

## HERITAGE RENFREW

Participating with Heritage Canada  
 Affiliated member of the Ontario Historical Society

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NEWSLETTER

September, 1979

No 20

The Board and Officers of Heritage Renfrew:

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## NOTICE OF MEETING

The September Meeting of Heritage Renfrew will be a Bus Trip to Geological and Historical Site in Renfrew and Pontiac counties. Fuller details are given on another page.

Bus leaves Bus Terminal, Renfrew and Argyle Sts. at 9.00 a.m.  
 Saturday September 29th, 1979 Bus returns about 4.30 p.m.

Members should provide their own lunch which may be eaten in Hall of United Church, Quyon where coffee will be provided.

There will be other coffee breaks and rest stops along the trip.

Clyde C Kennedy will be the guide and commentator on the trip. He will explain in detail and tell the story of the several unusual geological and historical sites that will be visited.

Clyde is preparing a written account with maps which will be handed out on the bus.

Wyman MacKechnie will join the trip at Quyon and will be guide and commentator on the portion of the trip around Quyon.

For a better understanding of many parts of the trip the reading of pertinent chapters in following books may be helpful:

The Upper Ottawa Valley by Clyde C Kennedy

What Men they were by Wyman MacKechnie

Carleton Saga by Harry and Olive Walker

The FALL COLOR of the leaves should be close to its best on September 29th and there will be many beautiful sights on both sides of the Ottawa River.

*Notes & from Helen Clark*

Champlain Sea Deposits of Shells

Over 10,000 years ago when Genesee County was flooded by waters of the Champlain Sea colonies of bivalve mollusks resembling clams lived on some parts of the shore. When the waters receded these creatures were left high and dry. Covered over with sand they remained for thousands of years until recently uncovered by sand excavators. The bus trip will go to where they may be seen in great numbers and specimens may be collected.

Ottawa River Potholes

Below the present Chenaux Hydro Dam the fast flowing Ottawa used to drop stones into depressions in the bed rock of the river. These stones were whirled around by the current for ages until they had worn deep holes in the rock. These are known as pot holes,

Dozens may be seen in the rock where they vary in size from a few inches in diameter to almost 6 feet across. They are most unusual and when seen in the white crystalline limestone with its gray bands they are quite beautiful.

Visit at Edison Brown's

Mr and Mrs Edison Brown have given us a very kind invitation to visit them at their home near Stark's Corners. Edison collects

gasoline engines - the "hit and miss" variety with two fly wheels - which were widely used as a source of power until about the 1920's. He has a special building to house his extensive collection. There are engines varying in size from the small  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hp used to drive cream separators or washing machines to the 40 hp monsters used to drive heavy machinery in industries and mills. Edison has restored most of them and has them in running order. In the house Mrs Brown has a variety of antiques which she will be pleased to show.

Hilton Iron Mine

For many years iron ore was taken from a pit near Bristol. It ultimately became about 900 feet deep and the slag from the mine forms the high "volcano" that is visible for miles on both side of the river. The mine was abandoned a few years ago and the pit is now slowly filling with water.

Pontiac Village

In the years around the 1850's an important route of transportation up the Valley was by boat up the Ottawa River. As the steamers could not get around the Chats Falls at the foot of Chats Lake they unloaded and their cargoes were taken over a railroad in cars hauled by horses. The lower terminus of this railroad as well the steamboat wharf was at an early settlement known as Pontiac Village. It was once a busy place but now little remains except a few old stone foundations, and the horse railway is long gone.

Chats Canal

To take the steamers around the rapids and falls the government began a canal in 1854. After working at it for two years they ran out of money and gave up. The old rock cuts and dikes are still there.

Churches in Guyon

The United Church where we will have lunch was a pioneer Methodist Church built in 1859. It is a most attractive little building and has served well for 100 years. St Mary's Roman Catholic Church is a fine stone structure built in 1908. The parish dates to 1837. The Anglican Church of St John the Evangelist was built in 1882. A Mission Station had been opened in Guyon in 1845-1854 although Anglican clergy had visited the district as early as 1827.

