



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU
LA SOCIÉTÉ HISTORIQUE DE LA GATINEAU

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NEWSLETTER

No. 02-2.: February 2002 - March 2002

COMING EVENTS

Monday, February 18, 2002

Heritage Day & HSG Annual Meeting

Monday, February 18 ("Heritage Day") is again this year the date for the Historical Society's Annual General Meeting. Proceedings will get under way with a social half hour starting at 7:30 (in the Chelsea Community Centre). The meeting will commence at 8:00. (*See details on page 2.*)

Monday, March 18, 2002

Michael Cooper: The Travel + Study Programmes of Elderhostel.

HSG's March presentation will be given by Michael Cooper of Wakefield, who is an Elderhostel group-leader. He will present an overview of the types of programmes available, and speak of his own experiences on boats, trains and feet. Started in 1975, using university residences in New England, E-H has grown to reach into 90 countries with 175, 000 hostlers annually

Sunday March 24, 2:30 PM

***Benefit Concert - St. Camillus Church
Farrellton Quebec***

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE GATINEAU in partnership with the 50 voice **CASTENCHEL CHOIR** are co-sponsoring a special benefit concert for the Parish of St. Camillus. Proceeds from a *free will* offering will go towards the restoration of the Church Steeple, blown over in a windstorm in the 1940s. At the time a modest "temporary steeple" was erected that now needs to be replaced with a steeple matching the original. In the fall of 2000. The HSG helped this historic Parish commemorate its 150th anniversary with a presentation to the Parish of historical photographs of the Church. This exciting musical event will feature the beautiful music of Franz Schubert and Gabriel Fauré. Please mark your calendars to attend (and bring your friends).

**HSG's OWN GENEALOGY
CENTRE**

Genealogy is one of the important hobbies of countless Canadians and others, world-wide, these days. Internet access has helped to boost the interest, and our Society has been receiving a steady stream of letters and e-mails in addition to visits from persons with Gatineau-Valley roots who hope to have help in tracing their ancestors.

As one of our 40th Anniversary initiatives, we are in the process of setting up a Genealogy Centre in the HSG Archives, located in the Chelsea Library basement. We have started with the purchase of a (used) microfilm reader, a donated stand for it, and a stock of census records on microfilm, covering the decennials from 1851 to 1891 for Hull Township (which encompasses Chelsea and Cantley), Masham and Wakefield Townships (now Lapéche). A bequest in memory of Mary Anne Phillips will be used to further develop the Centre, allowing us to purchase additional census reels and to begin acquiring copies of local parish records.

Another bonus for library users will allow members to order in copies of other microfilms (other localities of the census or microfilms on some other topic) via Inter-Library Loan.

Starting in March, the Genealogy Centre will be open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons, from 1:30 until 4 pm. Norma Geggie and Carol Martin will be available on Wednesday afternoons for genealogical consultations, and other HSG volunteers will offer guidance on using the reader on Friday afternoons. The HSG Archives has on file a number of genealogies (and we'd like to have copies of any local ones you've been working on) clippings, publications and photographs of local families. Come in and have a look!

Carol Martin

HSG ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's meeting is marking the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Society. As a special treat our featured speaker will be Moiya Wright, co-founder of the Society and its first president, with entertaining reminiscences about its origins and early days. The Society's archivist, Jay Atherton, will supplement the talk by showing a selection of photographs on the history of the Society taken from its Image Bank. Members will be invited to interact with the showing, supplying information on the people and events depicted in the images.

The members will elect their new Board of Directors, and as usual awards will be presented to deserving people to recognize their contributions to the work of the Society. The meeting also will be asked to approve an amendment to the constitution.

Clause IV.2 of the current constitution (September 1997) contains the following sentence: "A member of the Society may serve no more than two consecutive terms in any one of the senior Executive positions (President, First Vice President, and Second Vice President." The Board has found this to be unnecessarily restrictive, for reasons that will be made clear at the meeting. To insert a measure of discretion in the process, a motion will be presented to amend this clause by inserting the word "normally", as follows: "A member of the Society normally may serve no more than two consecutive terms" etc.

