



# The Historical Society of Ottawa News

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June 2009

## President's Report

By Alan McLay

The Annual General Meeting of the Historical Society of Ottawa was held on Friday, May 29, at St. Richard's Anglican Church at 1 p.m. Thirty-three members and visitors were present.

The business meeting began with a minute of silence in memory of Kenneth Cameron, Gordon Cullingham, Edward Devlin, Walter Jachan, Margaret Kells, John Moody, Elizabeth Shelton, Elva Skuce, Captain D.L. Small, and Jean Southworth.

I commented briefly on some of the highlights of our activities in 2008 covered in my President's Report and I thanked all the members of the Board of Directors for their faithful service and active cooperation. A motion to approve the Annual Report for 2008 with the exception of the Treasurer's Report was carried.

Anne Carruthers presented her Treasurer's Report for 2008. She thanked Don Baxter for reviewing the financial statements. An extensive discussion of the decrease in membership fees in 2008 followed. Several suggestions were made of ways to increase the membership of the Society. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was carried.

Don Baxter presented the report of the Nominating Committee listing the nominations for positions on the Board of Directors in 2009-2010: Donald Baxter, Donald Carrington, Anne Carruthers, Alan McLay, George Neville, Donald Ross, Herbert Sills, and Barbara Whitfield. A motion to close nominations was carried.

I thanked Dave Mullington for his valuable contribution to the work of the Board in the past three years. Dave is taking a year's leave of absence to

promote the publication of his biography of Charlotte Whitton.

Under new business George Neville reported that the spring bus tour on June 4 is filled to capacity. He suggested that the fall bus tour include the military settlements in Richmond, Perth, and Lanark. There was general support for this proposal.

I announced with regret that Ruth Hall-McMillan has resigned as our newsletter editor because of ill health. I have written to Ruth thanking her for her contribution to the Society in producing the January and April issues. Paul Reside has agreed to edit the June and September issues while we search for a new editor.

We have just been informed that Gordon Cullingham left a bequest of \$4,000 to the Historical Society of Ottawa in his will. We are very grateful to Gordon and his wife Janet for this generous gift.

As I announced at the monthly meeting in March, I intend to resign as President at the meeting of the Board of Directors on June 15.

It has been a pleasure to serve as your President for the last six years, but the time has come to step down. I am pleased to announce that Herb Sills has agreed to serve as President

for a term of one year.

The meeting adjourned for refreshments served by Barbara Whitfield, Nanette Whitwam, and Jean McNiven. After a short recess the meeting resumed at 2 p.m. to hear our guest speaker Phil Jenkins. Phil explained that he had been delayed because of an encounter with a male bear in the backyard of his house in Wakefield.

Phil spoke to us about the history and geography of the LeBreton Flats, the subject of his book, *An Acre of Time*, which has recently been reissued with an update on recent developments. The site is virtually an island of 154 acres. For centuries it was used as a campsite for First Nations tribes, part of a trade route that stretched as far as Florida.

In 1615, Samuel de Champlain visited the area of the Chaudière Falls, accompanied by his Mohawk guides.

In 1791, Philemon Wright travelled up the Ottawa River by wagon train with his native guides to a site across the river where he established the settlement called Wrightsville.

In 1900, the LeBreton Flats was destroyed by the Great Fire that swept across the river at the Chaudière

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# The Historical Society of Ottawa

Patron: Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, C.C., C.M.M., C.O.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		613-730-2264
Secretary: Don Baxter	<a href="mailto:marydon@cyberus.ca">marydon@cyberus.ca</a>	613-745-3430
Treasurer: Anne Carruthers	<a href="mailto:edithballer@hotmail.com">edithballer@hotmail.com</a>	613-828-0538
Membership: Don Baxter	<a href="mailto:marydon@cyberus.ca">marydon@cyberus.ca</a>	613-745-3430
Don Carrington	<a href="mailto:don.carrington@sympatico.ca">don.carrington@sympatico.ca</a>	613-733-8740
Don Ross	<a href="mailto:donross@magma.ca">donross@magma.ca</a>	613-592-2539
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Herb Sills	<a href="mailto:herb_sills@hotmail.com">herb_sills@hotmail.com</a>	613-231-5535
Barbara Whitfield	<a href="mailto:pthosteo@rogers.com">pthosteo@rogers.com</a>	613-722-2209

## Committees

Awards	Alan McLay
Collections	Dave Mullington, Dorene Hirsch, Barbara Whitfield, Don Carrington
Nominations	Don Baxter, Herb Sills, Barbara Whitfield,
Publications	Robert Serré
Tours Coordinator	George Neville
Telephone Committee	Barbara Whitfield, Pat Richardson
Outreach Coordinator	Susan Moss
Webmaster	John Reeder

