

HISTORIC GLOUCESTER

Quarterly Newsletter of

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

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View of Cummings Bride area (Vanier) in Gloucester,
from Sandy Hill in Ottawa, circa 1920s.

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COVER PHOTO:

The cover photo depicts the view across the Rideau River from Mrs. A.W.Fleck's house in Ottawa, Ontario in the 1920s. Mrs. Fleck lived at 500 Wilbrod Street, Sandy Hill, so the photo shows the Cummings Bridge area of Gloucester . This area was once known as Janeville, then Eastview and later as Vanier. See article on page 2.

Historic Gloucester is published 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.

Gloucester Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the City of Ottawa.

President's Report

I would like to thank all the members of our Board of Directors who so easily replaced me at the last minute for our annual general meeting. No one is indispensable, a message I have now received first hand. The meeting was well attended, in part due to our speaker, Ben Stafford, who gave us such a vivid description of his childhood community, Hurdman's Bridge. Flo Ladds also brought in many people from the Overbrook community who were interested in this local heritage.

At the meeting all of our Board members agreed to stay on for another year, and Ed Kirk agreed to join us. Board membership now stands at 11, with one position vacant.

What I have been able to do since our AGM was find out more about how the Gloucester Museum is functioning and what is happening at the City concerning museums. If you take out your copy of our Fall 2002 newsletter you will see a museum report. This is mainly good news, showing how the museum staff have made a lot of improvements, and fixed some old problems. This is still happening, but we are concerned that there is no longer a staff member on-site full-time. And no new exhibits have been produced in the past two years.

We have met with a consultant, Catherine Cole, hired by the City to study the situation of all 10 museums in the City and to make recommendations. Her report will be available to the City in about one month. She will probably be recommending that each museum have it's own curator. This sounds good in principle, but all indications are that money will become scarcer in the coming year. As a result and anticipating further deterioration of the situation of the Museum, your Board have decided to become more actively involved in the affairs of the Gloucester Museum. We will be reporting our findings and possible directions in the next newsletter and at our October event.

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, October 19 at 2 P.M. This event will give us an opportunity to exchange the latest information about the Society and the Museum. I am sure you will enjoy our speakers, and the opportunity to tell your own stories, if you wish. You will find the ad for this event further on in this newsletter.

Guy H. Legault

C'EST UNE PREMIERE!

Par Denyse Amyot

Le 8 mai dernier, deux membres de la Société historique de Gloucester, Patricia Leduc et Denyse Amyot, ont participé à titre de juges à la première foire patrimoniale régionale à Ottawa. Cet événement mémorable a eu lieu au Pavillon Aberdeen, Centre Civic, Parc Lansdowne, Ottawa. Cet édifice a célébré son centième anniversaire d'existence en 1998.

La cérémonie débuta en honorant M. Clifford Scott, l'instigateur de ce projet et en présentant M. Marc Denhez qui agissait à titre de maître de cérémonie. Une douzaine d'écoles du programme d'immersion participaient à cette foire historique entre autres la Westboro Academy et le VANDA Preparatory School.

Tous les projets présentés au public démontraient une grande imagination. Les écoliers présentaient leurs projets avec passion en passant de l'anglais au français avec grand habileté. Les sujets étaient variés tels: "Les Seigneuries", un autre "Robert Bourassa, ancien Premier Ministre du Québec" et "Mme SOS Montfort, Mme Gisèle Lalonde".

Bref, ce fut une journée chargée d'émotions, d'admiration, et de félicitations.

