

HISTORIC GLOUCESTER

Quarterly Newsletter of

**The GLOUCESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
and The GLOUCESTER MUSEUM and ARCHIVES**

VOLUME 2 NO. 1

SPRING 2001



A TYPICAL EXHIBITION OF HISTORICAL ITEMS, 1953



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COVER PHOTO:

The cover photo shows Evelyn Macartney behind a table of historical items. The picture is dated August 28, 1953 and was taken in the Ridge Road School. It is typical of exhibits of items which were once used routinely by many of our ancestors. Although they were mostly articles of value only for their usage, today we appreciate them as reminders of how our ancestors lived.



Historic Gloucester is published quarterly by The Gloucester Historical Society and The Gloucester Museum and Archives. It is intended as a Newsletter to members of the Society to provide interesting articles on Gloucester’s past and to keep them informed of new acquisitions by the Museum, publications available, upcoming events and other items of general interest. Comments and suggestions regarding the Newsletter are always welcome.



PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2000

This report covers the period of the year 2000 and was presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Gloucester Historical Society, April 9, 2001.

Major Activities

What a year it has been! Our municipality has ceased to exist... The Gloucester Historical Society, along with the Gloucester Museum and Archives, are now the principal custodians of the identity and of the history of Gloucester. Major activities of 2000 were:

- Celebration of the 150th anniversary of the municipality of Gloucester;
- Production, in conjunction with the Museum and Archives, of the historical booklet, published by the City of Gloucester;
- Work with the Ottawa Transition Board to ensure a place for the Society in the new City; and
- Receipt of the civic artifacts of the former City of Gloucester.

Transition to the new City was important also to The Museum and Archives. But, in that process we lost Peter Brown, our friend and advisor on the City staff, and Jennifer Vollmar, the Museum's Director/Curator. We wish them well, and thank them for their devotion to the Museum and Archives. The Ogilvie Exhibit, now on display, is Jennifer's last and most impressive project.

Before I leave this subject, let me assure you that your Board of Directors continues to serve as the Advisory Committee for the Museum and Archives. At our monthly Board Meetings we will continue to include consultation with the Museum Director and to receive updates. And the minutes of our meetings will continue to report the major activities and events of the Museum and Archives.

Memberships

Our membership today stands at around 80. We need more members. Please get out there and beat the bushes for some new blood. All ages and backgrounds are welcome. We need active members, not so much for the Board of Directors, but to conduct projects, visits, and to show the Gloucester flag. Enthusiasm is the main requirement, not historical training. Anyone can volunteer, even for an occasional few hours.

Board of Directors

After the election at our last general meeting our Board membership stood at two less than the constitutional maximum of 12. Bill King joined us for a time, but was unable to remain. Joan Scott joined us later in the year and has served as an interim member. She wishes to be elected as a full member later in this meeting. You will note that we are getting our newsletter out on a regular schedule. Joan is the editor, and her energy and experience are the reason this activity is going so well. Thank you Joan. The other nine members have all agreed to stay for another year. They are Mary Boyd, Lillian Kitchen, Jean-Marc Jossinet, Guy Legault, David Mackie, Aline



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standing support and their continued efforts on our behalf.

Finances

The details of our financial picture are in Treasurer Graham Ritchie's report. We continue to receive our regular grant of \$2,500 from the City this year, and have no reason to believe we will not be funded next year and in future. No doubt there will be reviews of all City funding of social and recreational activities, which from time to time will require us to justify our needs. But, the climate is good, as the new City has taken the firm resolve to respect the identities of the former municipalities from which it is derived.

I wish also to thank Bob Kemp for the very successful operation of our Nevada lottery. This fund raiser continues to provide funds to support our activities and some capital expenditures. Thank you, Bob.

Future Activities

The Gloucester Historical Society has agreed to assist the Gloucester Lions Club in writing their history. Bob Kemp and Graham Ritchie are members of both organizations, and are responsible for the administration of this project for the Lions. I am the GHS contact, and so far have assisted them in looking for a graduate history student to conduct the research and write the book. The Gloucester Lions will fund the student contract.

