

GATINEAU VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Oct — Nov. 2003

Box/C.P. 1803 Chelsea PQ J9B 1A1 (819) 827-4432

Number 2003-05

Coming Events

Monday, Oct. 20, 7:30 PM
Chelsea Community Centre

Life and Times of a Fireman on the Gatineau Line

Duncan de Fresne is a retired Canadian Pacific locomotive fireman who often worked on the Mainway Sub Division (known as the 'Gatineau Line') during the 40s' and 50s'. Mr. de Fresne is a member of the **Bytown Railway Society**. His main aim is to promote railway history in the National Capital region and across the country. The Society publishes *Branchline - Canada's Rail Newsmagazine*, 11 times a year in which Mr. de Fresne contributes a regular column called *Tidbits*. He will have on hand copies of the articles he has written about the 'Mainway Sub'. (Some samples *Tidbits* on p.2)

Friday, Nov. 17, 7:30 PM
Andrews United Church
Riverside Rd., Wakefield

Winter: A Toronto Wartime Journal. 1942-1945

She will be a frequent contributor to *Up the St. Lawrence*. Gunda Lambton, will read from her book *Sun in Winter: A Toronto Wartime Journal. 1942-1945*. The book tells the story of one woman's life as she came to Canada from England during the war. Gunda Lambton was living in Alcove, Quebec at the time. She has written several books, including *Seven Women Artists in Canada* and *The Wildest Rivers, the Old Rivers of the Gatineau and Pontiac*.

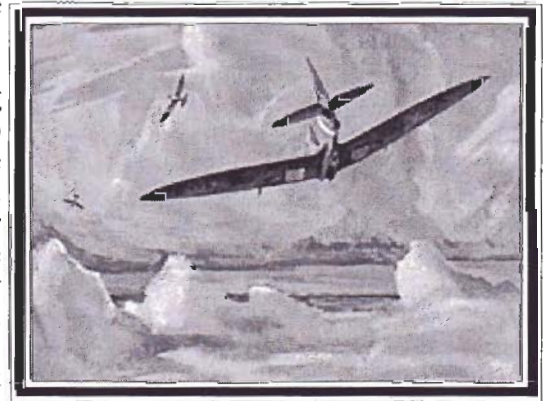
Remembrance Day Display at Chelsea Library October 22nd to November 30th, 2003

For the past several years, the *Gatineau Valley Historical Society* and the Chelsea Library have joined forces to commemorate Remembrance Day with an annual display featuring local wartime experiences. This year the exhibit will feature wartime memorabilia lent by Old Chelsea resident **Robert Hyndman**, the distinguished portrait painter and teacher whose contribution to Canadian art has extended over many decades.

After joining the RCAF in June 1940, Robert Hyndman first served as a flight instructor at Uplands Airport in Ottawa from 1941-43. In July 1943, he went to England where he flew Spitfires from Biggin Hill Airfield over the English Channel. He belonged to the 126th Tactical Wing that attacked the V1 and V2 sites in Northern Germany. "I was terrified each of the 150 missions I flew over the English Channel. I was 25. I did not really understand why I was there. I didn't want to die. I wanted to live to get back to my painting." he explained in an interview with *Legion Magazine*. (www.legionmagazine.com)

In September 1944, Hyndman's passion for art was rewarded when he was appointed an official war artist. He loved painting people, and so portraits became the strength and bulk of his war art collection. He created 68 war paintings in a year and a half.

His portrait painting has taken him around the world and has included a broad range of subjects from high society and government officials to businessmen and military personnel. (Continued on



Dive Bombing V-1 (Rocket) Sites
(CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM - CN11532)

More coming events on Page 4.

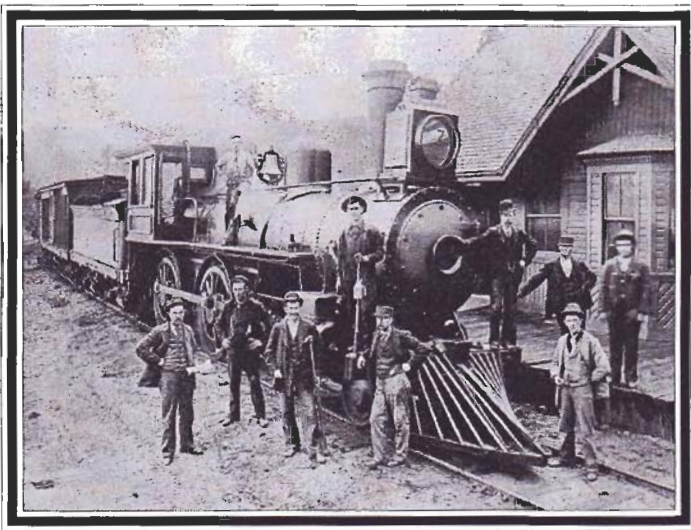
Tidbits

(From Duncan du Fresne's column in *Branchline*)

Up the Gatineau!

