

# The Historical Society of Ottawa

## News

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April 2005

### President's Report

*By Alan McLay*

I am pleased to welcome Paul Re-side as the new editor of the HSO News, our quarterly newsletter. He replaces Ron Elmer, who resigned in January. I have written to Ron to express our thanks for the great contribution he has made to the Society. We are very grateful to Paul for taking over this important task.

In January the Society received an Ontario Heritage Grant of \$900 from the Ministry of Culture. We have also received a grant of \$3,000 from the City of Ottawa support of our awards and outreach programs.

The Board agreed to renew the loan of the Pinhey Bible to the Pinhey's Point Foundation for the summer of 2005. The Bible received a lot of favourable interest and attention while it was on display at Pinhey's Point last summer.

At the January meeting the Board appointed a sub-committee to review the options concerning the ownership of the collection of artifacts belonging to the Society.

In February, the committee submitted its report recommending that the Society proceed to dispose of all the artifacts in the collection and cease to collect artifacts relating to the history of the City of Ottawa. The Board accepted and endorsed the report. We agreed to send a copy of the report with a letter of explanation to all members by mail. A motion will be placed before the membership for their approval at the Annual General Meeting on May 27. (see the notice of meeting in this issue)

The Collections Committee has been working hard to review the more than 2000 artifacts that have been

identified by the staff of the Bytown Museum for deaccessioning. The collection includes over 3,000 medals and badges. Don Carrington has appealed to the members of the Society for assistance in entering the information onto a computer data program. If you can give some time to this project, please call Don at 733-8740.

In response to an appeal for volunteers at the monthly meeting in January, Carmel Rombough agreed to review the financial report for 2004 to be prepared by Pat Hartney, our Treasurer. Also Pat Richardson offered to look through the archival records that belonged to Lauretta Black. We are grateful to Carmel and Pat for offering their services. I would also like to thank those members who have assisted Ruth Toller in serving refreshments at the monthly meetings this winter.

### Special events

There are several events taking place this spring that should be of interest to the members of the Society.

On April 21 Jean Palmer has invited members to attend a special exhibi-

tion of war artists in the Prints and Drawings section of the National Gallery. We are to meet at 1 p.m. and proceed to the Curatorial wing. As there is a limit of 30 persons, please call Alan McLay (730-2264) or George Toller (731-0112) if you would like to attend. Last year Jean arranged a very successful exhibition for us at the Gallery.

*Continued on Page 2*

### Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Historical Society of Ottawa will be held on May 27 2005 at 2 p.m. in the Routhier Community Centre (172 Gigués St. at Cumberland Ave.). Election of the members of the Board of Directors for the 2005/2006 season will take place.

Nominations for Board positions are solicited and may be addressed to any Board member.

### In This Issue:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| President's Report.....                  | 1 |
| Coming Events.....                       | 2 |
| Bytown Museum Report.....                | 3 |
| The Opeongo Line.....                    | 3 |
| History In A Shoebox.....                | 3 |
| Historical Walks in the Ottawa Area..... | 3 |
| National Gallery Exhibition.....         | 3 |
| Historica Fair 2005.....                 | 3 |
| Bytown Museum Report.....                | 4 |
| Orapex 2005.....                         | 4 |
| Huge Land Gift On the Rideau.....        | 6 |
| Treasurer's Report.....                  | 7 |

# The Historical Society of Ottawa

Patron: Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, C.C., C.M.M., C.D.  
Governor General of Canada

The Historical Society of Ottawa was founded in 1898 (as the Women's Canadian Historical society of Ottawa). Its objective is to increase public knowledge of the history of Ottawa by its publications, meetings, tours, outreach and participation in local heritage events and also by its co-operation with the Bytown Museum, a store of artifacts reflecting Ottawa's history from Bytown days and into the present century. Its headquarters is in the Bytown Museum, Colonel By's Commissariat Building, constructed of stone in 1827 and located at 1 Canal Lane by the Rideau Canal between the Château Laurier and Parliament Hill.