### Newsletter Editor:

Paul Reside [preside@sympatico.ca](mailto:preside@sympatico.ca) 613-825-3104

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P.O. Box 523, Station "B"  
Ottawa, ON  
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**Web Site: [hsottawa.ncf.ca](http://hsottawa.ncf.ca)**

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

## Coming Events

### Thursday, June 4

Spring Bus Tour  
Glengarry County  
8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### Wednesday, July 1

Canada Day Celebrations  
Bytown Museum  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Monday, August 3

Colonel By Day  
Bytown Museum  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Friday, September 25

Monthly Meeting  
Speaker: Bruce Straby  
"History of the Phonograph from Tinfoil to Stereo"  
Routhier Community Centre\*  
1 p.m.

\*Parking at the Routhier Community Centre - from Cumberland Ave., between St. Patrick St. and Guigues Ave.

**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 for you to photocopy on the last page of this newsletter.

**President's Report***Continued from Page 1*

Bridge. After the fire the houses and stores were rebuilt. It was a working class neighbourhood with a high percentage of French-Canadian families.

In 1982 the residents of the area received notices of expropriation by the federal government and the whole section was razed to the ground. An archaeological exploration of the site uncovered thousands of artifacts. For 35 years the whole area sat empty, an example of bureaucratic inertia involving three levels of government-federal, provincial, and municipal.

Originally the National Capital Commission planned to redevelop the Flats as a living community with no buildings higher than 5 stories, a V-shaped park, and a minimum 25% of affordable housing. The federal government decided to build the new War Museum on the site, a decision that Phil deplored. When the NCC called for tenders for Phase I of the redevelopment, only one bid was received. The 13-story condominium building that was constructed was totally out of scale.

Phil considered that a great opportunity to create a genuine community had been missed. He advocated the new urbanism of Jane Jacobs, built around the societal construction of the village. He urged members of the Historical Society to speak up when consultations are held for the development of the next 12 acres in Phase II. The city should take its architecture and landscapes seriously.

The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.

**Bytown Museum Report***By Steve Dezort***Upcoming Events at the Bytown Museum:****Gathering places by Bob Acton at the Bytown Community Gallery (until June 30)**

This exhibit showcases the people

and activities of two of Ottawa's long standing and vibrant neighbourhood gathering places: Mello's Restaurant and Irene's Pub. New exhibits in the Community Gallery in April, July and September.

**Sunday, June 7**

Bytown Museum Celebrates Doors Open Ottawa (FREE)  
Explore Ottawa's oldest stone building with its 2½ foot-thick stone walls. The

Commissariat was used as a treasury and storehouse during the construction of the Rideau Canal. Today, it houses the Bytown Museum. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Hourly Tours focusing on the Commissariat building.

**Wednesday, July 1**

Canada Day at the Bytown Museum

**Treasurer's Report to May 31, 2009**

Source	Revenue
<b>Memberships (incl. US exchange)</b>	<b>\$2,995.13</b>
<b>Donations</b>	<b>790.00</b>
<b>Sale of pamphlets</b>	<b>91.00</b>
<b>City of Ottawa Grant</b>	<b>3,000.00</b>
<b>Prov. of Ontario Grant</b>	<b>911.00</b>
<b>Misc. (postage credit re Newsletter)</b>	<b>10.40</b>
<b>Bank interest on checking account</b>	<b>2.11</b>
	<b><u>\$7,799.64</u></b>
Expenses	Paid Out
<b>Diefenbunker storage room rental</b>	<b>\$647.34</b>
<b>Routhier Centre room rental</b>	<b>64.80</b>
<b>Membership dues - CHOO &amp; Ont. HS</b>	<b>116.50</b>
<b>Newsletter including envelopes &amp; postage</b>	<b>654.23</b>
<b>Publicity</b>	<b>36.43</b>
<b>Office supplies</b>	<b>116.09</b>
<b>Postage</b>	<b>85.30</b>
<b>Photocopies (Annual Report etc.)</b>	<b>196.40</b>
<b>Post Box (shared)</b>	<b>65.84</b>
<b>Telephone</b>	<b>570.00</b>
<b>Library</b>	<b>40.00</b>
<b>Awards (Ottawa Regional Historical Fair, Algonquin College Foundation)</b>	<b>1,150.00</b>
<b>Donations (Bytown Museum)</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>
	<b><u>\$4,742.93</u></b>
<b>Bank Balance* at May 31, 2009</b>	<b>\$12,156.93</b>
<b>Term deposit at Dec. 10, 2008</b>	<b>\$10,585.65</b>
<b>GIC re Bequest from Walter Jachan</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>
<b>* With all checks cashed</b>	

