

# Opeongo lines



January 1991

## *A Special Message to all Home Children, their descendants and friends, and members of Heritage Renfrew*

**A** reunion of Home Children, their descendants and friends will be held at the Renfrew Quality Inn on Sunday, January 27, 1991, between 2:00 and 4:00 pm. There is no admission fee; all are welcome. The gathering is sponsored by Heritage Renfrew and will be preceded by a short Annual Meeting starting at 1:30 pm. Again, all are welcome to attend.

At 2:00 pm Dave Lorente, the son of an Ottawa Valley Home Child will make a short slide presentation and will introduce a Home Child who came to Renfrew County and stayed. Joe Brown will give his personal perspective of the Child Migration movement which ceased in this area in the mid 1930s. The gathering will then break for informal discussion and free coffee. Home Children and their descendants and friends who wish to be so identified will wear special buttons and name tags to facilitate identification and prompt discussion. At about 4:00 pm everyone will reassemble and a representative group of volunteers will answer questions from the floor. The official gathering will be over at 4:30 or so.

Those who wish to dine at the Quality Inn that evening with old or new found friends are responsible for making their own reservations by calling the Quality Inn at (613) 432 - 8109 or toll free at 1-800-263-8967 or 1-800-228-5151. The Quality Inn is located beside Highway 417 at the O'Brien Road turn-off.

Even though Heritage Renfrew will be sending letters to editors of Valley newspapers from Hawkesbury to North Bay, we urge everyone to contact Home Children personally to advise them of the reunion. We also ask that you send the names of any persons unable to attend to Dave Lorente so that he might send them a report on the proceedings.

Home Children have only recently come to the attention of the British public who are shocked that so many thousands of their children were literally exported to ease social problems back home in the mother country and to populate the Commonwealth with loyal subjects of the King. Many came to the Ottawa Valley through St. George's Home on Wellington Street in Ottawa, or by way of clearing houses run by Barnardo, MacPherson and others, which were run elsewhere in Canada. Their descendants make up 10% of Canada's population.

Most came as farm labourers, and, while the majority were teenagers, some of those labourers were as young as four or five. Few complained about the injustice of the system, and fewer still listened to those who, like Renfrew's Charlotte Whitton, did raise a voice in protest. Only in the last decade or so have several books been written on the topic, and it has been the subject of at least two recent British television programmes and a Canadian docu-drama. That so many of the "child migrants" could have been denied something so basic as a childhood and still survive and contribute to our country is nothing short of miraculous. There is an unwritten chapter in our history. It's time to do something about that... What better way than a reunion to start things off!

Send information to:

Dave Lorente,

107, Erindale Avenue,

Renfrew, Ont. K7V 4G3.

(613) 432 - 2486.

Proud son of a Valley Home Boy.

## *Founding Families*

Our project on the founding families of Admaston, Horton & Renfrew Village is now well under way. The following work has been achieved to date:

1. We have completed a "data base" for the project; i.e. we have basic information on all the founding families, gleaned from the 1851 census, rounded out by references which have appeared in local publications.
2. Several family entries have been completed, based on research kindly shared by people who have been working on their family tree.
3. Other families are now being researched, some by members of Heritage Renfrew and others by descendants from outside the area.

We still have many families which have little or nothing done on them, and we have some which have one line completed but with large gaps in other branches.

### *Can you help??*

We realise that not all our members are interested in genealogy so we don't expect a 100% involvement in researching the families. However, we could use volunteers who would be willing to offer some limited support in one or more of the following ways:

1. To look up obituaries in *The Renfrew Mercury*. This involves going to the Renfrew library and copying out information from half a dozen obituaries from the newspaper, which is there on microfilm. We will supply the exact date of the obituaries wanted, and if necessary, the staff will show you how to operate the microfilm reader, which is quite simple. You need to make an appointment for the use of this machine.
2. To write down and submit any human interest story you know of, in connection with any of the families. Examples: pioneer stories; funny incidents; names of descendants who have achieved prominence as clergy, members of parliament, artists etc.
3. The following is a list of people who appeared to be single at the time of the 1851 census. Do you recognise any of them? Did they marry? Did they stay here or go elsewhere? Please let us know.

