



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

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## Newsletter

No. 97/6: August-September 1997

### **AUCTION - AUGUST 16**

The Society's annual antique auction and flea market will take place, as usual, on the third Saturday in August on the grounds behind St. Stephen's Church in Old Chelsea. Viewing of the items will take place between 8:00 and 9:00, with the sale getting under way at 9:00. Master of Ceremonies **Bob Phillips** will welcome **Hoss Bertrand** back as our auctioneer. Watch for Chelsea's Mayor, **Judy Grant**, to serve a stint as guest auctioneer.



Special surprise items for the auction have been requested from the leaders of all the federal political parties, our local Member of Parliament, and our representative in the provincial Assembly.

There is no GST or PST charged on any items sold at the auction. Members wishing to offer items for sale should bring them to the church grounds on Friday afternoon or evening, August 15, where auction items will be registered. (Members have an option of requesting a receipt for income tax purposes, or asking for fifty percent of the eventual sale price.) If you want help in transporting items to the church grounds, give **Klaus Decker** a call at 827-2582. Overall coordinator of the auction again this year is **Randolph Gherson** (827-0050).

### **Flea Market Needs Volunteers**

A highlight of each year's auction is the flea market, coordinated by **Terry Winfield**. Here you will find items of inestimable value scattered among those of lesser quality - but all of it potentially of value to someone. Prices are **LOW, LOW, LOW!**

If you would like to join in the fun with Terry and her crew, please come along and help. Give Terry a call at 827-0678, to let her know you are coming, if you wish - or just come and pitch in. Extra hands are always welcome.

### **BAKE SALE**

**Rene Nielsen's** team of enthusiastic bake table managers will be dispensing coffee, muffins, and goodies at the auction on August 16. **THEY WILL NEED CAKES, COOKIES, BUNS, MUFFINS, AND OTHER EDIBLES FOR SALE. PLEASE HELP.** Bring examples of your culinary prowess along to the auction. Rene will be grateful, the Society will be thankful, and you will feel appreciated for your work - the entire community will be thereby enriched as a result of your thoughtfulness and generosity!

### **AUTHORS' TABLE**

A new feature at this year's auction: an "Authors' Table" where local writers (members of the Historical Society) will have their works for sale and be available to chat with attendees, autograph copies of their books, and compare notes. They are looking forward to meeting as many HSG members as possible.

### **Leamy Lake Archaeological Dig Tour Set for August 23**

Since 1992, a team of archaeologists has been working to uncover the fascinating story of Leamy Lake Park. Because of its location at the junction of the Ottawa, Gatineau, and Rideau rivers, it has long played an important strategic role: for centuries it was used as a meeting place by aboriginal peoples.

In June the scientists on the site announced that they had found the remains of a pre-1830s pioneer home, which they think might have belonged to one of the early settlers of Hull - perhaps Philemon Wright himself.

The National Capital Commission is offering guided tours of the original site, that is, the aboriginal settlement. The newer location, involving the early settler's house, is "off limits" to tours at present.

The Historical Society has booked a tour of the Leamy Lake site for its members, on **Saturday, August 23, at 10:00 a.m.** We hope to be able to persuade the guide at least to show us the location of the newer dig. If you are interested in this event, please reserve a spot by calling the Society's telephone number (827-4432).

### ***Prize Winners*** ***CHELSEA MUNICIPAL WEEK***

The Historical Society participated in the events marking the opening of Chelsea's new municipal hall, on Saturday, June 7. An exhibit of museum artifacts (in an ersatz antique display cupboard), archives memorabilia, and our publications enticed visitors to the basement of the Library wing (the old Council Chamber). There visitors were encouraged to enter a competition, by identifying the mysterious kitchen implements that were on display. The winners (who received Society publications) were:

Age 18 and over: Karen Ellis and J.V. Davies.

Under age 18: Kirsten Taylor-Bosman and Courtney Weeks.

Congratulations!