The Canadian Pacific Railway Company's Maniwaki Subdivision was known as "The Gatineau" to us railroaders. Although I'd seen bits and pieces of the pike after the end of the second world war, it wasn't until 1952 that I really made a "pay" trip on it as a CPR locomotive fireman. I definitely caught the tail end of its "glory days", if they could be called that, for in the early 1950s the Gatineau was still a busy place and all trains were still steam powered.

There was a daily except Sunday passenger train which left Maniwaki each morning at 07:40 and arrived at CD (Ottawa Union Station) at 11:05. By the



Locomotive No. 7, Ottawa and Gatineau Valley Railway,
ca.1890 / Gracefield (LAC — PA-164656)

time the engine got back to the Ottawa West shop and the crew went off duty it was afternoon. This gave the engine crew about three hours in Ottawa as they went back on duty around 15:00 in order to take the engine back over to CD, via Hull West, Hull (Beemer), and over the Princess Alexandra (Interprovincial) bridge for the return trip to Maniwaki. This move was, of course, made "tender first" (a back-up movement). The train that left CD at 16:15 usually consisted of a wooden Mail Express (Baggage), and two or three wooden coaches.

Maniwaki was reached at 19:40. After unloading passengers, express and mail, the train was backed to the wye where it was turned and backed to the north end of the little yard. The engine was then uncoupled and put over the ash pit on the shop track in front of the two-stall engine house. The engine crew then went off duty and retired to CP's little

northern resort, an old wood frame two-room bunk house. (December 1990)

Tragedy on the Castor grade.

Still another memory, a very unpleasant one, comes to mind. On the evening of October 11, 1953, a news flash came over the radio in Ottawa that a terrible passenger train wreck had just occurred on the Castor grade north of Gracefield, Quebec. It was a Sunday evening so the engine crew would be the spare crew which went north on Saturday. In any event an appeal for medical help was being broadcast and for a time it seemed that there was a great loss of life and many injuries. This, however, was not the case and, for reasons I no longer recall, the radio people, and perhaps others, had badly overreacted. The fact of the matter was the engine, G 1 class light Pacific No.2221, had left the track on a curve on the down-grade, rolled over on her left side and ended up quite a long distance from the track down a steep embankment. The wood bodied baggage car followed 2221 and ended up 90 degrees to 2221's tender, which had lost its forward truck and was lying on its left side at 90 degrees to the engine, but the baggage car remained upright. The first of the two all wood coaches went over on its right side and the second, and last, came to rest at a 15 degree angle, but remained on the railway.

Only 3 of the 35 passengers were seriously hurt. The most serious injury was a broken ankle, but everyone was, at the very least, "shaken up". Most had cuts and bruises and "the living daylight's scared out of them".

Springtime "Up the Gatineau"

Another little memory consists of a springtime ritual when the Section Foreman got us to stop over this or that still frozen culvert so that he could couple his steam hose to the back of our tender and thaw ice and prevent a flood. I don't recall doing this anywhere else but "Up the Gatineau!".

The **Robert Hyndman display** is being mounted with the assistance by staff and volunteers of the **Canadian War Museum**. The Society is thankful for the contributions made by **Jane Nesbitt**, Head, Library & Archives, and CWM volunteer **Ray White**. Also, many thanks to **Al Richens** and the **Chelsea Library** staff.

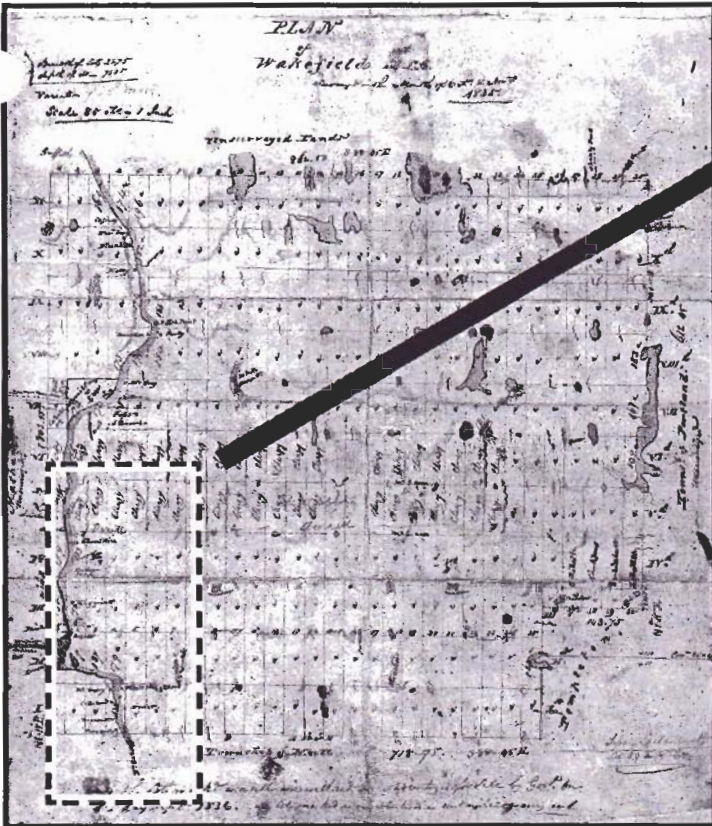
The exhibit will run from Oct. 22 to Nov. 30 at the Chelsea Library, located at 100 Old Chelsea Rd.