## Board Of Directors

|                                       |                             |          |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| President: Alan McLay                 |                             | 730-2264 |
| Vice President: George Toller         |                             | 731-0112 |
| Secretary/Treasurer: Patricia Hartney | hartneyp@ca.inter.net       | 523-6248 |
| Membership: Don Baxter                | marydon@cyberus.ca          | 745-3430 |
| Don Carrington                        | don.carrington@sympatico.ca | 733-8740 |
| Joe Konst                             |                             | 749-4101 |
| Clifford Scott                        | d.scott3932@rogers.com      | 731-3932 |
| Herb Sills                            |                             | 225-4185 |

## Committees

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Awards                | Clifford Scott, Mary Anne Dancey, George Toller  |
| Collections           | Don Carrington, Dorene Hirsch, Barbara Whitfield |
| Commemoration Plaques | Clifford Scott, George Toller                    |
| Monthly Meetings      | George Toller                                    |
| Nominations           | Joe Konst  |
| Publications          | Don Carrington                                   |
| Tours Coordinator     | Herb Sills                                       |

Newsletter Editor: Paul Reside      preside@sympatico.ca      825-3104

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Secretary,  
The Historical Society of Ottawa  
P.O. Box 523, Station "B"  
Ottawa, ON  
K1P 5P6

Society Email: [hsottawa@storm.ca](mailto:hsottawa@storm.ca)

**A note regarding Membership renewals** - For regular members of the Ottawa Historical Society, your renewal date is shown on your address label on this newsletter. Please check it and see that you are up-to-date. If not, a renewal form is available on Page 7.

## Coming Events

Thursday, April 21-  
National Gallery Private  
Exhibition - 1 p.m.

Saturday, April 23 -  
Historica Fair -  
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Friday April 29 -  
Annual General Meeting  
Routhier Community  
Centre  
2 p.m.

Friday, May 27 -  
Annual General Meeting  
Routhier Community  
Centre  
2 p.m.

Thursday, June 16 -  
Spring Bus Tour  
Details on page 6

*Continued from Page 1*

On Saturday, April 23, the third annual Historica Fair for the Ottawa Region will be held at the Cartier Square Armoury. Planning and organization of the Fairs have been initiated and chaired by our own Cliff Scott. The Historical Society of Ottawa has provided financial assistance for the Fairs from the beginning.

For further information about this year's fair, see the article on page 4 in

this issue.

As previously mentioned, all members of the Society are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting to be held at the Routhier Community Centre on May 27<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

## The Opeongo Line

Acknowledged as the social historian of the Ottawa Valley, Joan Finnigan has just published her thirtieth new book, "Life Along the Opeongo Line."

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, she spoke to us about the development of this settlement of immigrants from Europe. The "Line" extended from the Ottawa River to Algonquin Park, and Joan discussed the tremendous challenges facing those hardy pioneers. They were the founders of such present day towns as Eganville, Killaloe and Barry's Bay. It was a colourful picture of survival in the nineteenth century, as settlers opened up the Canadian wilderness.

## History In A Shoe Box

Our guest speaker at the February monthly meeting was Tony Atherton, (a columnist for The Ottawa Citizen) who is writing a series of articles celebrating the 150th anniversary of the City of Ottawa. He described the concept of the series as what one might find in a shoe box of memorabilia if the city was a proud, old dowager.

The history of Ottawa is divided into nine periods from 1855 to the present. The early period from 1855 to 1879 appeared in the Saturday edition of The Citizen on January 8<sup>th</sup>. The full-page article featured twelve artifacts representing important persons or events of the period. Several items from the Bytown Museum were included, such as the death hand of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, a mourning rosette from his funeral, a timber stamp from

the J.R. Booth lumber yard, and the beautiful inlaid table showing the E.B. Eddy plant made by James Hannam in 1874. The second article on the period from 1880 to 1904 was published in February and the third from 1905 to 1929 was to appear in March.

