer, sometime after the turn of the century. The McNally family purchased the property in 1944 and has continued to farm the land.

"I am happy that something is being done at last. It was very hard to get any information as to what was going to happen to the place. History buffs should be delighted that the

house has been saved from the wrecker's ball," Geggie said.

MICHAEL NEWTON 1948-1991

[Members who attended the Heritage Debate held by the Society in February 1990 will recall that one of the debaters was Michael Newton, historian at the National Capital Commission - and will be saddened to hear of his recent death. The following is an abridged version of a tribute that appeared in the July issue of the newsletter of the Ottawa Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society.]

Michael Newton, 43, National Capital Commission historian, and devoted local expert on local history and genealogy, died in Ottawa in late June after a lengthy illness. ...

Michael's Lower Town Ottawa, in two volumes, incorporated extensive new research and is perhaps his best known work. These publications were the most original historical accounts on the city in decades, and the most genealogically useful.

In a 1987 report on The Charron House in Hull's Jacques Cartier Park, he demolished the accepted myth it had been built for Philemon Wright's daughter, Christina. Its first owner was François Charron, a teamster and fur trader.

The report led Michael into important new research on the 19th century Ottawa Valley fur trade, a story that had been all but completely overshadowed by that of the timber trade.

He did not live to complete his

major work. However, a brief account was published by the Historical Society of Ottawa in its Bytown Pamphlet Series (No. 35) as Some Notes on Bytown and the Fur Trade.

Another genealogically significant publication for which he was largely responsible is Birth, Marriage and Death Notices from "The Bytown Packet" and "The Ottawa Citizen" 1846-1879. It was compiled by students under his direction at the NCC, and printed in 1990 for limited distribution by the City of Ottawa Archives. Its introduction was written by Past Chairman Alan Rayburn....

Genealogists have lost a friend. We will miss Michael.

- Bruce Elliott

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HERITAGE UPDATE

Federal Heritage Buildings Policy

Conserve crown-owned buildings while continuing to use them: this has been federal policy since 1982.

Helping federal departments to carry out this policy is the job of FHBRO, the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office, within Environment Canada Parks Service. And the job is a big one. The FHBRO must determine which federal buildings are heritage buildings, and then advise managers so that any repairs, alterations or additions to those buildings will respect their heritage value....

To date, over 2200 federal buildings have been evaluated. Of

these, 638 buildings have been designated as Federal heritage Buildings, 116 as "Classified" and 522 as "Recognized". The register contains a surprisingly varied range of building types: airport hangars, lighthouses, experimental farm buildings, penitentiary cell blocks, dry dock facilities, not to mention office buildings.

What is important about these designated buildings is that almost all are currently being used.... In a number of cases - like the lighthouse at Ile Verte, the Main Cell Block at Kingston Penitentiary, or the Custom House in Quebec City - designated buildings serve, uninterrupted, the same functions they were built for well over a century ago.

-Margaret Archibald

[*Impact* (Heritage Canada), Sept. 1991]

Hull's Maisons Allumettes

Across the river from Ottawa, behind the facade of high-rise office buildings and just beyond the late-night beat of clubs and dance bars is the community of l'Île de Hull. The heart of what was perhaps Quebec's original frontier town, it is bordered to the south by the Ottawa River and ringed by Brewer's Creek....

A few blocks from the Promenade du Portage and in the grid of side streets stand rows of narrow two-story houses that are almost monotonous in their similarity to one another. These steep-roofed, unadorned buildings are the maisons allumettes, the matchstick houses of early Hull's working class.

During the second half of the 19th Century, Hull's booming lumber yards

and pulp mills attracted an influx of workers, and their families, from across Canada and abroad. At the time, most of the real estate in and around l'Île de Hull was owned by a handful of its wealthier families. To accommodate new arrivals, the land was divided into small lots and rented to workers on five-year leases.

The style built by the workers was influenced as much by the lots' meagre dimensions (33 ft. by 90 ft.) and the available materials (usually scrap wood bought or "collected" from nearby lumber yards) as by the builders' modest wages and the insecurity of the rental arrangement. (It was not uncommon for workers to be evicted at the end of their leases if a slowdown reduced the demand for labour.)...

Raymond Ouimet, a Hull alderman, is president of the comité de promotion de l'identité hulloise, and an active proponent of the cultural and architectural history of Hull. He is committed to the preservation of the maisons allumettes.

"We should use history to prevent mistakes in future. These houses show the way the land was used to take profits from the poor workers. There's a lesson to learn from that... Allow the maisons allumettes to vanish and we allow part of the history of the common person, 'Monsieur at madame Tout le Monde,' to vanish."

Although they are not glorious examples of architectural art and have not housed any prominent individuals, the maisons allumettes, points out Mr. Ouimet, remind us of what should not be forgotten.

- Eric J. Calvert

[Heritage Ottawa Newsletter, Summer 1991]

MATERIALS CONSERVATION WORKSHOP

Outaouais Creators is hosting a MATERIALS CONSERVATION WORKSHOP on October 30, 2:00 p.m. at Heritage College Continuing Education, 729 St. Joseph Blvd., Hull.

Helen McKay from the Canadian Conservation Institute is a specialist in the conservation of painting on canvas. She spent six months on a work-study program in Rome. Ms. McKay will be speaking on her specialty as well as paper types, conservation of materials, and preservation of work.

There is no charge for the workshop, and any interested members of the Historical Society are welcome to attend.