IT'S A FIRST

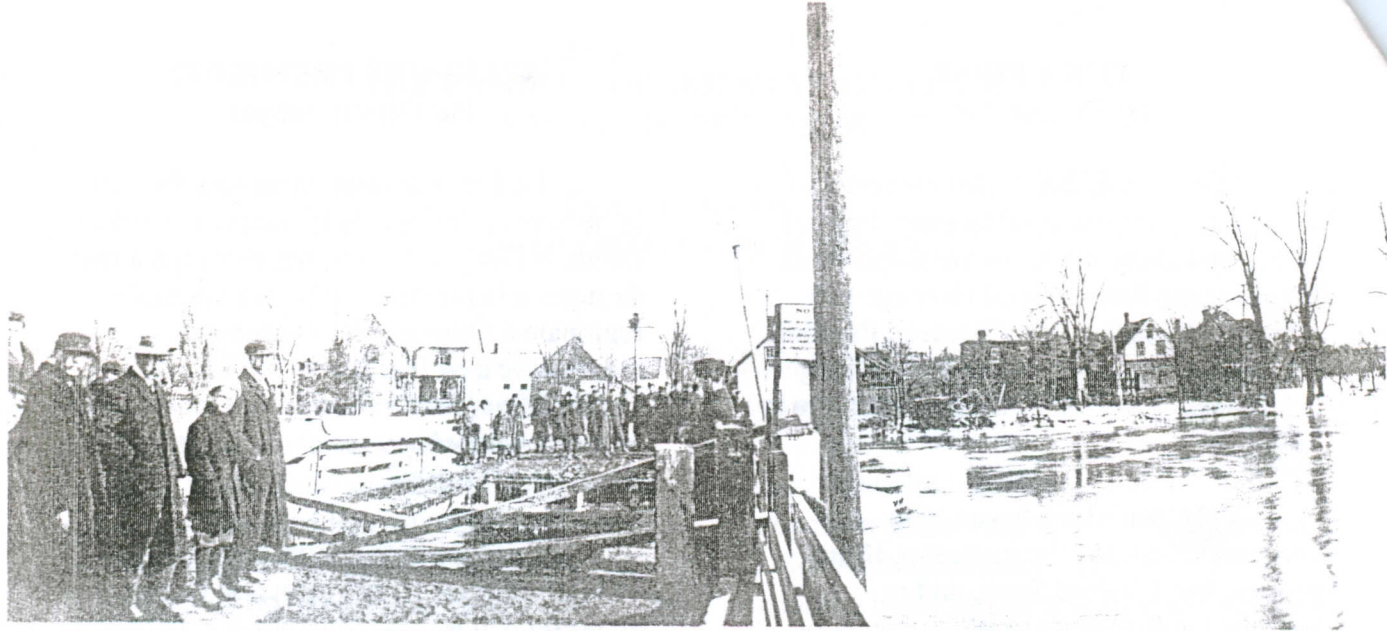
By Denyse Amyot

On May 8, 2003, two members of the Gloucester Historical Society, Patricia Leduc and Denyse Amyot, participated as judges at the first regional Heritage Fair which took place at the Aberdeen Pavilion, Lansdowne Park, Ottawa. This building celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary in 1998.

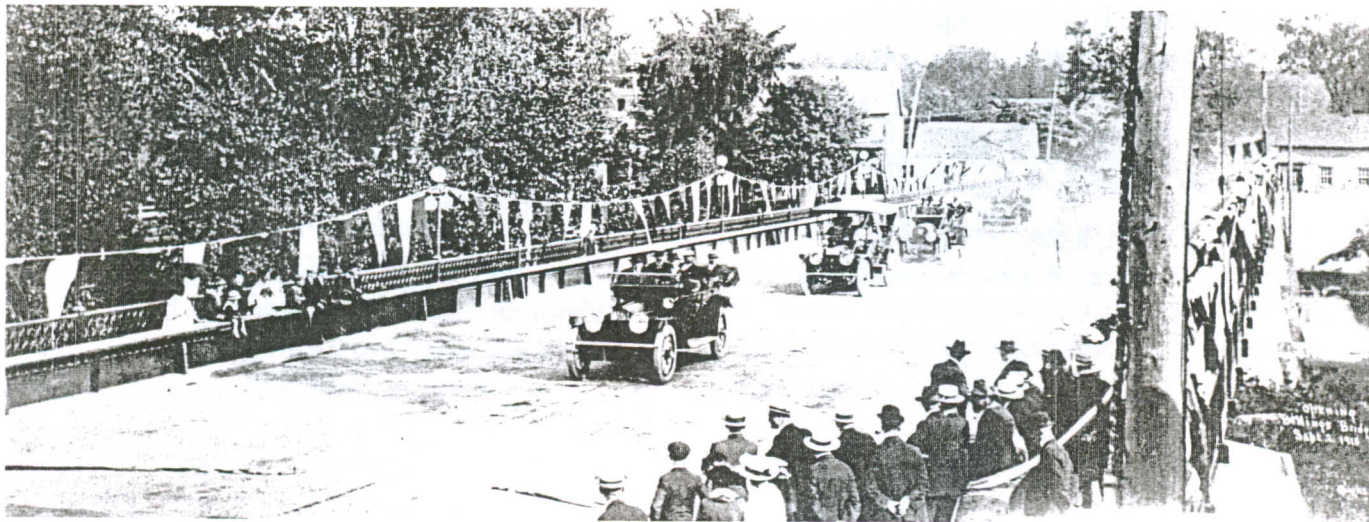
The ceremony began with congratulations for the instigator of the project, Mr. Clifford Scott, and in introducing Mr. Marc Denhez, master of ceremonies. A dozen schools from the immersion program participated in the project, including Westboro Academy and VANDA Preparatory School.

All of the projects presented to the public showed great imagination. Each student spoke passionately about his or her project in both French and in English. Subjects varied, and included: "Les Seigneuries", another "Robert Bourassa, former Premier of Québec" and "Mrs. SOS Montfort, the lady who saved Montfort Hospital, Madame Gisèle Lalonde."

In short, a day crowned with emotion, admiration and congratulations.



The old Billings Bridge circa 1915, after a horse went through the bridge. To the right (west) of the bridge and to the right of the post, along the Bowesville Road, is Richards' Carriage Maker's shed, Richards' house and McGuirl's house. To the left of the bridge (east) is Smith's large white house, then their store. The dark unpainted building directly left (east) of the exact south end of the bridge is the toll gate.



A parade of new cars crosses the then new Billings Bridge to celebrate its opening in 1915.
(Public Archives Canada)

*Gloucester Historical Society/
Soci t  Historique de Gloucester*

PRESENTS

“Crossing Bridges of Times Past”

Place: Gloucester Museum – 4550 Bank Street, at Leitrim Road.

Date and Time: – 2 P.M., Sunday, October 19, 2003

Three bridges on the Rideau River recall the histories of their nearby communities. The Billings, Hurdman and Cummings Bridges each bear the family names of former Reeves of Gloucester Township. But, for most they evoke deeper memories of villages and of families, past and present.

Four speakers will each address their histories and recollections of the communities bearing the names of these bridges, and of the village of Overbrook immediately north-east of Hurdman’s Bridge. Those attending are encouraged to bring their own stories and memorabilia.

**All Welcome
Admission Free: Light Refreshments**