Mrs E C Amaren  
 Robert Amaron  
 Judy Anderson  
 Leslie J Anderson  
 Robert Beattie  
 Audrey Beatty  
 Lenox Beauprie  
 A W Beck  
 Mrs A W Beck  
 Mrs Harold Bolger  
 Phillip Bolger  
 Thelma Box  
 Gordon Briscoe  
 Edison Brown  
 Mrs Edison Brown  
 Dora Bujold  
 Dr W B Burwell  
 Mrs W B Burwell  
 Mrs R Buzzell  
 Donald Campbell  
 Mrs Donald Campbell  
 Eldon Campbell  
 Mrs Eldon Campbell  
 Mrs Janet Carmichael  
 S M Chown  
 Helen Clark  
 Douglas Cochlin  
 Mrs Doug Cochlin  
 Jack Collins  
 Mrs Lucy Colterman  
 Marion Connaughty  
 Jennifer Cooke  
 Elizabeth Cox  
 Gladys Cox  
 Vera Cox  
 John Currie-Mills  
 Mrs John Currie-Mills  
 Paul DeLong  
 Gerturde Derry  
 Evelyn Desilets  
 Elaine Dick  
 Dolan Books  
 Mrs A Donohue  
 James Donohue  
 Evelyn Draper  
 Mrs H B Elliott  
 R J Elliott  
 Mrs E Enright  
 Mrs Don Farquharson  
 Edward Fee  
 W T Ferguson  
 John Ferrier  
 Mrs John Ferrier  
 R J Fletcher  
 L J Fraser  
 Mrs A Freemark  
 Willis Froats

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Norman Wilson

Denis Watts  
 Mrs Susan White

Norman Wallace  
 Mrs Eric Watson

Ed Gallagher  
 Mrs Ed Gallagher  
 Lawrence Gallagher  
 Leta Garvie  
 Ralph Geddes  
 Mrs Elsie Gibbons  
 Gilbert Griffin  
 Mrs B Gigg  
 Florence Godin  
 Mrs Jas Goodfellow  
 Mrs Norma Goodfellow  
 Audrey Green  
 Mrs R Allan Guest  
 Lillian Handford  
 Evelyn Hawkins  
 Effie Heins  
 Peter Henderskn  
 Mrs W Hermans  
 Dave Hidler  
 Mrs Reta Hilliard  
 Rev John Hillmer  
 Harry Hinchley  
 James H Hinchley  
 Helen Hobs  
 Campbell Humphries  
 Yvonne Imbleay  
 Halina Jeletzky  
 J C Jennings  
 George Johnston  
 Mrs George Johnston  
 Mrs M Johnston  
 Makie Kelly  
 Clyde C Kennedy  
 Robt Kimberly  
 Kinsmen Club  
 Russell Kirk  
 Mrs Russell Kirk  
 J E C Knight  
 Heather Lang  
 Joyce Lavigne  
 Brenda Lee-Whiting  
 Kay Leeney  
 H A Legris  
 Maureen Legris  
 Mrs H Lester  
 J E Lindsay  
 Mrs J E Lindsay  
 N E Lindsay  
 Mrs N E Lindsay  
 Wm Lockwood  
 Jean Logan  
 David Lorente  
 Wm Mass  
 James Martin  
 Bial Mason  
 Mrs Ernie Millar  
 Eva Miller  
 Barbara Moogk  
 Mrs D G Munro

Mrs D G Munro  
 Dolores Mur ay  
 Mrs Jas McAdam Jr  
 Mrs Jas McAdam Sr  
 Dorothy McArthur  
 Lloyd McBride  
 Mrs Lloyd McBride  
 Barry McCormack  
 D W McCuaig  
 Thos McDowell  
 Mrs Thos McDowell  
 Wm McGahern  
 Irene McGregor  
 A A McHugh  
 Mrs A A McHugh  
 Wyman McKechnie  
 Jas McKillican  
 Mrs J J McMahan  
 Winnie Nute  
 Catherine O'Brien  
 Art O'Connor  
 Calvin E Patrick  
 Ada Plaunt  
 Janet Plaunt  
 Mrs S Pottinger  
 Len Quilty  
 Mrs Len Quilty  
 E W Rafuse  
 Ethel Rankin  
 Donald Ready  
 Helen Roach  
 Mrs P Roberts  
 Mrs S Rowsell  
 Bruce Scott  
 Mrs Bruce Scott  
 Scott & Sons Hardware  
 Mick Sidney  
 Wayne Simpson  
 Mrs H Skinner  
 Stanley Sloan  
 Mrs L B Smith  
 W J Smith  
 Robt Stark  
 Mr Robt Stark  
 Doug Steele  
 Mabel Stevens  
 Milton Stevenson  
 Dan Stewart  
 D W Stewart  
 Mrs D W Stewart  
 Miss Margaret Stewart  
 E Hostresman  
 Barb Symingotn  
 Mrs E Stuart Taylor  
 Mrs Ralph Thom  
 Marlene Thom pson  
 Thos Vice