Tony distributed a list of events for the next three decades from 1930 to 1959, including Elvis Presley's visit to Ottawa in 1957, and he asked the members for their assistance in finding souvenirs of these occasions, such as letters, programs, badges, buttons and other memorabilia. A lively discussion ensued.

## Historical Walks in the Ottawa Area

Our guest speaker on March 18<sup>th</sup>, was the winner of Ottawa Tourism's 2003 Tourism Media Award. Katherine Fletcher has just published three updated editions of previous books, "Walking Tours of Ottawa", "Historical Walks of Gatineau Park", and "Quebec - off the Beaten Path". Her illustrated books and an accompanying slide show provided a scenic background to her delightful historic tales of the whole Ottawa area, from the lumbering era to the modern capital city. Well documented and researched, her books provide newcomers to Ottawa with a whole set of cultural and historical gems.

## National Gallery Exhibition

Members of the Society (and friends if space permits) are invited to attend a private exhibition arranged by Jean Palmer at the National Gallery on Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. The theme is "THROUGH ARTIST'S EYES: The Legacy of Art from Canada's Two World Wars.

During both World Wars, officially

appointed war artists recorded the actions of Canada's fighting forces in works now held in the National Gallery's Prints and Drawings Collection. A selection of these drawings will be shown by Jean in the Study Room of the Curatorial Wing. This topic is especially appropriate at this time as the new War Museum will soon be opened in May. Those wishing to attend must give their names to Alan McLay (730-2264) or George Toller (731-0112) by April 14<sup>th</sup>, so that security passes may be issued. There is a limit of 30 persons. We must be in the lobby of the Curatorial Wing by 1 p.m. sharp.

Those who wish to have lunch in the Cafeteria before the exhibition will be conducted directly to the Study Room and given their passes at that time. Those coming directly to the Curatorial Wing will be met in the lobby and given passes. The Curatorial Wing is directly north of the National Gallery building and is joined to it by an overpass. The entrance is under the overpass.

Please note that the National Gallery now charges admission. There is no charge if you are only using the Cafeteria, but you must ask for a badge admitting you to the Cafeteria. There is no charge for the lecture in the Study Room.

## Historica Fair 2005

The third annual Historica Fair in the Ottawa Region will be held this year on Saturday April 23, 2005. This year's theme is the 150th Anniversary of the City of Ottawa.

The opening ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. in the Lisgar Collegiate auditorium. The historical projects by students from Grades 4 to 9 will be on display in the Cartier Square Armoury, 2 Queen Elizabeth Drive (next to the City Hall). The judging begins at 11 a.m. and the Awards Ceremony will be held at 2 p.m.

*Continued on Page 4*

*Continued from page 3*

Tours of the Governor General's Footguards and the Cameron Highlanders Museums will be arranged.

Admission to the Historica Fair is free and free parking is available at City Hall.

Members of the Historical Society are encouraged to attend this exciting event.

## Bytown Museum Report

*By Christina Tessier*

Happy Birthday Ottawa! As many of you know, 2005 is Ottawa's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Bytown Museum is leading a number of events and celebrations this year to commemorate the anniversary.

Launched in late January, the Ottawa Stories Web Site is not only designed to teach people about Ottawa's history, it also serves to collect the stories and memories of Ottawa's residents. Whether it is a favourite place, person or moment, we want to know why people love the city we live in. And from Cumberland to Carp, the communities that make up Ottawa are also invited to tell us what makes their community special.

The bilingual web site provides an overview of Ottawa's 150 years of history, photos of the week, historical fast facts and event listings related to the anniversary. Visit [www.ottawastories.com](http://www.ottawastories.com) for details. If you don't have access to the Internet, fax your story to 234-4846 or mail it to the museum. The Ottawa Stories Web Site will collect personal, community and celebrity stories throughout 2005.