Mary Boyd has started a project to produce a series of Genealogies to be published by the Society. This project is just getting started. Mary will speak on this topic later. I urge all to give her as much assistance as possible.

Guy H. Legault
President

WORKING TO PRESERVE GLOUCESTER'S HISTORY

by Joan Scott

Although the Gloucester Historical Society and the Gloucester Museum and Archives are very separate entities, there is, and has always been, a very good sense of cooperation between the two. The museum has had a professional part-time curator since 1986 but unfortunately there were insufficient funds available to pay for a full-time professional until a few years ago when Jennifer Vollmar was hired. Jennifer is currently working with the newly amalgamated City of Ottawa as Acting Supervisor/Curator of Museum Services. We also have the valuable assistance of Geri Laird and Anik Despres, as outlined in their article in this issue. Meanwhile, the Historical Society is run entirely by dedicated volunteers. However, part-time staff and students are hired, both by the Museum and the Society, from time to time to assist in specific tasks such as putting together special exhibits and updating computer programs or initiating new ones. For the past couple of years we have been privileged to have the assistance of Neal Johnstone in carrying out some of these projects.

Neal, originally from Dunrobin in Nepean, came to Ottawa as a young man to find work, and has been employed on a part-time basis with the Museum and Society since then. He has become very knowledgeable about Gloucester, the Museum and the Society. Initially he was asked to set up a data base of all the photographs which the Society has on hand. This he accomplished and the new system of referencing photos greatly assists researchers in retrieving pictures on any person, place or thing - merely by keying in the proper words to describe which relevant photos are required. Pictures can be located by asking for availability by place, name or category of photo. As well, original photos are now stored in individual envelopes and filed away to protect them. For researchers who wish to look at a number of pictures, there are books of copies of photos available for browsing.

This new system has proven invaluable to the Society and we are very grateful to Neal for his hard work.

More recently, Neal was involved in setting up a display of Gloucester cemeteries. For this he researched the numerous cemeteries, took pictures of each and wrote captions detailing a few facts about each site. This display was used for the Gloucester Historical Society Heritage Month Event 2001 which was held February 11. It was again used for the Society's booth at the Ottawa Genealogical Society Heritage Month event held at the old Ottawa City Hall on February 18. Cemeteries both large and small were included in the project. For some there was a great deal of information available, for others, particularly small family cemeteries, there is little known about them and it is hoped that displays such as this will encourage the public to contribute what information they may have on these important historic links.

In addition to the valuable contribution made by Neal, the Museum has been very fortunate in being able to hire two students each summer to assist in their work. Last summer they were Jeremy Morrison and Jennifer Rowberry who contributed greatly to the success of several exhibits. As well as working on the William Ogilvie and the James Blair exhibits, the two students were deeply involved in the popular *In Focus* photograph exhibit which was held in a Riverside model home last summer. The exhibit was opened by Mayor Claudette Cain and viewed by many people during the weeks that it was on display. Jeremy acted as Master of Ceremonies for the opening, and Jennifer was responsible for the graphic design work on the invitations for the opening.

Although our volunteers work hard to man displays at many exhibits during the year, provide help to researchers in the office and for telephone enquiries, run the Society

office, attend events put on by other historical societies, prepare and send out the newsletter, and carry on the various other tasks that are necessary to keep the Society remain active and up to date, they cannot do it alone. This is where it is important to have occasional paid help who bring new energy and ideas to the work of the Society. While we benefit from their services, they also benefit by learning more about Gloucester and its origins, and, hopefully, will be inspired to a greater sense of history. We hope we can continue to receive the same high caliber of help that we have had so far!

Photo below: l to r -

*Jennifer Rowberry, Jennifer Vollmar,
Neal Johnstone and Jeremy Morrison*



INTRODUCING THE MUSEUM STAFF

by Geri Laird and Anik Despres

The new City of Ottawa Museum Services Division, within the Community Services Branch, now has two professional, full-time staff working in specialized roles in the City's museums. This summer, they will be focussing their attention primarily on Billings Estate Museum and Gloucester Museum, and also at Pinhey's Point Museum. Two more specialized staff are expected to be hired in the coming months: a Supervisor/Curator and an Exhibitions/Research Officer. Jennifer Vollmar is the Acting Supervisor/Curator for the Museum Services in the new City of Ottawa. She is helping to build an exciting future for our community museums.