## MEMBERSHIP IN HERITAGE RENFREW

List of members as of August 31st, 1979 as shown on our books is enclosed. If there are any errors or omissions please advise the Financial Secretary.

We are now open to accept memberships for 1980. The fee is the same as formerly.

Memberships may be obtained from any member of the Membership Committee: Jessie Stewart, Chairman, Helen Clark, Marge Lindsay Dorothy Skinner, Les Anderson and Harry Hinchley.

Marge Lindsay is to be the Guest Speaker at the November meeting of The Ottawa Valley Historical Society in Pembroke. The meeting is to be held in St John's Lutheran Church Hall on Monday evening, November 12th. Her subject is to be "Early Homes on the Opeongo Road in and around Renfrew." It is illustrated with slides.

Marge was to have given this at the Symposium in Pembroke in May but the slide projector acted up and the slides could not be shown. She presented it in Renfrew at our June meeting and it was both informative and entertaining.

Arnprior Historical Society had a dinner meeting in August at the Arnprior Golf Club. They presented the retiring President with a fine metal plaque in appreciation of the good work he has done. Phil is leaving this fall to attend University. Miss Heather Lang is the new President of the Arnprior Society. She is young and energetic and has a good executive to work with.

The Arnprior Society has done a good job in trying to preserve the old stone C P R railway station at Arnprior. It was in danger of demolition but the Society came up with some suggested uses as a combined college, courtroom and arts centre. Arnprior Council has accepted their recommendations and has agreed to pursue the matter with Algonquin College and the Office of the Attorney General, two of the proposed tenants, according to the Arnprior Chronicle.

The Ottawa Valley Historical Society has finished their new building at the Champlain Trail Museum in Pembroke. The building was officially opened in August and many of the new exhibits are in place. They run things something like the Renfrew Fair - with small groups or committees under a chairman each responsible for its own display only. They have set up a number of rooms or compartments separated by light movable partitions. A compartment is set up to depict some individual display such as a farm kitchen, a pioneer bedroom, a country store, a barber shop, a blacksmith shop, etc. It is planned to keep changing them periodically.

NOSTALGIA:

"The woman sat among the doomed things, turning them over and looking past them and back...No, there isn't room... How can we live without our lives? How can we live without our past?"

...John Steinbeck- The Grapes of Wrath

Settlers Near Red River From Renfrew by Ethel Rankin Page 5

While Reading "Clearing in the West" by Nellie McCullung one of the many excellent books in the library of the Free Methodist Church Renfrew I came across this stanza:

"The house which was to receive a family from Renfrew, Ontario stood about 3 miles from our house and all that first long winter it served as an emblem of hope for us across the snow. It was a square house built by Mr Naismith and his brother in law, Tom Dunfield, who had returned to Renfrew for the winter."

Mrs McCullung, then a young girl of about ten years goes on to relate the return of Mr and Mrs Naismith (no doubt remembered by a few now but known by many in 1882) and related that Mrs Naismith wore her beautiful blonde hair in braids and typified the best kind of pioneer woman: cheerful, self-reliant and undaunted by any emergency.

Isn't it thrilling to know that Renfrew people helped to settle the West and that after all weasels had destroyed all of Nellie's parents' hens, Mrs Naismith was among the neighbors helping replenish the flock by donating a fine yellow hen with black markings. Nellie was the keeper of the hen house and it was her chore to check it every night to see that that the egg layers were safely locked in.

Are there any relatives of the Dunfields or the Naismiths among our members? It would be wonderful to know now almost a century later. Please let Mrs Rankin hear from you.