Coming up in May, we will be launching our 2005 special exhibit. "A Salute to Service and Sacrifice: 150 Years of Policing in Ottawa" highlights

the important role that Ottawa's Police Service has played in the development of our city. The exhibit will open on May 18<sup>th</sup>, International Museums Day, and run until November 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be many weekend programs running in conjunction with the exhibit involving the police's canine unit, dive team, bicycle squad and tactical unit.

Our biggest event of the year is the Ottawa Stories Costume Ball. The ball is scheduled to take place on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at the historic Cartier Square Drill Hall, next to Ottawa City Hall. Three hundred tickets will be sold to help raise much-needed funds for the Bytown and Nepean Museums. Guests will be invited to dress up as their favourite Ottawa character, whether it is Sir John A. MacDonald or Charlotte Whitton, and dance the night away to live music from the last 150 years in Ottawa. Prizes will be awarded for best costume in several categories. Tickets go on sale in late April for this unforgettable evening.

But you don't have to wait long to join us for a special event! On April 13<sup>th</sup>, we will be celebrating D'Arcy McGee's birthday at D'Arcy McGee Irish Pub on Sparks Street (corner of Elfin). Join us between 6:00 and 9:00 p.m. for this annual fund raiser and raise a toast with Sir John A. MacDonald and D'Arcy himself.

We look forward to seeing you in 2005!

## ORAPEX 2005 is Fast Approaching

Everything is almost ready for ORAPEX 2005, Ottawa's National Stamp Exhibition. This year's show, the 44th will be held in the curling rink of the RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Drive, which is located on the south east corner of Bronson Avenue and Riverside Drive in the south end of Ottawa. The show will be open on Saturday, April 30 from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00

p.m. and on Sunday, May 1 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Both admission and parking are free.

This year, Canada Post will be at the show and there will be a youth booth which will offer 100 free stamps and gifts to young collectors. Ottawa Stamp Auctions will be holding an auction at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday

The theme for ORAPEX 2005 is the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the city of Ottawa. Before 1855, Ottawa was known as Bytown. The Court of Honour will have an international award winning exhibit of Bytown and early Ottawa postal history and postmarks. It will also have an impressive display of Ottawa post cards, depicting views from the early 1900's. In view of the theme of this year's show, the organizing committee is especially seeking exhibits of a postal history nature.

Additional information can be obtained from Major Dick Malott, CD, Ret'd, 16 Harwick Cres., Nepean, ON, K2H 6R1. Dick's email address is [rmlott@magma.ca](mailto:rmlott@magma.ca) and his phone number is (613) 829-0280.

### OBITUARY

#### *H. Douglas MacDermid*

The Historical Society has lost a good friend and long-term supporter. Douglas MacDermid died on February 23, at age 85, after a long siege of cancer. He came from a long line of United Empire Loyalists and grew up in Williamstown, Glengarry County. He served as a navigator in the R.C.A.F. in World War II.

Doug had a strong interest in genealogy and wrote a number of books and articles on his Scottish background. We are indebted to him for his talks to the Society and his pamphlets, "The County of Glengarry" and "The fur Trade and the Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry", published by the Historical Society of Ottawa.

Our deepest sympathies go out to his wife Sylvia, who is also a member of the Society



## British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa

# NEW BOOK COMMEMORATES OTTAWA SHARPSHOOTERS



Two Sharpshooters were killed on 2 May 1885 at the Battle of Cut Knife Hill. They are commemorated by a modest monument in Ottawa's Confederation Park.

(February 2005) What do Canada's most famous racehorse, impersonator Rich Little, and the Senator who fell out of a train have in common? Believe it or not, they are all connected to the *Ottawa Sharpshooters*, a Company of 53 men who served during the 1885 North West Rebellion. All is revealed in a new book—*The Ottawa Sharpshooters*, edited by **John D. Reid**—being published this May.