### ***Tour of New National Archives Building Scheduled for September 12***

Important new conservation and storage facilities for the National Archives of Canada opened in Gatineau in June. The new edifice is 99 metres in length, 92 metres wide, and 19 metres high; it houses 48 environmentally controlled vaults, each 350 square metres in size. Conservation laboratories are grouped on the top floor.

In response to our request, the Archives has agreed to host a tour of this remarkable building, at **3:30 pm on Friday, September 12.** The building is located near the corner of Maloney Boulevard and Montée Paiement in Gatineau (the easiest way to get there is to travel on highway 50, then exit at Montée Paiement south. You see the building clearly as you descend the hill on Montée Paiement. The front entrance and parking area at the south end of the building.

Highly recommended!

### ***Chelsea/Wakefield Studio Tour*** ***September 20-21 & 27-28***

Take a tour! Artists in the Chelsea/Wakefield area are hosting an event where they open their studios to the public.

The ARTISTS IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT Studio Tour will be held on the weekends of September 20 and 21, and September 27 and 28, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The tour showcases talented painters, sculptors, a glass artist, a photographer, a candle maker, and a blacksmith, giving visitors an intimate view of the artist's creative process at work.

For a brochure on this free Studio Tour, call 827-4159.

### ***Aylmer To Celebrate*** ***150th Anniversary***

A special ceremony to commemorate the incorporation of the village of Aylmer will be held on **Saturday, August 30.** Participants will meet outside St. Paul's Church, corner of Eardley and Notre Dame. The official proclamation of the incorporation, signed by Lord Elgin, will be read and posted on the church door, as it was in 1847. Free admission. For information, call 685-5036.

(For a detailed description of the 150th anniversary celebrations and sites of interest in Aylmer see the article by Catherine Fletcher in the "Sunday Best" section of *The Ottawa Citizen*, 12 July 1997.)



**WELCOME**

...to the following new members of the Historical Society:

Lorne Rowbottom, Cantley  
Bernard Benoit & Wendy James, Chelsea  
Mr. & Mrs. Horace C. Gardner, Ottawa

## ***SOCIETY UNVEILS PRENTISS CLOCK IN CHELSEA MUNICIPAL HALL***

On Friday, June 6, the Municipality of Chelsea officially opened its new administrative centre ("town hall") on the Old Chelsea Road. As part of the ceremonies, Society President **Carol Martin** unveiled the Prentiss grandfather clock, loaned to the municipality by the Society for permanent display prominently in the main lobby. Carol's remarks on this occasion are reproduced below, as they were given on that occasion:

The Thomas Brigham Prentiss clock is a very special part of Chelsea's history. *L'horloge de Thomas Brigham Prentiss a sa place dans l'histoire de Chelsea.*

Prentiss was one of the earliest settlers here, where he ran the first store and post office. Like a number of other New Englanders, he was attracted by the opportunities in Canada early in the nineteenth century. His uncle, Thomas Brigham, had married Abigail, daughter of Philemon Wright, and owned several 200-acre lots in what is now the centre of Old Chelsea.

*Prentiss fut parmi les premiers à s'établir à Chelsea, où il exploitait un magasin général et agissait comme maître de poste. Originaires de Chelsea au Vermont, Prentiss et son oncle Thomas Brigham (lui-même gendre de Philemon Wright) ont légué le nom de leur village d'origine à leur nouveau patelin. Ce nom se perpétue aujourd'hui par l'appellation des villages de Old Chelsea et Chelsea et de notre Municipalité.* Brigham and Prentiss both came from Chelsea, Vermont, and one of their enduring contributions important to us here today is the name they gave to our municipality.

Among the prized possessions that Thomas Brigham Prentiss brought, over some 450 kilometres of rough roads and not exactly tranquil rivers in the 1830s, was this grandfather clock. With its wooden working parts, the clock dates to about 1780, and became the property of the Historical Society of the Gatineau thanks to the sharp eyes and persuasive powers of Patrick Evans (present here for this ceremony today), who noted it with a display of other clocks in the care of the Bytown Museum. It has been restored to working order and the Historical Society of the Gatineau now offers it on a long-term loan to the Municipality of Chelsea.

