

The Rideau Township Historical Society

Preserving and Promoting local history for the former Rideau Township

October 2012 Newsletter

Newsletter Editor: Ron Wilson (rideauarchives@ottawa.ca)

Next Meeting

Date: October 17, 2012
Time: 7:30 pm
Place: Christ Church Anglican Church
4419 Donnelly Drive
Burritts Rapids



This Month

1. The Next Meeting
2. From the Pen of the President
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Bring a Friend, Light Refreshments

From the Pen of the President

Our Society meeting in Burritts Rapids on the 17th will provide us with the opportunity to be briefed on the history of the village and to become acquainted with Christ Church (Anglican), the oldest surviving church in the Rideau Valley.

On July 27th, 1975, I was privileged, as Mayor of Rideau Township, to present the historical background of the church at a service to dedicate an historical plaque

Topic: Burritts Rapids - An Historic Village on the Rideau

Burritts Rapids is located within two Townships, separated by the Rideau River with Oxford on the south and Marlborough on the north. Both Townships were surveyed in 1791. Burritts Rapids geographically possessed important assets. It had water power generated by the fall of the river, access and communication by water in a great wilderness, with good land and fine timber near the river. In short, it began with many of the essential prerequisites for a thriving pioneer community.

Three brothers, Daniel, Stephen and Henry Burritt arrived in 1793, settled in the area and gave the Village its name. When Daniel died in 1859 the Village he helped to found boasted a doctor, a laundress, a butcher, four general stores, four inns or hotels, two churches, two schools, two saw mills, a grist mill, a woolen mill, blacksmiths, harness makers, joiners, tanners - all the parameters of a thriving community with a population of about 400 flanked by a productive agricultural community on both sides of the Rideau

Brad Smith, a long time resident of Burritts Rapids community is the speaker for the October 17th meeting of the RTHS. We will hear the story of the successful growth of Burritts Rapids during its first sixty-five years and the extent to which it would or would not develop beyond 1860.

Speaker: Brad Smith

Brad Smith graduated from Mount Allison University (BA. 1952) and from Dalhousie University (MA. History 1955; LLB 1956). He later studied at the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London and at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva.

He practised law for nearly thirty years in the Department of Justice of the Federal Government of Canada. During that time he held positions as Solicitor to the Treasury, Director of the Constitutional and International Law Section, Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Civil Litigation and Chief General Counsel. Following his retirement from the Department of Justice he joined the Firm of Strikeman Elliott as Special Counsel. He was made Queen's Counsel in 1973.

Brad and Rennie Smith purchased "The Burritt Farm" in Burritts Rapids in 1963 and shortly thereafter took up residence. They have grown "fond" of the Village and became students of its history and guardians of its rich heritage. Brad is well qualified to enthusiastically lead us through a journey of the contextual history of his community.

at Christ Church erected by the Ontario Heritage Foundation. It was an occasion I had not earned but cherish.

The Anglican Congregation was formed in Burritts Rapids in 1822. Construction of the framed wooden church began in 1831 and was completed the following year. It was designed in the Gothic Revival style, customarily used in churches of the period. A small section involving the chancel was

added in 1861. The building remained in its original form until about 1992 when additions, renovations, and new cladding were added.

One of the highlights of the church was its centennial in 1931. The anniversary lasted over two days. Four services were held on Sunday and some five hundred people celebrated communion. On that occasion, a stone cairn was erected at the front of the church in memory of the pioneer families who initiated its construction. The stone coping on the top of the cairn came from the Burritt family farm in Bennington, Vermont.

This church is rich in mementos: The windows all have pointed arches and are magnificently glazed with stained glass, the Book of Common Prayer in the display case at the rear of the church and dated 1830 was presented to Colonel Stephen Burritt by the first pastor, Henry Patten. The Bible, a gift in 1845, the oak pulpit, the stained glass windows, eagle lectern, altar rail, communion table, alms dish, collection plates and other items were gifts from benefactors over the years.

This magnificent frame structure has served the Burritts Rapids congregation for one hundred and eighty years. Please make it a priority on October 17th to come and enjoy the charm and history of this pioneer church.



Historic Christ Church Anglican Church in Burritts Rapids is worth a visit at any time.