In March 1885, following Louis Riel's proclamation of a provisional government, thousands of volunteer militia soldiers from across the country set off for North West Canada to suppress the Rebellion. The Nation's Capital raised its own volunteer company—the *Ottawa Company of Sharpshooters*. This new book tells the story of that Company and of the 53 men who served in it.

Using original research, the book records the diverse and sometimes distinctly unusual histories of the men who served. Transcripts of letters by Sharpshooter Herbert M. Jarvis and the field diary of Captain Alfred H. Todd—never before published—complement the narrative.

This tribute was researched, compiled and published by members of the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO) from local sources, supplemented with information from Sharpshooter descendants and relatives. It honours the Company and the men on the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rebellion. At the same time, it makes an important contribution to local history in the National Capital Region on the occasion of BIFHSGO's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**Publication date is May 2005. Contact BIFHSGO to reserve copies – e-mail to [sharpshooters@bifhsgo.ca](mailto:sharpshooters@bifhsgo.ca), leave a message on our voice-mail at 613-234-2520, or write BIFHSGO at P.O. Box 38026, Ottawa ON K2C 3Y7, Canada. (Cost TBD)**

*By the way, the racehorse Northern Dancer was owned by tycoon E.P. Taylor, son of Sharpshooter Sergeant Plunkett Bouchier Taylor. Impressionist Rich Little is the great nephew of Sharpshooter Sergeant Henry LeBreton Ross, also related to Captain John LeBreton who gave his name to LeBreton Flats and poet Archibald Lampmann. Sharpshooter Private James Taylor, an Ottawa Citizen reporter, became an MP and Senator, and died by falling out of a locked railway sleeper car while travelling through Saskatchewan.*

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa exists to encourage and facilitate research and its publication by people with ancestry in the British Isles. The Society's focus is on the family histories of people with origins in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands, and/or Isle of Man, whose ancestors migrated to North America and settled in Canada. BIFHSGO is a federally registered charitable society.

## TOURS IN 2005

*By Herb Sills*

The Historical Society of Ottawa has always honoured Lt-Col. John By who came to Canada in 1826 to build the Rideau Canal as a means of moving troops in defence of the Canadian colonies. In accomplishing that goal he also laid out the first streets of Bytown which became Ottawa in 1855.

Our first tour in 2005 will start in Ottawa and will take us to several of the lock sites on the Rideau Canal which were carved out of the rugged wilderness using a survey which was often inaccurate because it was made when there was snow on the ground. The workers who were hired were mostly Irish immigrants who had recently arrived in Canada. They were eager to work but had little experience in canal building.

The work was mostly with pick and shovel and often required blasting of granite rock or the raising of water levels to drown mosquito ridden swamps.

The tour will take place on June 16, 2005. The bus will make its first pick-up at 8.45 a.m. at St. Richard's Church parking lot corner of Merivale and Rossland Avenues. Second pick-up at 9 a.m. at Lansdowne Park, Bank Street entrance. Cost is \$50.00 which pays for transportation and noon meal.

The second tour of 2005 will take us on an exploration of "Life Along The Qpeongo Line" with the help of Joan Finnigan. It is being planned for a day in October. More details in a newsletter later this year.

## Huge Land Gift on the Rideau

*By Charles Billington*

Two local conservation partners have just received an absolutely vision-

ary gift of land from a community-minded donor. Dr Ron Curtis and his wife Laurie have donated a 37-acre parcel of undisturbed Rideau River shoreline just south of the Kars bridge in the City of Ottawa to the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation (RVCF) with the help of Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC). Dr Curtis donated this superb piece of sensitive, natural land to the Conservation Foundation to keep it in its natural state for future generations to enjoy. The property includes over one km of natural shoreline and marsh, a four-acre island, and several forest and meadow areas. This magnificent piece of conservation land will be set aside for environmental protection and wildlife habitat preservation.