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## Bytown Museum Report

*Continued from Page 3*

Celebrate Canada Day downtown at our scenic UNESCO World Heritage Site location! Enjoy a free Ottawa history presentation on the first floor. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

### Bytown Museum Saturday Activity Programs (July 4 – August 29)

From rug braiding and live folk music to storytelling and the Irish harp, summer Saturdays are a great time to visit the Bytown Museum! Check our web site for details. Saturdays, 1:00 to 3:00 pm

### Colonel By Day August 3rd

Join CHOO/COPO and the Bytown Museum for this fantastic community event! Celebrate the holiday named for one of Ottawa's founding fathers with live music, dancing, heritage demonstrators, costumed characters and games and face painting for the kids! 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

## St.-Onge Illustrated Exposé, "History of the Eastern Arctic"

*By George A. Neville*



*Dr. Denis St.-Onge*



Dr. Denis St-Onge, O.C., esteemed geologist, earth scientist, and still very active Emeritus Scientist of the Geological Survey of Canada and Prof at U. of O., delighted a capacity attendance of HSO members and friends at the April 24th meeting where he related eastern arctic history from the time of the Dorset to present Inuit.

To understand the Arctic, one must understand its geology. Some 18,000 years ago the whole of North America (i.e., all of Canada and further to the south in line with Wisconsin state) was covered by a vast, very deep ice sheet. By some 13,000 years ago, a relatively narrow passage way from the NW (Bering Strait) was exposed to the southern plains through which it was thought that people arrived from Siberia although more recent archaeology has shown that southern habitation predated that postulated opening of the corridor between Cordilleran ice to the west and the massive Laurentide ice sheet to the east. By some 8,000 years ago, the great ice dome over Hudson's Bay collapsed flushing immense freshwater into the eastern Atlantic Ocean. By 4,000 years ago tribes from Siberia were migrating along the north coast of North America; relatively rapidly the Eastern Arctic as far north as northern Greenland and south to Labrador was occupied by these people as evidenced by such artifacts as construction of central fire

pits (like those employed by present day Sami in Lapland), collections of twigs, and animal bone fragments.

Paleo-Eskimos had arrived ~3,000 B.C. About 2,000 B.C., the Arctic again became very cold so that the Dor-

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## Obituary

Walter Jachan was born in Vienna in 1914. He trained as a mechanical engineer. During World War II he was interned in Britain as a resident alien. After the war, he emigrated to Montreal, where he met his wife Christa. They were married in 1956, and later moved to Ottawa.

Walter's favourite hobby was repairing watches. Christa served as a volunteer at the Bytown Museum for many years. She continues to volunteer at the National Gallery.

Walter died on December 9 at the age of 95. In his will he left a bequest of \$1,000 to the Historical Society of Ottawa. We are very grateful to Walter and Christa Jachan for this generous gift. The bequest has been invested in a fund for a special project (to be determined) in memory of Walter Jachan.

**"HISTORY OF THE ARCTIC"***Continued from Page 4*

set culture, a mobile people that carried materials on their backs, took to harvesting sea mammals using spears, having lost the art and use of bows and arrows. Artifact needles show that they also could not produce circular holes in bone, etc.

*Dr. St-Onge Speaks with members of the audience*

The Thule culture people (1,200 AD) hunted from boats and kayaks. There was no obvious relationship between the Thule and Dorset (no DNA linkage), but the Dorset had unwittingly prepared the land for the Thule who quickly moved in taking over lands of the Dorset. They built houses on peat excavations by using whale rib-bones around pits to support hides – such artifacts found on Devon Island, and the Thule house at Radstock Bay of 500-600 B.C.

The first big European incursion into the lives of the eastern Inuit was by Martin Frobisher whom the Inuit regarded as having arrived on a super umiac. On his second return to the Arctic in 1577, Frobisher seized a man, woman and baby whom they took back to England along with black rock thought to be rich in gold ore. Such was the appeal of this rock that England sent over 15 ships to collect and return this ore. Only 15 tons of the black rock arrived as half the ships failed to get back to England.

Other eastern Arctic explorers mentioned were Wm. Baffin (1616) who explored the waters that bear his name; John Ross (1818) and Parry (1819-1820). The first large commercial

development of whaling (especially for the big blue whales) for production of whale oil in on-shore rendering, such as on Kekerten Island was described. A brief recapitulation of the fatal expedition of John Franklin and the more recent findings of some of his crew, especially that of the best preserved 20-yr-old John Torrington led Dr. St-Onge to extol his hero, John Rae (an MD of remarkable endurance and capacity to walk immense distances) who was able to find out what had happened to the Franklin expedition (eventual cannibalism much to the rejection and disbelief by Lady Franklin) and returned with relics of the tragedy.