Anik Despres, Education Officer, is responsible for interpretation and educational programming, a vital function in all museums. This summer, Anik will work to increase the public profile at Gloucester Museum. One of the events planned is the official opening for the large, new photographic exhibit "William Ogilvie, a journey from Gloucester to the Yukon". There will be an advance announcement giving the date and details of the opening so everyone can attend. In the meantime, the exhibit is open to the public from Monday to Friday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.; work is underway to have the exhibit gallery open on Sunday afternoons as well. Anik is looking forward to meeting members of the Historical Society at the opening, and throughout the summer.

Starting May 1st, Geri Laird, Collections Officer, will be spending two days a week at Gloucester Museum along with an assistant, Carolyn Wells, who is on

contract from May through August. Both are very excited to be working with the excellent community collection at Gloucester, and have identified projects that will not only familiarize them with the various aspects of the collection, but also assure it a good standard of care. They will conduct an inventory of all the artifacts, producing a shelf location guide and identifying items that need conservation treatment. They will survey the collection records and try to provide appropriate documentation for all artifacts. At the same time, they will be accessioning recent donations, and organizing storage to accommodate the growing collection. So don't be surprised to find them in their work outfits when you're visiting the Museum this summer.

Notice:

An upcoming project for the GHS is the identifying and researching of material for a booklet showing the family trees of some of Gloucester Township's pioneer families.

Information will be taken from family files now in the hands of the Society. At some point each family to be included in the booklet will be contacted by the Society. Any help received such as information on family genealogies, verification of dates and/or loan of family photos will be greatly appreciated.

Additional family histories are always welcome and could be included in this or a future book. Give us a call and we will tell you whether your family history is on file with us. If not, perhaps you would like to add it!

A TALK ON FIRST FAMILIES OF THE OTTAWA AREA

by Joan Scott

At the Annual General Meeting our guest speaker was Mrs. Coral Lindsay who spoke about *The First Settlers of Ottawa*. Her talk was not only most informative, it was also extremely interesting. Through the use of little known anecdotes concerning these early settlers she shed new light on the goings-on of some of our predecessors!

According to Mrs. Lindsay, the first settler in the area was Roger Stevens, a United Empire Loyalist, who came with his wife Polly and his children to the area now known as Merrickville. Stevens had a mill in Merrickville which his friend Merrick claimed in payment of a debt after Stevens was drowned while on an outing with Merrick. There is, of course, a Roger Stevens Road, but the village which he helped to establish is now known as Burrets Rapids and is the furthest south community in the new City of Ottawa.

The next arrival in the vicinity was apparently Abyjah Dunning who arrived in Cumberland about 1801 and was followed in 1807 by Amable Foubert who settled in the same area. In 1809 Capt. Steven Collins arrived and opened a tavern at the flats but also spent some time as paymaster for Col. John By (1828). He, too, was a United Empire Loyalist and today is remembered for his fine stone house which still stands on the old Prescott Highway (the Collins/Mansfield house) and which today is a matter of controversy as to whether it will be demolished or restored.

Ira Honeywell and his wife Polly Andrews, settled on land three miles west of the Chaudiere Falls. His son, John

Honeywell, was the first white child born in Nepean. In 1813 Braddish Billings came and built a home for his wife, Lamira Dow. Their history is well known and is being preserved through the Billings Museum.

Other early arrivals were Gerard Chapman, Nepean; The Moores, Nepean; the Burrows; the Scarfs; and the Bradleys. Roger Moore owned the first licensed tavern in the area, but by 1820 the number of taverns had increased to ten.

The first settler in Fitzroy came in 1818. He was Charles Sheriff, who had been a wealthy shipbuilder in Scotland. Andrew Dixon followed soon after Sheriff, but later went to Pakenham and established mills there. There is an interesting story of Mrs. Sheriff being custodian of the only sewing needle in Fitzroy. One day she dropped it while taking it to a neighbour and the whole community came out to search for this priceless treasure!