Single people in the 1851 census. (Some spellings may be incorrect.)

|                        |                          |                           |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Allan, Elizabeth       | Gauthier, Deline         | Miller, Archie, Jesse, Wm |
| Allan, Michael         | Gibbons, James           | Morris, James             |
| Armstrong, Janet, Mary | Gibson, William          | Murray, David             |
| Bain, Katherine        | Goodwin, Alex            | Nisbet, Jean              |
| Beecher, Ann           | Hardican, Edmond         | O'Brien, Anne             |
| Bonnun, Alex           | Harkness, Allan          | O'Docherty, Patrick       |
| Bowthre, Celinaes      | Harper, J.L.             | O'Neil, Peter             |
| Bridgeman, Maurice     | Harty, Michael           | Orme, Katherine           |
| Brunette, Alex         | Harvey, Susan            | Qurda, Balesh             |
| Burke, John, Michael   | Henhasen, John           | Power, William            |
| Burnett, John          | Hogg, John               | Reid, Ellen               |
| Butler, Bridget        | Hughes, Mary, Patrick    | Roe, Eliza Jane           |
| Campbell, Lachlan      | Kelly, Thomas, Wm,       | Rollin, Helen             |
| Cameron, John          | Mary                     | Ronna, Alex               |
| Cappo, Joseph          | Lennon, Patrick, Stephen | Rotton, Mary              |
| Carr, Joanna           | Linard, Joseph           | Russell, James            |
| Code, Francis          | Maryon, John             | Scanlon, Bridget          |
| Connor, Bidy, Margaret | McAley, Daniel           | Scott, William            |
| Cuthbertson, Thomas    | McAllister, Charles      | Seeley, Mary              |
| Dandy, John            | McFeathers, Mary         | Settler, Thomas           |
| Deacon, John, Thomas   | McGoggin, Mary           | Shepherd, Mr              |
| Dee, Ann               | McGrath, Alice, Mary     | Shanahan, James           |
| Delaine, Martin        | McIntyre, Duncan,        | Smith, Anne, Emma         |
| Dewar, Dan             | Henry                    | Stewart, Alex, Margaret   |
| Edmonds, Alex, Amos,   | McKay, William           | Sullivan, William         |
| Rebecca                | McKechnie, Katherine     | Thomson, Mark             |
| Farrell, Edward        | McLaren, Donald, John,   | Tun, John                 |
| Fraser, William        | Margaret                 | Wilkinson, Eleanor        |
| Friel, Mary            | McLean, John, Mary       | Wilson, Thomas            |
| Gallagher, Hugh        | McMann, James            |                           |

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 Some facts about the early settlers:

Many who came to Renfrew Village were tradespeople - blacksmiths, merchants, coopers, masons, millers, tanners, carpenters.

In Horton Township, there were quite a few veterans who had first located in the military settlements of Perth and Richmond.

In Admaston, many of the Scottish people had come to Lanark County from Scotland in 1820 and 1821 as "Lanark Society Settlers." In the famine years, a large group of inter - related families came from County Kerry, Ireland to the district.

**A**ve atque Vale . . . Hail and farewell! That old Roman greeting seems appropriate at this time when we say goodbye to the old year and to the 1990 Heritage Renfrew Executive and welcome a new slate of officers. We also welcome the last decade of the century. (It really does begin only in 1991!)

This is also a time for assessing the extent to which your Executive achieved its Aims, Goals and Objectives. Here, in more or less chronological order, are some of the things we did in 1990.

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- \* Held Directors' meetings every month, as well as separate Committee meetings, sometimes several a month;
- \* Updated the By-Laws and Constitution;
- \* Drafted about a dozen pages of long and short-term Aims, Goals and Objectives;
- \* Published newsletters that reach over 200 households;
- \* Promoted interest in local genealogy by:
  - Providing information in our Newsletter;
  - Helping to promote the formation of the Upper Ottawa Valley Genealogical Group with moral and financial support;
  - Hosting a very successful genealogical day conducted by Wayne Walker of the Ottawa LDS Family History Department;
  - Responding to many genealogy queries received;
  - Forming a genealogical committee headed by Carol McCuaig;
  - Starting research on a new book, to be released in 1992, on the Founding families of Admaston, Horton & Renfrew Village;
  - Adding six microfiche readers to our archives so that we can make use of the millions of names available for research in the Individual Genealogical (World) Index ... IGI
  - Committing ourselves to purchase our own copies of the IGI, we hope in 1991.
- \* Added to our microfilm collection of Mercury newspapers.
- \* Held our most successful February Heritage Luncheon yet, thanks to our poster-distributor Judith Anderson, decorating team of Doris Humphries, Helen Clark, Dorothy Skinner and Mary Lester, and the ACW at St