- Anna L. Woods

Ontario Association of Archivists - Certificate Program - Workshop Series

The Ontario Association of Archivists (OAA) is inaugurating a five-year cycle of post-appointment training workshops designed to assist those with little or no formal training in archival theory and practice. It is important to emphasize the "post-appointment training" applies not only to individuals working in established archives, but to those who are confronted with archival material in

their day-to-day work.

Ottawa has been chosen as one of the sites in Ontario for the commencement of a five-year cycle of fourteen Core Workshops covering all aspects of archives management.

Workshop participants must obtain credit for all fourteen workshops in the core program in order to obtain the final certificate for the program. Participants will receive written notice of their successful completion of each individual workshop as they are held.

In processing applications, priority will be given to persons who intend to complete the entire cycle of fourteen workshops.

Dates for Core Workshops in Ottawa in 1991/92 are:

Oct. 18-19: ARCH1000, "Introduction to Archives"

Jan. 24-25: ARCH1001, "Arrangement and Description"

Mar. 13-14: ARCH1002, "Introduction to Records Management"

Each workshop will include a component by which the participant will be evaluated to test how well they have assimilated the material presented. This component may take the form of a short test given at the end of the second day or of a written assignment to be completed and mailed in some time after the end of the workshop.

For further information contact:
David Bullock, Workshop Chairperson,
c/o City of Ottawa Archives, 174
Stanley Avenue, Ottawa K1M 1P1
(564-1352).

Historical Society of Ottawa - Oct. 23 : "Beginnings of Upper Canada"

The next monthly meeting of the Historical Society of Ottawa will be held on Friday afternoon, October 23, at 2:00 p.m. in Glebe St. James United Church, 650 Lyon Street. Speaker will be Dr. Glenn Lockwood, who will give a slide presentation on "The Beginnings of Upper Canada". This excellent talk was the feature presentation at the Ontario Historical Society annual meeting this May.

Ontario Genealogical Society (Ottawa) - Upcoming Meetings

Tues., Oct. 22: "How to Search the Records: Adoption & Genealogy", Joan Marshall, President, SearchLine.

Tues., Dec. 10: "History of Nepean", Dr. Bruce Elliott.

Meetings take place at 8:00 p.m. in the Library, National Archives of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa. They are open to the public.

Publications Price List

Here is a list of currently available publications. Prices shown are those for Society members (including GST). Postage will be added for mail orders. Publications may be ordered from the Society by mail or telephone (Box 485, Chelsea, Qué., J0X 1N0, 819/827-4432).

Up the Gatineau! (1991) \$4.00
- previous issues \$2.00
Index to *Up the Gatineau!*, to 1989 \$2.50
Green binder for *Up the Gatineau!* \$8.00

Unto the Hills, by Norma and Stewart Geggie - a history of the United Church in Alcove, Wakefield, Cascades, and Rupert \$5.50

Hurling Down the Pine, John W. Hughson and Courtney Bond's story of early logging days in the Gatineau \$9.95

The Extra Mile, the journal of Wakefield's Dr. Harold Geggie, edited by his son, Dr. Stuart Geggie \$9.95

Historical Map of West Hull, black and white, with names of early landholders \$9.95

Wakefield and Its People: Tours of the Village, by Norma Geggie \$8.95

Touring the Two Chelseas, by R.A.J. Phillips \$5.00

the Ottawa Valley lumber men, and if any family feels slighted by not being mentioned in this book the omission is not intentional. Some of these families have descendants living in the Ottawa area to-day [1964], but it is sad to relate that in another twenty-five years the only living survivors through the straight line of descent will be Booth, Bronson, Gilles, Hughson, O'Brien, Maclaren and Wright, out of all the following names: Barnet, Booth, Bronson, Bryson, Charlton, Church, Cox, Davidson, Davis, Eddy, Edwards, Egan, Fraser, Gillies, Gilmour, Haycock, Hughson, Logue, Lumsden, Maclaren, McLachlin, Morse, O'Brien, Pattee, Papineau, Perley, Poupore, Read, Thackeray, Trenholme, Shephard, Wright. And so ends the chapter of Canadian history which can never be repeated. It was a very good time for Canada looking at it in retrospect, and a time when fears of external troubles did not press at all heavily. True, there was not today's ease of living with all of the modern gadgets and inventions, but it really depends on one's state of mind to recognize whether the uncomplicated way of life was to be preferred to to-day's haste and hurry.

EXCERPT:

It is with considerable pride that Canada can look back to 1810 ... to envisage the pioneer spirit of these family enterprises on which was based the first solid economic strength of the country. Without these families, some of whose names are listed here, there would not be the burgeoning prosperity of to-day. So let us salute

[from the Introduction to *Hurling Down the Pine*, by John W. Hughson and Courtney Bond, first published by the Historical Society in 1964 - Third Edition, 1987, is still available for sale.]

New Members

Welcome to the following new members of the Historical Society:

Charles & Noreen Martin, Ottawa

Jeffrey Murray, Chelsea

Malak & Barbara Karsh, Ottawa

Quote of the Month

"Histories make men wise...."

- Francis Bacon

The Historical Society of the Gatineau *Newsletter* is published monthly (more or less). It belongs to the membership and should be seen and used as a vehicle of communication between the members of the Historical Society. Comments and contributions are welcomed by the editor, Jay Atherton, either by telephone (827-1703) or by mail (R.R.3, Wakefield, QC J0X 3G0).

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