This generous gift of land is very important because much of the natural shoreline along the Rideau within city limits has been altered, damaged or changed with development. Pristine, natural shoreline especially of this size is becoming increasingly rare in Ottawa. An outstanding natural buffer such as the Curtis property will provide some excellent long term protection against water quality loss in the river. The thousands of trees on the property will continue absorbing carbon dioxide from the air and produce life-giving oxygen for years to come. The land provides water purification by filtering contaminants before they hit the river.

The Curtis property gift will have a positive effect on biodiversity along the river by maintaining significant habitat for a rich variety of animals. Songbirds, migratory birds and raptors all nest, breed and live there. Others including rabbit, beaver, mink, fisher, fox, snakes, turtles and frogs also live there. The property further provides a natural buffer from current development on River Road. It truly is a natural gem within city limits and will only become more important to Rideau Valley residents as the years go by.

Mr Curtis and his family purchased the property in 1966. They have planted an additional 7,600 trees

through partnership with Wetland Habitat Fund, City of Ottawa and Rideau Valley Conservation Authority over the years. The Conservation Foundation intends to continue the work Mr. Curtis began by ensuring that these 37 acres of natural habitat remain unaltered and protected for future generations. A Management Plan developed in cooperation with Ducks Unlimited Canada will ensure the long term protection of this ecological gift. A ceremony commemorating the gift will be held on site this spring.

The Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation is a registered environmental charity working to help protect and conserve the lands and waters of the valley of the Rideau River in Eastern Ontario. Ducks Unlimited Canada is a national, private, not-for-profit organization that has been committed to wetland and natural land conservation for more than 65 years.

For more information:  
Rudy Dyck, Forestry Program Manager, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority 692-3571 ext. 1135 or 800 267-3504 ext. 1135  
rudy.dyck@rideauvalley.on.ca

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### OBITUARY *Una Beaudry*

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We regret to announce the death of Mrs. Una Beaudry (nee Kelly) On February 11, 1005. Born and raised in Ireland, Una came to Canada with her husband in 1957. For over ten years she taught in Metis reservations in Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba before moving to Ottawa where she and her husband owned a grocery store. After retirement, she completed here B.A. Degree in Anthropology at Carleton University. She was employed as a substitute teacher and also served as a volunteer at the Museum of Civilization and the human Rights Commission. A member of the Historical Society of Ottawa, Una especially enjoyed the spring and fall bus tours. Our condolences to her family.

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**Treasurer's Report - First quarter 2005**

**Revenues**

|                           |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Memberships and Donations | \$2,281.65        |
| Prov. of Ont. Grant       | \$ 900.00         |
| Miscellaneous             | \$ 26.15          |
| <b>Total revenues</b>     | <b>\$3,207.80</b> |

**Expenses**

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Newsletters           | \$748.27          |
| Administration        | \$201.31          |
| Special Mail-out      | \$179.99          |
| Phone                 | \$139.02          |
| Membership Dues       | \$112.10          |
| Room Rental           | \$ 61.80          |
| <b>Total expenses</b> | <b>\$1,442.49</b> |

**Current bank balance** **\$14,183.10**



The Historical Society of Ottawa gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the City of Ottawa and the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Ontario.



**Membership Renewal Form**  
**The Historical Society of Ottawa**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal/New \_\_\_\_\_ No. Members \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name (for mailing) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (res) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (work) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Interest (Activities?) \_\_\_\_\_ (Volunteer?) \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership fees**

Single \$35/year  
 Student \$10/year  
 Family \$50/year  
 Single Life \$350

**Payment**

Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Receipts will be issued for both membership and donation**

Please complete this form and mail it with a cheque, made payable to **The Historical Society of Ottawa**, to:  
**Membership, The Historical Society of Ottawa**  
**P.O. Box 523, Station B.**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**  
**K1P 5P6**