- Paul's and Heritage Renfrew members;
- \* Continued research on our book of local architecture, Faces & Facades II;
- \* Made presentations at various functions throughout the Valley, e.g. Perth, Ottawa, Pembroke, Arnprior, and Renfrew;
- \* Held Open Meetings featuring:
  - Wayne Walker of the LDS;
  - Steve Evans & Barb Sibbald on oral history and Valley Portraits;
  - Phil Wright, Archeologist, on local Indians;
  - Alison Ritchie on a teen's perspective of life in Japan;
  - Carol McCuaig on Founding Families;
- \* Made visits to schools in Renfrew and district and even Arnprior to talk to students, show slides etc.
- \* Promoted an interest in local heritage by distributing posters to all schools and some public places and by:
  - Offering prizes for student participants;
  - Drafting a proclamation for the mayor to sign at a Council Meeting during Heritage Week;
  - Conducting heritage walks for groups or schools on request;
  - Participating in costume in the Return of the Astrolabe ceremonies at Cobden (special thanks to Bob Amaron, Helen Clark, Dorothy Skinner etc;) and making a financial contribution to the above event
- \* Formed a video committee which:
  - Taped most events involving Heritage Renfrew (copies in our archives)
  - Made copies of the above available to Janie Bilson, Director of Maclean Hunter Cable 12 for use on the air;

Produced, in close co-operation with Cable 12, several hours of programmes, especially in connection with the Lumber Baron Festival; Filmed all the Lumber Baron's activities during the Festival. Special thanks to Vaughan Simmons, alias Cecil B. de Mille;

\* **Made** a small start on our video inventory of every street in the town of Renfrew;

\* **Started** our move into our new quarters in the National Archives of Canada satellite building in Renfrew. (The Mitel building of old.) This entailed:

Shopping for furniture, typewriters, office supplies, microfilm readers etc;

Attending auctions and moving the equipment.

Assembling shelving (thanks to Donald Campbell, Vaughan Simmons and Hank Legris)

Having our collection examined by the National Archives experts for infestation etc;

Arranging for servicing of the machines;

Drafting a tentative policy that will be acceptable to the National Archives re use of facilities;

Soliciting new contributions. Special thanks to Les Church, Clair Seeley and Tony Cuccaro who have been responsible for steering material our way recently.

Determining needs and making long and short term plans for the purchase of archival supplies, visual aids, genealogical source material etc;

Drafting an application to the government for financial assistance in purchasing resource material;

Determining how we are going to recognize the contribution made by Betty Kidd, Tom Nagy and the NAC and others;

Arranging for a co - op student to assist us part - time from February to June, 1991;

Starting a new file on individual families in Renfrew and soliciting input from families. Vivian Elliott started us off with our first

family record.

\* **Assisted** in preparing signs and promos, operating the parking lot and making a video for Bill and Ruth Burwell's most successful Second Annual Steam Show;

\* **Received** \$1,4000 from the Burwells to assist with the cost of moving into the NAC building. We recognized their magnanimity when we presented them with a scroll of appreciation after our October meeting;

\* **Purchased** and assisted in the dedication of a plaque commemorating the old Byers church which Heritage Renfrew helped relocate near its original site;

\* **Were represented** all year by Marge Lindsay on Len Hopkins' committee to promote Renfrew County tourism and the Flaming Leaf Tour. Hank Legris and Vaughan Simmons also attended the post event meeting, Dave Lorente is our new rep on the committee for 1991.

\* **We again sponsored** a bus tour to see the fall colours, We tied this into the Flaming Leaf event and, in spite of cold damp weather, we needed an extra bus. Special thanks to Len Quilty and Hank Legris, the official guides who trained Con Hunt and me for the second bus;

\* **Formed** an official plaquing committee because there is an enormous amount of work in liaising with politicians and Ministry officials. Besides the Byers church plaque we also arranged for the erection of the Tom Low plaque during the Lumber Baron Festival. This was funded in large measure by a grant from Town Council. We are in the process of arranging for a new cairn to commemorate events which occurred at Farrell's Landing on the Ottawa River.

\* **We raised** membership fees to \$5.00 per person or couple, which still doesn't cover the cost of printing and mailing our newsletter, but we're happy to subsidize it.