*Parmi les objets que Thomas Brigham Prentiss apporta dans sans pays d'adoption, vers 1834, sur une distance de 450 kilomètres par des routes cahoteuses, se trouvait cet horloge de parquet à mécanisme de bois datant d'environ*

*1780. Grâce à l'oeil expert et à l'influence de Patrick Evans (qui est ici pour cette cérémonie aujourd'hui) qui l'avait dénichée parmi d'autres horloges exposées au Musée Bytown, La Société historique de la Gatineau en a fait l'acquisition. Elle a été remise en état de fonctionnement et la Société a récemment pris les dispositions pour en faire le prêt à long terme à la Municipalité.*

*L'horloge Prentiss est un lien avec l'origine et l'histoire de notre communauté et confirme notre intérêt dans la conservation du patrimoine. Quand elle a appris que Mme. le Maire et ses conseillers étaient à la recherche d'objets qui pouvaient être le témoin des origines de notre communauté, la Société historique de la Gatineau était fière de pouvoir offrir cette horloge. Bien à la vue dans le nouvel hôtel-de-ville, cette horloge est un rappel tangible de la contribution des valeurs du passé à une société moderne et progressive.*

The Prentiss Clock symbolizes a connection with our historic roots and the respect and interest we have in preserving our heritage. When Chelsea's Mayor and Councillors were seeking something to remind residents and visitors of our community's past, the Historical Society was pleased to offer the Prentiss Clock.

In its location in our beautiful new Chelsea Town Hall the clock is a tangible reminder of the contribution of heritage values to a modern and progressive community.

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## ***THE QUEEN'S SCARF: a Copy for the Historical Society***

From September to November the Historical Society will have on display at the Chelsea Library an exact replica of the Queen's Scarf knitted by Queen Victoria and presented to Private Richard Rowland Thompson (who lies in the Chelsea Pioneer Cemetery). The scarf will be on loan from the Canadian War Museum (to whom the Society expresses its thanks).

During the time that the scarf is on display in our community, we will be looking for volunteers who have the ability to make an accurate copy for the Historical Society of the Gatineau. We shall then have this copy of a valuable piece of our heritage available for future ceremonial and exhibition use.

Please contact **Alan Richens** at 827-1616 for further details.

## ***Wakefield Cemetery Board To Hold Seventh Annual Memorial Service***

The Wakefield Cemetery Board has announced its annual service, to be held this year at **Hall's Cemetery** on **Sunday, August 17**, at 2:30 p.m. The purpose of this annual service is to remember those buried in both Maclaren's and Hall's Cemeteries, inviting their descendants to gather together in remembrance and contribute towards ongoing maintenance of the two cemeteries. For further information or to offer a contribution (tax-deductible), contact **Jack Martin** at 459-2031 or address the "Wakefield Cemetery Board," P.O. Box 177, Wakefield, QC J0X 3G0.

### Reminder:

## ***British Isles Family History Fall Conference***

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa is again sponsoring a conference, to be held September 26-28, in Ottawa City Hall. Topics to be covered deal with various aspects of emigration from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

To receive a brochure with details and a registration form, contact BIFHSGO. P.O. Box 38026, Ottawa K2C 1N0.

### ***Correspondence***

From Michael Cooper, Coordinator of the Outaouais Heritage Fair held at the Canadian Museum of Civilization on May 23 and 24, addressed to First Vice President Ernie Mahoney:

I want to thank you most sincerely for your enthusiastic participation at our first Outaouais Heritage Fair on May 23 and 24. The excellent presentation of your organization and your representatives reflects your obvious enthusiasm for the subject and the attention you give to heritage and history.

I also want to thank you for your sympathetic approach to our first-time stumbles. As there appears to be strong support for a second Heritage Fair next year, we educators will certainly learn from our mistakes.

Once again, please express my thanks and congratulations to your colleagues.

## ***WAKEFIELD COVERED BRIDGE COMMITTEE UPDATE***

A date has been set for the official opening of the Wakefield Covered Bridge: **Saturday, October 11**. Much work remains to be completed between now and that date, including installation and painting of the siding (expected to be finished by the end of August).

