
The Historical Society of Ottawa

News

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September 2005

President's Report

By Alan McLay

As the long, hot days of summer gradually draw to a close, we all look forward to the cooler weather of autumn and especially to the beginning of a new season of activities for the Historical Society of Ottawa.

Before looking ahead, however, I would like to mention some highlights of the Board of Directors meetings last spring. In April the Board reviewed a Strategic Plan Report produced in 1998 by a committee chaired by Don Carrington. While some aspects of the report were no longer relevant because of the recent separation of the Bytown Museum, it contained some useful suggestions. Don Baxter prepared a status report summarizing the activities of the Society that are still current and making some recommendations for further study by the Board.

In May the Collection Committee completed the task of reviewing all the artifacts that had been identified by museum staff for deaccessioning, a total of over 2,000 artifacts and 3,000 medals and badges. Our thanks to Don Carrington, Dorene Hirsch and Barbara Whitfield for devoting so much time and hard work to this project. The information on each artifact is in process of being entered into a computer program that will provide a complete inventory of the collection. The whole collection of artifacts was moved in May to a new storage facility at the Diefenbunker Museum in Carp.

Also in May the Board approved a set of guidelines prepared by Cliff Scott for the Awards Committee to follow in selecting worthy recipients for commemorative plaques in recog-

nition of their outstanding contribution to the history and culture of Ottawa.

At the June meeting the following officers were re-elected for the year 2005-2006: Alan McLay, President; George Toller, Vice-President; and Patricia Hartney, Secretary-Treasurer.

The first monthly meeting of the new season will be held on Friday, September 30, at 2 p.m. in the Routhier Community Centre. Our speaker, Alan Rayburn, will talk about the historical significance of family names in the Ottawa Valley. On Thursday October 5th, Herb Sills has arranged a bus tour up the Opeongo line. For more information see the articles in this newsletter.

Museums Sustainability Plan

By Alan McLay

After the crisis last year in the discussion of the City's 2005 budget concerning financial support for the ten local museums and heritage organizations, city staff were instructed to pre-

pare a Museums Sustainability Plan as a basis for determining the City of Ottawa budget for 2006. The plan was developed in full consultation with museum staff and representatives of heritage organizations. The plan proposes longterm financial support for the museums by an increase of 2.3 million dollars over the next four years, including an increase of \$700,000 in the year 2006.

Six public consultations on the Plan have been held from April to June. The Plan will be presented to the Health, Recreation and Social Services (HRSS) Committee of City Council at 1.30 p.m. in the Champlain Room at City Hall on September 15th. Ottawa City Council will discuss the Plan at its meeting on September 28th in the Andrew S. Haydon Hall at City Hall. These meetings are open to members of the public.

Members of the Historical Society of Ottawa are encouraged to write to the Mayor and City Councillors urging them to vote in favour of the Museums Sustainability Plan.

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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	<i>hartneyp@ca.inter.net</i>	523-6248
Membership: Don Baxter	<i>marydon@cyberus.ca</i>	745-3430
Don Carrington	<i>don.carrington@sympatico.ca</i>	733-8740
Joe Konst		749-4101
Clifford Scott	<i>d.scott3932@rogers.com</i>	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

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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 6.

Coming Events

Saturday, September 24-

Bytown Ball
Cartier Square Drill Hall
6 p.m.

Friday, September 30 -

Monthly Meeting
Speaker - Alan Rayburn: "The Historical Significance of Family Names in the Ottawa Valley"
Routhier Community Centre
2 p.m.

Wednesday, October 5 -

Fall Bus Tour - The Opeongo Line - 8:45 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
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Friday, October 28 -

Monthly Meeting
Speaker TBA
Routhier Community Centre
2 p.m.

Friday, December 2 -

Christmas Luncheon
St. Richard's Anglican Church
12 noon - details page 5

Colonel By Award

On the recommendation of the Department of History at Carleton University, the Board of Directors agreed to present the Colonel By Award of \$500 to Luke Morse, a fourth-year Honours History student, for his term paper "Ghost Town: Treading through the underworld of Ottawa's history."

Bytown Museum Update

By Pam Cook

Despite the sweltering heat and humidity this summer, the Bytown Museum had a very successful season!

This summer saw the launch of our Adopt-An-Artifact program. Through donations from Historical Society members and the general public, we have raised almost \$800. Using this fund and donations from the Whelan Revolver Campaign, many artifacts such as the Union Jack Flag from the original Parliament Buildings and a sculpture of Sir John A. MacDonald by Louis-Philippe Hébert will be undergoing conservation work. The Bytown Museum would like to thank everyone who donated to this worthwhile campaign.

The summer's excitement will be carried into the autumn months. The museum staff and volunteers are looking forward to the Bytown Ball, to be held September 24th at the Cartier Square Drill Hall. This gala fund raiser is in celebration of Ottawa's 150th anniversary. Guests are invited to dress up as their favorite Ottawa character and join us for an evening of dinner and dancing. There will also be a live auction with many exciting prizes such as a dinner for eight with France's ambassador and his wife at the Embassy of France!