\* **We made a submission** to the Premier's Task Force on Heritage;

- \* **Set up a heritage display** in the town hall in heritage month;
- \* **Sponsored** a name-our-newsletter contest which was won by Carol McCuaig;
- \* **Invited** local authors to sell their books at some of our events;
- \* **Wrote letters** to the government and to the Ontario Heritage Foundation re the OHF move to Renfrew;
- \* **Involved members** in the design of the Heritage Renfrew flag which will be unfurled for the first time at our Annual Meeting, and flown during Heritage Week;
- \* **Designed** and presented scrolls of honour to our benefactors;
- \* In co-operation with Tim Gordon of General Store Publishing, **sponsored the launching** of Frank Consentino's book on the Renfrew Millionaires. Special thanks to Marge Lindsay and to the staff of the Old Town Hall Tea Room.
- \* We again made a significant contribution to the **Lumber Baron Festival** by arranging all logistics for the Lumber Baron's itinerary (schedule, costumes, vintage cars, horse-drawn vehicles); we arranged for television coverage before and during the events; conducted research into the historical significance of every place and person visited and made up an entourage to lend colour to his tour. Special thanks to Lumber Baron Bob Amaron and to Marge Lindsay and all the executive. We arranged for an Open House and Lawn Party at the House on the Hill. A special vote of thanks to all the Carswell

descendants and especially to Margaret Gibson who made the house available and who assisted us in so many other ways. We enlisted the co-operation of the Victorian Order of Nurses, the Renfrew University Women's Club and the Balsam Hill Women's Institute in recreating historical events. We arranged a main street display in co-operation with the Renfrew Historical (Museum) Society, and we prepared information for The Mercury who, as always, were most willing to assist us and to promote local heritage.

\* We **solicited help** from all Valley newspapers in contacting Home Children, and we arranged a reunion of Home Children, their descendants and friends.

Things like the above do not just happen. They take time, effort, and a great deal of sacrifice, and love . . . love and dedication.

Your executive and the members - and non members - who work behind the scenes to keep our organization flourishing have made it all happen. It's been a treat to work with them for these past two years as your president and newsletter editor.

Many of the same people will be standing for office in 1991. I'm sure that they, and the "new blood", will give our new president the same effort and dedication.

Thanks all.

*Dave Lorente.*

## *We're in . . .*

HERITAGE RENFREW has moved that portion of our collection which has been examined for infestation into the RENFREW ARCHIVES room at the NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA (Mitel) BUILDING in Renfrew. The rest (which has been stored elsewhere) will be moved in when the NAC team can again study, under ideal warmer conditions, the maps, plans, drawings and newspapers.

We have commenced organizing the collection, arranging it on the shelves, updating our inventory, and servicing the furniture and equipment we have come by through purchase or donation. A co-op student will assist us half days beginning in next month. More about when we shall open to the public in the February Newsletter.

Special votes of thanks are due to:

DAGMAR STONEHOUSE, Principal of Victoria School, who authorized our using storage space in her school for a portion of our collection in those lean years when we had no place to go,

Past-President LES CHURCH who spear-headed the drive to find us a place in the NAC building,

BETTY KIDD and TOM NAGY of NAC who facilitated approval of the move and have been our liaison people, Directors VAUGHAN SIMMONS, HANK LEGRIS and DON CAMPBELL who helped move in the collection and assemble shelving and filing credenzas,

MEMBERS and NON-MEMBERS at large like DAVE LORENTE JR., DES LORENTE and TODD VISINSKI who helped with the heavy work,

All the directors who prepared the collection for analysis and were there to assist the NAC team,

HANK LEGRIS for making a Heritage Clock for the room,

BILL and RUTH BURWELL for their kind donation which made the move and acquisition of furniture possible.

## *About Roy Gravelle . . .*

Hugh MacMillan, former Ontario Archives acquisition facilitator, is publishing a book which will include a chapter on the Gravelle family of Renfrew. Everyone has heard of Father Gravelle and his brother Roy. The former was a genealogist and the latter a very competent — and legal — safe-cracker.

You can give the chapter a flavor of your own.

If you have any information — anecdotal or otherwise — or papers concerning Roy Gravelle especially, please advise Hugh MacMillan at 21 Suffolk St. W., Guelph, Ont. N1H 2H9.

### Shoe