WarMuseum.ca

Library and Archives Canada Offers Online Access to Its Map Database

An online version of the Library and Archives Canada's catalogue of early maps of Canada is now available.

Library and Archives Canada has been acquiring, preserving and commemorating the cartographic heritage of Canada since 1872. Today, these holdings include some of the earliest known images of Canada and constitute the world's largest cartographic description of our country. Researchers now have access to these national treasures through an online catalogue on the Library and Archives Canada Web site. The catalogue provides bibliographic information on some 50,000 early maps, plans and charts, and is the largest source of information on the early cartography of Canada. The maps date from the early 16th century to the mid 1980s. Some 1,500 of the maps have been digitized at a high resolution and then reduced in size using image compression software. With the click of a mouse, researchers can magnify the maps without loss of resolution. Further scanned images will be added to the catalogue on an annual basis. The catalogue and digitized copies of some of early maps can be accessed using ArchiviaNet, a Library and Archives Canada online research tool, at www.archives.ca



"Plan of Wakefield in L.C.", 6 November 1835
 (Library and Archives of Canada — NMC 16205)



Monday November 11, 11:00 a.m. Remembrance Day

Pioneer Cemetery, Old Chelsea

Members and friends of the Historical Society of the Gatineau are invited to attend one of the most poignant of the thousands of Remembrance Day ceremonies held across Canada on November 11th. The HSG has hosted the Remembrance Day service since 1986 to keep alive the memory of Private Richard Rowland Thompson, Queen's Scarf, who is buried in the tiny cemetery. As in past years, Private Thompson's old regiment, the Royal Canadian Regiment, stationed in Petawawa, will form a guard of honour.

Wakefield Cenotaph

This year, the Remembrance Day ceremony in Wakefield will be underscored by the passing of one of Wakefield's most notable veterans, **Lorne Shouldice** who passed way in August after completing the task of rebuilding the Wakefield Cenotaph - because it needed to be done. The memorial that he helped put in place in 1977 was too shabby to represent

the memory of the Canadians that lost their lives in the wars. The new cenotaph was unveiled at last year's ceremony.



A true native son of Wakefield, he enlisted in the Canadian Navy in 1942 and served in the Battle of the Atlantic aboard the **HMS Nabob**, a Canadian-manned aircraft carrier, which was torpedoed by U-354 off the coast of Norway.

Due to excellent damage control activity by the crew, the ship limped 1,186 miles through submarine-infested waters back to safe anchorage in Scapa Flow. She arrived there on 27 August, 1944 after which the Nabob saw no further action during WW II. Although Lorne survived the ordeal, 23 of his shipmates did not. A few years ago, he was awarded a Russian decoration for participating in the "Murmansk Run" in World War II, when merchant and navy ships steamed into the stormy Arctic with supplies for the Russian front.

Unique Journeys: Canadian Emigrant Letters 1815-1852

7 August - 9 November at the
Carleton University Gallery

Canadian settlers' lives and letters home are profiled in an exhibition developed by Carleton University's Public History students, and sponsored by the Carleton Centre for the History of Migration. Director of the Centre is long time Society member and supporter Professor **Bruce S. Elliott** of the Department of History.

www.carleton.ca/gallery/

Notes from the September 29 Executive Committee

With sincere regret, the Executive Committee accepted the resignation of GVHS Director **Randolph Gherson**. The retired diplomat and Larrimac resident leaves the Board after over 10 years of dedicated service to the Society. Randolph presided over the Annual Auction from 1996 to 1999 and has continued to promote and contribute to the annual event. More recently, Randolph was involved in securing funds to begin research for the future publication of an *Illustrated History of Chelsea, Quebec*.

The Society wishes to thank Randolph and long-time GVHS Archives volunteer **Joan Gherson**, and offer our best wishes as they settle in to their new home in Ottawa.

Al Richens reported that negotiations with the Municipality of Chelsea for them to assume responsibility for maintaining the **Protestant Burial Ground** in Old Chelsea are almost complete. The Municipality will take on the management of the cemetery and will commence some the over-due repair work in the near future.

Alan also reported that some members of the **Chelsea Firefighters Association** very kindly offered to help us improve the **Pioneer Cemetery** this summer. The group spread fifteen cubic yards of wood chips to form a very attractive path which allows visitors to follow the diagram on the descriptive plaque when viewing the site.

Many thanks to John Pomeroy, Chris Young, Ryan Millar, and others from the **Chelsea Firefighters Association** for their support.