The Committee held a highly successful Jamboree Party in late June, which produced just over five thousand dollars in net revenues (800 people attended the event). The Committee is still working to pay down a debt of about \$65,000.

While corporate donations are being sought actively, individual donations from members of the community are more than welcome. Cheques (which are tax deductible) may be sent to the Wakefield Covered Bridge Committee, Box 444, Wakefield, Québec J0X 3G0 - or you may call either 459-2061 or 459-2773.



## ***Recognition of Major Donors to the Wakefield Covered Bridge***

*.. So future generations can appreciate  
your generosity . . . .*

*In preparation for the Official Opening of our new bridge in October, we are now finalizing the list of those who have made major donations of \$1,000 or more - either in cash or in kind. As promised, the names on this list will be engraved on a bronze plaque at the bridge entrance.*

*If you wish to add your name to the list to be engraved on the plaque, please call 459-2061 or 459-2773 before August 31st.*

*Or, if you have contributed previously and wish to donate the difference to achieve \$1,000, we have a complete record of all donations of \$10 or more and will be pleased to calculate the balance for you. We would remind you that donations are tax deductible.*

*(The names of all donors in our record will be placed on an honour roll to be deposited with the Historical Society of the Gatineau.)*

*- Wakefield Covered Bridge Committee*

## Special Feature

### **HAMMOND HOUSE IS DEMOLISHED: Another Incalculable Loss for the Architectural Heritage of the Outaouais**

by Michel Prévost

[Reprinted from *Heritage Canada*, May/June 1997]

The demolition of the historic Hammond House in Hull, Québec on March 27 will remain forever in our memory. It took only a few hours to wipe out more than 130 years of history. This destruction is particularly dramatic since it was the latest in a long series of disasters for the architectural history of the Outaouais.

#### **History repeats itself**

In recent decades, a part of Hull's historic building stock has disappeared. We could mention, among others, the old city hall and Notre Dame church, which burned in the 1970s, as well as the court house that was torn down at the same time to make way for federal offices. More recently, the Scott building fell under the wrecker's ball in 1995 after having been damaged by fire. And finally, more of the matchstick houses, which are typical of the Hull landscape, disappear every year. This sad reality made saving the Hammond House of prime importance to many in the community.

#### **The Outaouais Historical Society's campaign to save Hammond House**

Built between 1860 and 1870, this magnificent neo-gothic stone house was one of the oldest in Hull as well as the most important historic monument in the city's north end. Moreover, it was one of the last vestiges of the village formerly called Ironside. The Outaouais Historical Society (OHS) requested in vain that the City of Hull designate Hammond House a heritage property. The OHS also asked Mr. André Dupont, the owner of the building and Du Portage Mercury, to integrate the building in his plans to make room for Cité Chrysler and the two automobile giants, Ford and Chrysler, intervene financially to save the historic house.

All in all, the preservation of Hammond House became a symbol for the future of the city's heritage. The Outaouais Historical Society threw all its energies into this battle, by organizing the first demonstration in its history on February 26 in front of the threatened building and by appearing before the municipal council a few days later. In addition, the Society orchestrated a boycott of the two car dealers involved in the demolition, and distributed hundreds of leaflets at a book fair, le Salon du livre de l'Outaouais.

#### **Conflict between the business sector and heritage buildings?**

The failure to save Hammond House resulted from, among other things, the perceptions of certain parties, particularly members of the city's demolition control committee, who suggested that it is impossible to protect a heritage building in a business zone. The OHS heartily rejected this argument, reminding everyone that the house was on the site long before the dealers' arrival. In addition, the Society saw no reason why a house that was designated as a building of regional interest in the Outaouais regional Community's revised development plan should be sacrificed under the pretext that it is located in a commercial zone. Indeed, Hull already has a convincing example of heritage preservation in such an area.