The September Meeting Speaker: Catherine Gallagher Article and Pictures by Lucy Martin

Catherine (White) Gallagher may be New England born and a resident of Arizona, but her connection to this region are blood strong. At least 43 members and guests filled the Carsonby Hall to hear Gallagher speak about "Duty, Family, Service" - The Wallace-Eastman Family".



Catherine and Bob Gallagher, shown here with Bill Tupper, visited the Rideau Branch of the Ottawa Archives in the course of researching Catherine's family. They very kindly timed their visit so as to speak to the Rideau Township Historical Society September meeting on the connections to the Wallace - Eastman families in this area.

Long-time residents and regional historians know the names well. After all, Eastmans and Wallaces helped settle this area. The audience was well-sprinkled with descendants and distant relatives - if every connection on various family trees was traced and known.

Gallagher's talk focused on the life and family of her great-grandfather, Dr. David Wardrope Wallace (1850-1924). His parents (James Wallace and Agnes Adams) came from Scotland in the mid 1840's. James Wallace died sometime before 1860. According to some accounts he was lost and frozen in a snowstorm. Thereafter, David Wallace helped support his widowed mother, a sister and an invalid brother. He became a teacher at age 16 - which sounds young but was not unheard of for that time. It's possible he taught his future wife.

He went on to become a medical doctor and a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. He practiced in North Gower, Metcalfe, Ottawa and Kemptville.

In 1883 he married Esther Angelia Eastman, who had qualified to teach herself at age 18. She was descended from United Empire Loyalists by way of Eastman, McEwen, Kerr, McLaughlin and Sherman lines.

The couple had eight children - all born in the same house on Victoria Street in Metcalfe. Each of their four sons became physicians as well. Their eldest daughter died in her early 20's. Two other daughters became teachers. The fourth married a trade commissioner. In addition to his long career in medicine, Dr. Wallace was also a Liberal Member of Parliament representing Russell from 1903-04.

Gallagher's own career involved sales management in the education, manufacturing, and travel industries. Though long interested in the subject, she only began seriously researching her extensive family tree over the last dozen years. Her line of descent goes thusly: Dr. David Wallace begat Dr. Charles Kenneth Wallace who begat Betty Patricia Wallace White who begat Catherine Gallagher. (The Biblical flourish was irresistible – how often does one get to use “begat”?)

Gallagher's grandfather, Dr. Charles K. Wallace, served in WW I under Lt.-Col. Dr. John McCrae, of Flanders Fields fame. Sometimes what we know about long-gone ancestors comes down through family lore. According to Charles, his father David walked 80 miles to take and pass his initial teacher's certificate. Charles also recounted that he never heard either parent make an unkind comment about anyone. (A rare – and admirable – compliment.)

Genealogy uncovers all sorts of facts and stories about specific relatives. Broader findings also reflect various shifts over time. Things like family size - under one roof and beyond. For example, how many first cousins do you have? Gallagher said she has 19 first cousins, and her husband, Bob Gallagher, has 17. Contrast those numbers to Esther's father, North Gower blacksmith Cyrus Eastman (1804? -1888). He had 209 first cousins - 92 on the McEwen side; 117 on the Eastman side!

Exploring the family tree has been a fruitful line of endeavor. Gallagher is now president of the West Valley Genealogical Society & Library (near Phoenix) with over 700 members. She also produced a book “The Descendents of William 'Benjamin' Eastman”, which can be found at the Rideau Archives.

Speaking after her talk, Gallagher mentioned deep gratitude for the generosity she's encountered along the way from fellow genealogists. She added a friendly caution: once bitten by the family tree bug one might never finish: “Because you learn more about the next generation. There's always more. It's so much fun – and frustrating.” (Frustrations arise when research hits a “brick wall” and cannot uncover more information. Or sorting out too many people who share the same name.) Like others in

this pursuit, she stressed the importance of collecting information from older generations while that's still possible.

With a laugh of relief, Gallagher said she had been equally thrilled and scared to come and present. She added it was an honour to meet Archive volunteers and RTHS members in person, including some who may know more about the subject than she does. For their part, Archive volunteers mentioned being impressed at how Gallagher and her husband put in days of additional field and archival research prior to the event.