Mrs. Lindsay's talk was not only interesting and informative, but also quite amusing. She brought with her a number of books on the early days of the area which gave more insight into the early settlers and their lives in the wilderness of what is today Canada's capital.

The Exhibit *William Ogilvie: A Journey from Gloucester to the Yukon*, is now on display in the Gloucester Historical Museum. The official opening will be held in June to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Ogilvie's retirement as Commissioner of the Yukon.

BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE GLOUCESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

A History of Gloucester Historical Society
by Grace Johnson.....\$2.00

Belden Map of Gloucester, 1879.....\$5.00

Billings Bridge: My Village, My Life
by Gerard and Bernard Pelot.....\$20.00

Blackburn-Glen Ogilvie: Centennial History
by Anna Elliott.....\$ 2.00

Bowesville: A Place to Remember
by Grace Johnston.....\$15.00

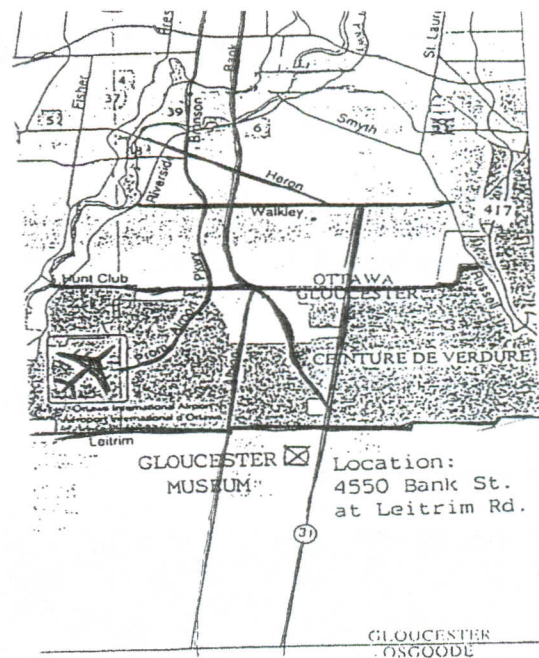
*Carlsbad Springs/Ramsaywille Branch East
Carleton Women's Institute 1934-1994*..\$ 4.00

Gloucester Roots
by Lois Kemp.....\$20.00

Memories of the Lockstations.....\$ 4.00

*Milk/Cream Produce-Distributors in
Gloucester 1892-1975*
by Grace Johnson.....\$10.00

Valley Views.....\$10.00



If you have memories of life in Gloucester or stories of schools or families from early days, and would like to share them, please give us a call. Artifacts and photographs of yesteryear are always welcome additions to the Museum.

Call us at 822-2076 to talk about it!

About the wooden bicycle (see front cover) -

In 1898 James Blair, a 17-year old who lived in Gloucester on the present site of Ritchie Feed & Seed store off Innes Road, built himself a wooden bicycle which he rode all over the farm and to the Byward Market in Ottawa. This amazing bicycle can be seen in the Gloucester Museum.

Board of Directors

President	Guy Legault	Directors:	Lillian Kitchen
Vice-President	Mary Patterson		David Mackie
Recording Secretary	Mary Boyd		Aline Mageau
Correspondence	Jean-Marc Jossinet		Jacqueline Rawes
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GLOUCESTER MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Supervisor/Curator	Jennifer Vollmar
Collections Officer	Geri Laird
Education Officer	Anik Despres
Chair, Advisory Board	Guy Legault

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP, OR IF YOU WISH TO BECOME A NEW MEMBER, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND SEND IT IN WITH YOUR CHEQUE. STILL ONLY \$10.00 PER YEAR OR \$40.00 FOR A LIFE MEMBERSHIP!

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Gloucester Historical Society
Soci t  historique de Gloucester
Membership/Adh sion 2001

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Mailing Address: Gloucester Historical Society
4550B Bank Street,
Gloucester, Ontario
K1T 3W6 Tel: 822-2076