We hope to have a good turnout to debate this weighty issue, and to refresh the Society for its journey into the next forty years. That's Monday, February 18, at 8:00 p.m. (refreshments at 7:30) in the Cheslea Community Centre, Old Chelsea.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

A reminder to our members whose membership expired at the end of 2001, please check the date on your address label (expired memberships are marked in red). Membership fees are unchanged: \$15 (one year) or \$25 (two years). In addition to bimonthly newsletters, paid-up members will receive a free copy of the 2002 issue of *Up the Gatineau* !

Behind the Scenes - Conference Planning Update

Members of the Historical Society of The Gatineau are hard at work planning the program and activities for the 2002 Quebec Anglophoe Heritage Network (QAHN) conference to be held in and around the Gatineau Valley, June 7 to 9. Over the past 40 years the HSG has grown into an association of members whose aim is to promote our diverse heritage and record the historical legacy of the Gatineau Valley. With so many years of accumulated experience and a wealth of national and regional heritage institutions and sites to visit, our biggest challenge is in narrowing these options into an effective and relevant program for all our conference participants. Although the conference will be based mainly at Heritage College in the amalgamated City of Gatineau (formerly Hull), the aim of the conference is to take advantage of our geographical situation and spread our activities into the surrounding areas. We plan to offer conference participants a "Behind the Scenes" view of heritage by organizing tours at some of Canada's world-class cultural institutions and by imparting useful skills and knowledge that can be taken away and applied at the local level. We will also showcase the "scenes" that make up the picturesque and unique historical geography of the Gatineau Valley. As in past conferences, associations are invited to present their work and activities in our Exhibits area. This year we have invited larger scale associations, such as the Heritage Canada Foundation, to join us. Our location near the nation's capital will help us, we're sure, attract more exhibitors, and we hope you'll take advantage of this opportunity. Our tentative program outline:

Friday, June 7

Morning: Check in at University of Ottawa Residence and conference registration at Heritage College.

Afternoon: Choice of "Behind the Scenes tours".

Evening: Cocktail reception

Saturday, June 8

Morning: QAHN Workshops at Heritage College

Afternoon: HSG Regional Showcase at Heritage College.

Evening: Banquet and keynote speaker

Sunday, June 9

Morning: QAHN Annual General Meeting at Heritage College.

Afternoon: An optional steam-train excursion to Wakefield and guided tours of the village.

Marc Cockburn (459-2004) & Michael Cooper (459-2787),
Conference Planning Committee, Co-chairs

THE CANADIAN CENSUS: A NATIONAL TREASURE

by: Carol Martin

For historians, economists, genealogists, medical researchers, and future generations, the historical Canadian census records which have been preserved and made available are a national treasure.

Many of us are familiar with the manuscript census, the actual written records of all individual Canadians, which were compiled each decade beginning in 1851 (that one was actually held in January 1852), and are currently available at the National Archives of Canada on microfilm for the years 1851 through 1901.

The last Canadian census released to the public (1901) was made available after 92 years. In 1906 a special census of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan was conducted, and in 1911 a decennial census of the entire country. However, the 1906 census has NOT been released to the Canadian public, and Statistics Canada claims to be concerned with "legal, privacy and archival implications" of providing access to it, the 1911 and subsequent censuses!

What is the problem? During the period when the 1906 and 1911 Canadian censuses were conducted, there was no legislation governing future access to these records. The enumerators' manuals enjoined the census takers to keep the information "confidential," and also instructed them to write clearly and legibly because "The census is intended to be a permanent record, and its schedules will be stored in the Archives of the Dominion." In our increasingly complex world, official "privacy" has been the subject of definition and legislation. In Canada, *The Privacy Act* was enacted in 1983. Although the censuses of 1891 and 1901 were released after this, the "problem" seen by some privacy "experts" and Statistics Canada is in interpreting the meaning of confidentiality (required of the census-takers in 1901, a census now publicly available and identically worded in the 1911 census manual).

On January 6, 2000, Statistics Canada received the report of an *Expert Panel of Access to Historical Censuses*, in which Ian Wilson, the National Archivist of Canada, requested that Statistics Canada turn over to the NAC the 1906 and 1911 censuses for release after 92 years. This has not been done, and a further round of "public consultations," in the form of "Town Hall" meetings in eleven cities across Canada was held starting in December 2001 and finishing at the end of January 2002.