#### BOOK REVIEW

"Faces and Places Along the Railway"- Elizabeth A Willmott  
Gage Publishing Co \$17.95 available locally

"Railway stations are disappearing at an alarming rate - these stations that were once the pride of their communities where they were built...The townspeople looked at a station as a town's guarantee of progress, prosperity and glamour." So writes Ms Willmott and this more or less sets the theme of her book and stations are very much the subject. She shows a great appreciation of the architecture of railway stations which more or less seemed to follow a type of its own.

There are many excellent photographs of stations chiefly in Western Ontario. However, there are some in Eastern Ontario including a good though recent photo of the C P R station in Renfrew which is still standing although its days may be numbered. At the other end of the K & P line the Kingston station has been taken over by the Chamber of Commerce. Surrounding the old station they have made a beautiful park with garden and walks which is one of the show places of the city.

There is also a photo of the Parry's Bay station on what used to be the Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound line built by timber baron J R Booth. At one time this line, which runs through Renfrew carried as many as 35 trains a day. Spearheaded by a local High School teacher the citizens of Parry's Bay put on a campaign and saved the old station and water tank.

There are many photos in the book showing interiors of stations. However the book is by no means all about stations only. There are many photos of locomotives, timetables, bridges and water tanks, all of which were a part of railroading. There is even a photo of a crossing watch tower much like the old one that stood guard at the Raglans St C P R crossing in Renfrew near the Exchange Hotel.

H.H.

Remember how on the Ottawa Bus Tour last May we had the good ice cream cones at the Centennial "restaurant" in Pakenham? And how everyone enjoyed them?

Here is what Dick Brown writes in the Financial Post Magazine:

"The largest ice cream cone in the country (maybe in the whole world) goes for 50¢ at the Centennial Restaurant in Pakenham, Ontario on Highway 29 between Smiths Falls and Arnprior. And it's big. People from all over the Ottawa Valley, and beyond, come to try the cones they have heard about....The proprietor describes the cones, modestly, as "two good-sized scoops". Some of her customers liken them to softballs. The ice cream is Sealtest and it's good, but it's the hefty scoops that really impress everybody."

HISTORICAL PLAQUES OF THE VALLEY No 16

Lt. Christopher James Bell, R.A. 1795 - 1836

1½ miles southeast of Castleford  
at Bonnechere River Crossing.

A pioneer of the Ottawa Valley lumber industry, Bell commanded H. M. Gunboat "Murray" at the battle of Plattsburg on Lake Champlain in 1814. Emigrating to Canada about 1817, he was granted 800 acres of land, partly located here at the "first chute" of the Bonnechere River. By 1829 he had built a timber slide and sawmill, in the vicinity of which there grew up the hamlet of "Castleford" named for Bell's birthplace in Yorkshire. The name was later transferred to the present settlement on the Ottawa River. As magistrate, commissioner of the court of requests, land agent and postmaster, Bell played an active role in the development of Renfrew County.

#### PEAT BOG EARMARKED FOR DEVELOPMENT

According to the Cobden Sun, the Minister of Natural Resources believes the peat bog or swamp of Westmeath is a "unique ecological area that should be preserved." Peat has a potential as an alternate fuel and source of energy. The bog is being earmarked as a development area in the official plan and studies should be made of possibilities of using the peat from this bog.

#### C P R Station at Renfrew

There seems to be no word about the future of the C P R station at Renfrew. "Maybe no news is good news. But we have heard what has happened in Perth, Almonte and Arnprior and wonder if we may be next.

In any case it is good to know that we have friends in Ottawa. Arnprior Council was advised by James W Knight, Associate Director of Heritage Canada that "should it prove necessary, Heritage Canada will use its good offices in an attempt to persuade the appropriate officials of the merit of saving the building. You can count on us as an ally."

#### AN APPRECIATION

Two of the participants in Halina Jeletzky's walking tour of Raglan Street in June have expressed appreciation recently. One said he sees much more to our old buildings every time he goes up town. The other said she had a much better appreciation of the architecture of Quebec buildings as seen on a bus tour as a result of learning a little bit about our own buildings from the talks given by Halina.