The Bytown Ball will also feature the first public viewing of the Whelan Revolver that was recently purchased by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Tickets are still available and may be purchased for \$100 each by contacting Kim Kelly Associates by phone at (613) 521-3910 or by e-mail at : register@kimkellyassociates.com.

Later in the season, if you're looking for a Halloween event that's educational and just a little spooky, visit us for our annual Halloween Howl on October 30th. Take a stroll through the "boo vault" if you dare! Listen to true

ghost stories of Ottawa's oldest stone building. Be entertained and amazed with Halloween crafts and fortune telling. The museum will be open between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Admission is \$2.50 per person, plus a canned food donation to the Ottawa Food Bank.

As many of you are aware, the City of Ottawa has been working on a Museums Sustainability Plan designed to increase operational and capital funding for all of our local museums. It will also provide funding for a new Virtual Heritage Gateway and a Museum Network that will focus on marketing Ottawa's museums. The operational funding alone will represent an additional \$2.3 million over the next four years. I would encourage each and every one of you to write or call your Councillor and let them know that you support the Plan. In addition, the Museum Sustainability Plan will be presented to City Council's Health, Recreation and Social Services Committee on September 15th. If you are able to attend or even make a presentation to the Committee, your presence will make a difference! For more information, please call Christina Tessier at 234-4570. Thank you for your continued support!



Col. And Mrs. By are welcomed to Major's Hill Park by the Herald reading the Proclamation of Colonel By Day, August 1, 2005

History of St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, wins prize

"Unto The Hills Around", a history

of St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa by John S. Moir, has won the 'Congregational History of 2004' award. The prize was presented in Edmonton on June 7th to St. Andrew's minister, the Rev. Andrew J. R. Johnston, at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Filled with archival photos, "Unto The Hills Around" chronicles the history of St. Andrew's, as well as our city and nation. The oldest Protestant congregation in Ottawa, St. Andrew's first stone church was built on the corner of Wellington and Kent in October 1828 by Thomas MacKay's stone masons during a lull in canal construction. In 1872-74, the first church was replaced by the current larger building. St. Andrew's will celebrate its 177th Anniversary in October 2005.

"Unto The Hills Around" features profiles of past members of St. Andrew's, including Thomas MacKay, Nicol Baird, William Clegg, Daniel Fisher, Charles Shirreff, William Stewart, Simon C. Fraser, J. R. Booth, William and Georgina Perley, Henry F. Bronson, James Skead, Lady Aberdeen, Margaret Heggie Smith, Andrew and Gertrude Fleck, Mary McKay Scott, Mackenzie King, Madge McRae, Francis H. Chrysler, Lord Tweedsmuir, and Senators Norman Paterson and Cairine Wilson. The title comes from the beloved hymn, a paraphrase of Psalm 121 written by the Marquis of Lorne, who attended St. Andrew's while he was Governor General.

Copies of "Unto The Hills Around" are available from the church office. Cost, \$20.

For more information, please contact: Brenda Dawson, church office: tel. 232-9042; office@standrewsottawa.ca Sheila Urquhart: tel. 521-8788; john.urquhart@sympatico.ca.

Editor's Note: Anyone wishing to receive the HSO Newsletter by e-mail may request it by sending your e-mail address to the editor at: hso.news.editor@sympatico.ca

Spring Bus Tour – June 26, 2005

By Herb Sills

The Spring Tour was designed to visit locks on the Rideau Canal, however, because of the distances involved, we followed the route of the canal and from Smiths Falls travelled highway 15 to Jones Falls where our lunch was ready for us.



Viola Johnson and Nicole Cuevas at Hotel Kenney, Jones Falls, ON

After lunch there was time to view the four locks and the massive stone arch dam which rises to a height of over 60 feet above the bottom of the rocky gorge down which the Cataraqui tumbled as a small stream.

We next went to Chaffey's Locks where we were met by Mr. Neil A. Patterson. He had done a great deal of work to clear the site of a cemetery containing the bodies of a number of canal workers, mostly Irish immigrants, who died of malaria and construction accidents. Their graves are marked by a single piece of stone from the quarry at Elgin. Also buried in the cemetery are Samuel Chaffey and his wife Mary Ann. There is also a Memory Wall with plaques inscribed to early families who settled in the area.



Neil Patterson explains headstones at graveyard of Rideau Canal construction workers to HSD visitors at Chaffey's Locks, ON

From Chaffeys we went to Newboro. We had a large amount of information on Newboro which was supplied by Ruth Gray who is descended from Benjamin Tett the founder of the town.

We visited the Block House (c. 1832) and St. Mary's Anglican Church (1850) but found them both locked. Newboro was originally known as Isthmus as it is on land separating the Rideau and Cataraqui river systems. It



George Neville, Ruthe Gray, and Herb Sills discuss HSD Rideau Canal Trip at Newboro Lock

was necessary to cut a channel one and one-half miles across the Isthmus. It proved to be one of the most difficult works undertaken on the canal because it demanded excavation into a hard ridge of Canadian Shield granite.