The Ferme Columbia, one of the rare historic houses designated at the municipal level, is a perfect example of a re-adapted hundred-year-old building situated in the heart of a commercial neighbourhood. The house, tucked in between three shopping centres, is occupied today by a financial institution, the General Trust. Indeed, there was no conflict between the "car-dealer strip" and heritage preservation, since the latter preserves a town's history and its inhabitants' way of life through the passage of time.

#### **Promising elements for the heritage of the Outaouais**

Of course, the results of our campaign seem very dark for the architectural heritage of the Outaouais. All the same, we must remember that there were some positive outcomes. The debate sensitized part of the population to the importance of preserving its historical buildings. Only rarely in the region has a historic house under threat been so much in the news - over fifty articles appeared in local newspaper, for instance. In addition, protest letters, comments on open-line shows, and expressions of support for the preservation of the building, including one from Heritage Canada, all demonstrated the interest of the people of the Outaouais in their heritage.

#### **The OHS asks the city to re-form the Heritage Committee**

After the demolition of Hammond House, the Outaouais Historical Society asked the City of Hull to re-form the Heritage Committee, which was discontinued in 1993. The OHS is convinced that the restoration of this committee will enable the city to better preserve its history and its heritage. Highlighting heritage in this way seems essential to us, particularly within the framework of the preparations for Hull's bicentennial in the year 2000.

*Michel Prévost is president of the Outaouais Historical Society and French editor of the Newsletter of the Council of Heritage Organizations in Ottawa. He has been Chief Archivist at the University of Ottawa since 1990.*

## ***Pioneer Memorials for Wakefield Cemeteries***

A local organization under the chairmanship of Ron Stevenson, the Pioneer Monument Preservation Committee/Le comité pour la préservation des monuments pionniers, is planning to dedicate pioneer memorials at two of Wakefield's cemeteries, Hall's and Maclaren's, on **August 4**. The dedication at Hall's is scheduled for 10:30 a.m., and that for Maclaren's for 3:00 p.m.

Special attractions and a lunch at the Legion Hall in Wakefield (cost \$6) are planned by Mr. Stevenson and his committee. The plaques commemorate persons from 1881 and earlier who are buried in these cemeteries. Further information on the committee and the ceremonies on August 4 may be obtained from Mrs. Janet Reynolds at 59 Normandie, Hull, QC J8Z 1N6.

(The Pioneer Monument Preservation Committee is an independent organization not affiliated with either the Wakefield Cemetery Board or the Historical Society of the Gatineau.)

## ***Historical Microreproductions on the Internet***

The Ottawa-based Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions has been awarded a \$50,000 U.S. grant for a project that will make early works of Canadian literature, native studies, and women's history available on the Internet. The grant was provided by the Mellon Foundation of New York.

The two-year project will be undertaken by the Institute, the National Library of Canada, the Université Laval Library, and the University of Toronto Library. Since 1978 the Institute has located and preserved in microformat more than 70,000 Canadian books, pamphlets, and periodicals documenting Canada's printed record before 1920.

A bilingual Web site will provide a detailed description of the project. Address: [www.nlc-bnc.ca/cihm/ecol/](http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/cihm/ecol/)

## **NEAT STUFF**

### **Using Objects to Explore Women's History**

Saturday, 4 October 1997

Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull

This one-day workshop on researching and interpreting women's history through personal, family, community, and museum objects and collections features hands-on sessions, gallery visits, a behind-the-scenes tour of collections, and presentations.

For more information, contact **Tina Bates** at 776-8362; [christina.bates@cmcc.muse.digital.ca](mailto:christina.bates@cmcc.muse.digital.ca).

Sponsored by the Ontario Women's History Network and the Canadian Museum of Civilization.



The *Newsletter* is published regularly by the Historical Society of the Gatineau. Contributions and comments are always welcome. Editor/compiler is Jay Atherton (827-1703; e-mail: [jather@ccs.carleton.ca](mailto:jather@ccs.carleton.ca)). Pat Lavergne keeps our mailing list up to date. Distribution is handled, very ably, by Rae Moore, Marjorie Evis, and Charis Palmer.