I was one of the presenters at the Ottawa Town Hall Meeting. At that meeting, I offered four main reasons why the Canadian Censuses of 1906 and 1911 are of interest to historical societies such as the HSG, and why they should be made available to the public now.

First, the census is the ONLY contemporary source of general information about characteristics of the entire Canadian population. In 1911, this is the story of 5,350,000 Canadians. If you go to biographies of Canadians at that time, you will readily find a few hundred names, and perhaps a thousand... but this is the story of everyone. Ordinary people. Like many of us.

Other records are not a substitute for the census information, which shows families grouped together, provides their religious denomination (leading to a way to search in religious records), gives occupation, and in rural areas for some years, locates their property. The information asked in 1906 and 1911 is extremely similar to what was asked in 1901, 1891, and so on, and the release of that information led to no public criticism. The crucial difference is who was where and what they were doing in 1911, compared with those previous years. One decennial census is not a substitute for another. However, the 1911 did add a few "new" questions, and these are important ones that would help us know more about rural Canadians. For the first time, people were asked about secondary occupations, so now we would have a better picture of the additional jobs done by
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The Statistics Canada website has some information on this topic, see:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/census96/chief.htm>

Environics (which conducted the Town Hall sessions on behalf of Statistics Canada) has information at :

http://erg.environics.net/census_consultations/default.asp?load=presentations

Information on using census records for genealogical research can be found at the National Archives of Canada web site:

<http://www.archives.ca>

(The Canadian Census....)

farmers in the Gatineau area: the miners, those who worked in the lumber camps, and so on. And it asked about life insurance, an interesting question at a time of increasing industrialization in Canada. And there were NO questions about criminal records or illegal activities, in 1906, 1911 or earlier! (

Third, only a portion of the census information of 1906 and 1911 has ever been analyzed. There were no computers when the census workers were tabulating the results of these censuses, so only simple tables were ever prepared. There is literally a treasure trove of data waiting for discovery!

Finally, ordinary Canadians think that the release of the personal census, after 92 years, is "reasonable" and they want access to it. Great Britain releases its personal census after 100 years; the United States after 72 years. 92 years seems to be an ideal and distinctive Canadian solution.

Over 100 presenters at the Town Hall meetings across Canada overwhelmingly endorsed the idea of releasing the Canadian census after 92 years. The next step in the Environics-Statistics Canada consultation is to hold "focus groups." Stay tuned..!

INTERESTING LECTURE SERIES AT NATIONAL ARCHIVES:

The *Friends of the National Archives of Canada* is hosting an interesting set of presentations at the National Archives over the next three months. On Wednesday, February 20, the Director of the new National Portrait Gallery, **Lilly Koltun**, will give an illustrated lecture based on the voluminous portrait holdings of the Archives, and will describe the exciting future plans for this initiative.

A month later, on March 20, **Michal Crawley**, the curator of the large permanent exhibition at the National Archives, "Treasured Memories," will describe the mounting of the exhibition and the selection of documents presented in it. This presentation will take place in the exhibition room itself, surrounded by the very treasures being described.

On April 10, **Andrew Rodger** will describe and illustrate the "Photographic Treasures of the National Archives."

All three lectures will begin at 8:00 p.m., and will be bilingual and fully illustrated. With the exception of the March 20 presentation, the lectures will be held in room 156 of the National Archives Building, 395 Wellington Street, in Ottawa. Admission is free.

DO YOU KNOW?

Pictured are Postmasters Frank and Germaine Farrell in front of the Farrellton Post Office. Does anyone know if Farrellton was named for this couple or their relatives? Is the Post Office still there? Is the building still standing? If yes, what is its address? This photograph does not appear to be very old. However, it has that old country store atmosphere. Through the window you can make out all sorts of interesting objects and reflected in the window, you can see a distant hill well populated with conifers. Frank and Germaine look like a salt-of-the-earth couple from whom it would be pleasant to buy stamps. I expect at this spot, locals bump into one another and would catch up on the news -- perhaps they still do!



Norma Geggie has been able to identify four of the five gentlemen pictured in the last newsletter. Using the cryptic clues hidden in inscription on the back of the photo, which reads, "Harry Ry Ward H. Elmer Bun E.", Norma guessed that they are, from right to left: brothers Harry & Roy Wills, Ward H (unidentified), Elmer Wills, and Clare (Bun) Earle. The photo was likely taken in the late thirties.