To lessen the amount of excavation Col. By decided to build a dam of earth and clay at the Narrows to raise the water level 4 feet 10 inches, thus creating the Upper Rideau lake. A weir and a lock linked the two Rideau lakes at the Narrows. From Newboro we made our return to Ottawa arriving at 6 p.m.



Barry and Jane Maloney, Jones Falls, Rideau Canal

Fall Tour – October 5, 2005

On the Fall Tour we will explore the Opeongo Line which runs from Farrell's Landing on the Ottawa River near Renfrew to Bark Lake near Barry's Bay. It was a scheme by the Canadian Government to survey a road through the wilderness and parcel out free land to immigrants. Villages sprang up at such places as Dacre, Esmonde, Clontarf, Brudenell, Balaclava, Rockingham, Mount St. Patrick, Newfoundland, Wilno and Barry's Bay. The plan is to have lunch in Eganville.

Joan Finnigan has written a book on "Life Along the Opeongo Line" and we hope to have her on the tour to relate

some of her stories. The bus will depart from St. Richard's Parking Lot - Corner of Merivale Road and Rossland Avenue at 8.45 a.m. (be early). The second pick-up will be at Lansdowne Park, Bank Street Entrance at 9.00 a.m.

The cost of the tour is \$50.00.

Family History Conference – Celebrate Your Anglo-Celtic Roots!

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO) is holding its 11th Annual Conference, Sept 23–25, 2005.

Speakers include professional genealogist, Else Churchill of the Society of Genealogists, London, England, who will offer five of the 18 featured Conference presentations on family history for those with roots in the British Isles.

The annual Don Whiteside Memorial Lecture is being given at 8:00 pm on Friday, September 23rd by popular media weather specialist and senior climatologist David Phillips of Environment Canada, who will speak on weather and our ancestors.

Come and browse the marketplace of family history products/services and have fun in the computer genealogy room. Open to all with registration fee.

Two pre-Conference seminars are being offered on Friday, September 23rd:

- 1 - Beginning Genealogy - to be given by the Ottawa Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society (morning), and
- 2 - Family Tree Maker Workshop (software): Beginner to Advanced - by Rick Roberts of Global Genealogy (full day)

There will also be a tour of Library & Archives Canada after lunch.

Location: Library & Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa.

Cost after August 15th: non-members \$85, members \$70. (Reduce by \$10 if register before August 15th.)

Friday seminars & lunches extra. Daily, session & student rates also available. Register by mail in advance or at Conference.

Conference opens (reception) at 6:00pm, Friday Sept 23rd. Weekend sessions 9am - 5pm.

Free parking after 6pm Sept 23rd and all weekend in government lots east of the building.

Info & registration form: www.bifhsgo.ca or 613-234-2520 (voicemail). Conferences queries: conference@bifhsgo.ca

Bring a friend!

Christmas Luncheon December 2, 2005

The annual Christmas Luncheon will be held December 2nd at 12:00 noon at St Richard's Church on Rossland Avenue, near the corner of Merivale Road. The cost will be \$20.00 and, as usual, we will have a turkey dinner.

The Christmas Luncheon is the one occasion when we get most members together and have an opportunity to chat and learn about planned activities.

Please make arrangements to attend and bring along any prospective new members. Call Herb Sills at 225-4185 and get your name on the list.

Bruce Elliott Receives Heritage Award

At the March meeting of City Council Dr. Bruce Elliott historian and editor for the Pinhey's Point Foundation, received an Ontario Heritage Foundation Community Recognition Award in the area of cultural history in 2004. Our congratulations to Bruce for this well-deserved honour recognizing his outstanding contribution to the preservation and interpretation of Ottawa's history and culture.

Contribution to St. Alban's Church, Frant, England

In response to an appeal for donations to restore the church tower of St. Alban's Church, the Board of Directors approved a gift of \$250 from reserve funds to the church where Colonel John By is buried. Several members of the Historical Society have visited this church and the grave site of Colonel By.

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT

Here's a new book to be shortly published by one of our HSO members. It will be launched at the Ottawa Public Library at 7.30 pm. on Sept. 8, 2005
 Title: Chain of Office: Biographical Sketches of the Early Mayors of Ottawa (1847-1948)

Author: Dave Mullington
 Publisher: General Store Publishing House, Renfrew

The book looks at the men who were mayors of Bytown and Ottawa between 1847 and 1948, and in doing

so adds human faces to the city's often colourful past.

Whether it was Sir Richard Scott, after whom the building housing the main branch of the library is named, or Napoleon Champagne, after whom the Champagne Bath was christened, all these men had a direct influence in shaping the frontier town that became the metropolis we have today. Along the way, there were tales of election fraud and other political shenanigans. While some mayors went on to political careers at the provincial and federal levels, most simply retired after their mayoralties and returned to their full-time occupations, some with disastrous results.

Dave Mullington is an Ottawa native who worked on newspapers across Canada and in Asia for more than three decades. He retired from the Ottawa Citizen in September 2000 after 19 years as a reporter and copy editor at the paper.

We hope to have Dave speak to us

at one of our future HSO monthly meetings.



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 complete this form and mail it with a cheque, made payable to **The Historical Society of Ottawa**, to:
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