The presentation was complemented by a myriad of wonderful illustrative views skillfully integrated by power-point presentation. A lively discussion ensued that brought forth even more remarkable information. It was clearly evident that the speaker enjoyed his delivery as much as the audience was enthralled and very appreciative of this epic account of Denis' many trips to the Arctic and of his abiding deep interest in all that relates to it.

**Old Ottawa South Project**

John Calvert spoke at the March 27 meeting on the Ottawa South History Project and his group's plans to carry out a heritage survey of Old Ottawa South this summer. The survey will document various heritage features in the community and produce a report to support future urban and heritage planning there. (Old Ottawa South is the area be-

*John Calvert speaks at the March 27th Meeting of the HSO**Continued on Page 6***Obituary**

We regret to report the death of Gordon Cullingham on March 25th. Gordon was an active member of the Historical Society of Ottawa for many years. For fifteen years he served on our Board of Directors He organized the program of speakers at the monthly meetings and edited our newsletter for four years. In 2007 we presented Gordon with an honorary life membership in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Society.

Gordon was actively involved in heritage conservation in Ottawa. He and his wife Janet Irwin developed an audio-cassette tour of the Rideau Canal in celebration of the 150th anniversary in 1982. Heritage Ottawa has created the Gordon Cullingham Research and Publication Grant in his honour.

Gordon will be greatly missed by all his friends and colleagues in the heritage community in Ottawa..

We have just been informed that Gordon left a bequest for \$4,000 in his will for the Historical Society of Ottawa. We are very thankful to Gordon and Janet for this generous gift.

## Old Ottawa South Project

*Continued from Page 4*

tween the Rideau Canal and the Rideau River, with Bank Street as its main thoroughfare.)

Calvert enlivened his well-received talk with slides showing heritage features in the community, from early-period homes to photographs of the canal and its surroundings in the early 1900s.

Calvert is the founder and coordinator of the project and, like others in his group, he is an amateur historian with an enthusiastic appreciation of his community.

In order to conduct the summer survey, the group hopes to hire university students with backgrounds in heritage-related interests.

For more details, visit the Old Ottawa South website at [www.oldottawa-south.ca](http://www.oldottawa-south.ca) and click on the "History & People" tab.

## Mrs. Devlin's Diary

*by Alan McLay*

Before his death at the age of 97 on February 15th in Fall River, Massachusetts, Edward (Ted) Devlin asked his nephew, Brian G. Devlin, to send us a diary kept by his mother, Mrs. Edith Wade Devlin, for the year 1910.

She had come to Ottawa in June 1909 and became engaged to Edward Devlin (Ted's father) in September.

In her diary she recorded the daily round of social activities-lunches, dinner parties, visits to the Russell Theatre, sporting events, camping trips, etc. She led an active social life and she knew many of the prominent families in Ottawa.

At our last meeting the Board of Directors agreed to donate the diary and a typed transcript with notes prepared by her son Ted to the City of Ottawa Archives where they will be preserved in a climate-controlled environment. A photocopy of the transcript will be

given to the Ottawa Room at the Ottawa Public Library and a copy will be placed in our library at the Bytown Museum.

## Newsletter Editor Required

Anyone who is interested in this volunteer position is asked to reply to anyone on the Board of Directors with their intent.

The position entails collecting materials provided by contributors, assembling them into the quarterly newsletter, sending the newsletter to the printers, and mailing the completed newsletters to the membership at large.

A computer, a printer, a scanner with optical character recognition, and internet access are all highly recommended, if not required to efficiently complete the newsletter.



*Susan Moss and George Neville at GENE-O-RAMA*

## GENE-O-RAMA

*by George Neville*

Susan Moss and I attended the GENE-O-RAMA organized by the Ottawa branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society on Friday the 27th of March, from 5 p.m. to 10p.m., and Saturday the 28th of March, to provide materials on the Historical Society of Ottawa (newsletter, program cards, brochures, membership

forms) and to offer copies of Bytown Pamphlets for sale. We felt it very worthwhile for the opportunity for outreach to potential members who showed interest in our activities and accepted copies of our promotion materials.



Ottawa Regional Historica Fair 2009

**City of Ottawa Cup Award**  
by Alan Mclay

The Ottawa Regional Historica Fair was held in the Great Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization on April 29th. The City of Ottawa Cup for the best project on the region of Ottawa was

awarded to Aaron York-Lyon, a student in Grade Seven at Hawthorne Public School, for his project on Smallian Lake.

On Friday, June 5th, I will present Aaron with a cheque for \$150 in recognition of his of his achievement.

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) \_\_\_\_\_

Address Unchanged(Show Changes Below)

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 photocopy and 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**