Gallagher's own expertise and diligence were quite evident in her well-illustrated talk. In case you missed it, or wish to learn more, print and digital copies of Gallagher's slide presentation are available at the Rideau Archives. Gallagher says she enjoys helping others and sharing her findings.

Any family is fortunate to have members willing to do such detailed research. Their toil allows others to see the leaves, trunk and roots on a given family tree – without replicating all that heavy lifting!



Left to right, Colin and Carol Wright, Catherine Gallagher and Ruth and Brian Wright. The Wrights are distant relatives of Catherine, and are of course long term and valued members of the RTHS.

Coming Event

The monthly meeting of the North Grenville Historical Society takes place Wednesday, October 10, 2012 at 15 Water Street, Kemptville. The speakers are Jim Heppell and Mac Savoy, who will make a presentation on the history of Holy Cross Church. This is part of the series on churches of North Grenville.

Doors open at 7 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7:30 after time for socializing, coffee and cookies. Admission is free and all are welcome.

The Dickinson House

I thought we had a fabulous weekend at the Dickinson House. Visitors came from as far away as Poland and China, and from Nova Scotia to Saskatchewan. The theme was Apples and Honey. Coral's exhibit on apples was most informative. The beekeeping exhibit was excellent and the beekeepers did an exceptional job of describing their industry. We even had a piano keyboard playing for two hours on Saturday. We had about 500 guests go through the house and suspect our count was low.

Bill Tupper

[The RTHS gratefully acknowledges the financial support received from the City of Ottawa](#)

News from the Rideau Branch, Ottawa Archives

Hours: *The Rideau Archives is open every Tuesday from 9:30 am to 4:30 p.m., and at other times by appointment. (613-489-2926).*

It was with sadness that we learned of the recent passing of Ottawa's own Barbara Ann Scott, World Skating Champion and Olympic Gold Medallist at the 1948 games in St Moritz, Switzerland. This past spring, she donated her memorabilia to the City of Ottawa Archives, a collection of medals, trophies, gifts and scrapbooks documenting her illustrious career. Many of these items are on display in a special gallery located in City Hall's main concourse, 9 AM to 6 PM daily.



Watson's Mill Events

The Mill is located at 5525 Dickinson Street, Dickinson Square, Manotick. Free parking on-site.

Web Site: www.watsonsmill.com

Watson's Mill hours of operation: Office hours: weekdays, 10:00-4:00. Watson's Mill: starting Saturday, May 5th: open to visitors daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please visit www.watsonsmill.com for a complete calendar of events. Below are some highlights for the fall.

- Whisky Tasting: Thursday, October 11th, 7:30-9:30pm. At Watson's Mill. Tickets: \$45/person, or group rate of \$40 each (4 or more). Must be legal drinking age. The guest speaker Geoff Skeggs is of "GrapeScot", a Wine and Single Malt Whisky appreciation company. See the Watson's Mill web site for more information
- Paranormal Investigation: Saturday, October 27th, Group 1: 6:00-9:00pm and Group 2: 10:00pm-1:00am: at Watson's Mill. Tickets: \$25/person. Ann Crosby was married in January 1861; she was 20 years old. Six weeks later she died in a frightful accident at Watson's Mill. Rumour has it that Ann Crosby Currier's ghost still resides in Manotick's oldest landmark. However, some say she is not the only one. There are other spirits in the Mill. Many visitors claim to have experienced paranormal activity at Watson's Mill such as sightings, unexplained chills and uneasy feelings, orbs of light appearing on photographs. Is this evidence? See the Mill web site for more information.
- "Raise the Roof" Concert: featuring Ian Tamblyn: Saturday, October 27th: Doors open at 6:30pm; Concert starts at 7:00pm. Tickets \$20/person, or \$50/family package (2 adults & their children under 14 years). At Manotick United Church. Music style: Folk-Roots. Tickets are available for purchase at Manotick Office Pro and Watson's Mill.
- Annual Christmas Market: November 17th to December 2nd: Saturdays and Sundays, from 10am to 4pm. At Watson's Mill. Calling artists, artisans and crafters: currently accepting applications for participation in the Christmas Market. Forms are available by request electronically at: watsonsmilloffice@rogers.com, or by calling Melanie at: 613-692-6455; also, hard copy applications and guidelines also available at Watson's Mill—see staff at front desk. Forms will be available on the website shortly.