

# Opeongo Lines

Jan 1994

## THE VOICE OF HERITAGE RENFREW

We've got quite a pot-pourri of goodies in store for you. Getta load o' this:

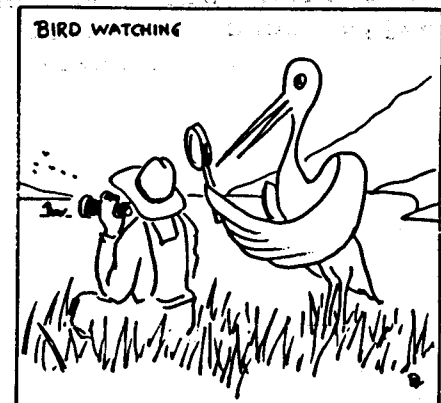
### ANNUAL MEETING FEATURING MICHAEL RUNTZ AND HIS PRIZE WINNING PHOTO PRESENTATION.

27 Jan, 1994 at 7 p.m.

At the RENFREW INN

MICHAEL is a naturalist and Carleton University biology professor. He has worked at provincial and national parks as a professional naturalist and has conducted biological surveys on such rare species as the Peregrine Falcon.

He has won three national photo contests for his wildlife photos and is the recipient of an Outstanding Service Award from the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. He is also the author of the bestsellers MOOSE COUNTRY and ALGONQUIN SEASONS. MICHAEL RUNTZ lives in Arnprior and is currently a consultant to Algonquin Park's new Visitors' Centre.



### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

At a short business meeting preceding Michael's presentation, our nomination committee will present a suggested slate of Heritage Renfrew officers for 1994. Nominations are welcome from the floor. Memberships can be renewed at this meeting. (see MEMBERSHIP below)

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### THE FAT'S IN THE FIRE...

Watch this space and your local media for further developments arising from the TWINNING OF BLIND RIVER AND RENFREW, the two 'home towns' of our 1994 Lumber Baron, J.J. MacFADDEN. You might choose to check with local school children first; rumour has it that some are even now actively involved in the project.

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### HERITAGE LUNCHEON

On Monday, Feb 21, 1994, Heritage Renfrew will again kick off HERITAGE WEEK by sponsoring our Annual HERITAGE LUNCHEON at the Anglican Church Hall. All are welcome. This year, thanks to your suggestions, we offer special TAKE-OUT SERVICE.

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### 1994 MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE.

\$5.00 pays for an individual or a married couple's annual membership. This amount does not cover the cost of printing and mailing your newsletter, so it's a real bargain. Membership fees can be mailed to our Treasurer HELEN CLARK, at 137 Quarry Street, Renfrew, K7V 2W3 or can be had from any Heritage Renfrew directors.

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR OFFICIAL TOWN CRIER AND TOWN HISTORIAN**

...and to Renfrew Town Council for acting so expeditiously on Heritage Renfrew's suggestion that JACK LOCKWOOD be designated Official Renfrew Town Crier and that MARJORIE LINDSAY be named official Town Historian. JACK (and let's not forget AGNES, 'the gal behind the man behind the gun'....Sounds like a World War II slogan, doesn't it?) have performed Town Crier duties with colour and panache at civic functions for years but have never been able to participate in official Town Crier competitions because they lacked 'official' status. They have it now, and good luck to them! MARGE LINDSAY, who was a co-founder of Heritage Renfrew with the late HARRY HINCHLEY, is the only person we know who has proven already that she can fill his shoes as official Town Historian. And like our Town Crier, MARGE will need no training for the job; she has been doing it for years behind the scenes.

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**THE O'BRIEN THEATRE - A PHOENIX REBORN**

Mythology tells of a beautiful bird that lived 500 years, died, and rose again from its own ashes. Congratulations to Murray ADOLPH, who gave new life to the O'Brien Theatre which re-opened on 6 January. JOHN STEELE, our President, spoke at the opening and presented Mr ADOLPH with a copy of Heritage Renfrew's **FACES AND FACADES**, a significant gift, given Mr ADOLPH's role in perpetuating, like our book, Renfrew's heritage and beautiful architecture.

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**THIS MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JOHN STEELE:**

Congratulations to the two Heritage Renfrew directors who were awarded medals on the occasion of Canada's 125 anniversary. MARGE LINDSAY received hers from our provincial MPP, Leo Jordan, for her overall contribution to our heritage. DAVE LORENTE (Sr) received his from our federal MP Len Hopkins especially for his work with Home Children.

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**HOME CHILDREN NEWS**

Over 440 individuals have requested our free information and research kits....Home Children Committee members KAY and DAVE LORENTE were official guests at the world Premiere of **HOME BODIES** in Lindsay in December. The very moving play by Edith Shaw was based on actual incidents and concerned the plight of Home Children in the Port Perry area. The Kawartha Players decorated the foyer with artifacts provided by local Home Children and with a dozen posters provided by Heritage Renfrew....We thank the Renfrew Library Staff and Renfrew Library Board for giving us permission to erect beside the Library entrance Ontario's (Canada's??) first historical plaque commemorating Home Children. The plaque will be unveiled at our September Reunion. The location of the proposed plaque is singularly appropriate because so many Home Children were denied an official education that they had to seek what learning they could in books that they borrowed from local libraries such as ours....Heritage Renfrew's Home Child work received local TV

attention in productions emanating out of Ottawa and Pembroke and national coverage in lengthier shows based on an interview with our Committee Chairman that was taped in Edmonton. This program was revamped on the Mike Duffy show which was shown across Canada on 2 Jan. Such exposure always results in a flood of requests for assistance.....The Stamp Advisory Board of Canada Post will consider our request that a series of Commemorative Stamps be issued to honour Home Children.....The signs are good that Ottawa officials will be prompted by Heritage Renfrew to erect an historical plaque on the only Home Child distribution house in the area and perhaps on the unmarked plot where Home Children are buried in at least one Ottawa cemetery.....Watch for more coverage in the next issue of CROSS COUNTRY CANADA, a glossy magazine edited by Barbara Sibbald, of local fame.

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#### **THE BOMBER HARRIS TRUST - A BATTLE FOR TRUTH**

Last January Heritage Renfrew hosted an information night on the TV series THE VALOUR AND THE HORROR and pointed out some of the five dozen errors in it. Ron Butcher, our guest speaker, prophesied there would be a class action suit against the authors and producers. There was, but the judge, while acknowledging errors in fact, has since decided against it, in part because of the 'dangerous' precedent of awarding damages to a 'large group.' The decision will probably be appealed. You can contribute to the Trust (which asks only for historical accuracy) by contributing \$20 and/or by purchasing a book called A BATTLE FOR TRUTH (\$12.50 includes postage) from THE BOMBER HARRIS TRUST, 7 Barrhead Crescent, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 3Z6. Several video tapes are also available. For further information contact JACK DOUGHERTY at 432-3339 or DAVE LORENTE at 432-2486.

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#### **SCHOOL POSTER PROJECT**

Watch your newspaper for news of our Heritage-Day-in-the-Schools Project.

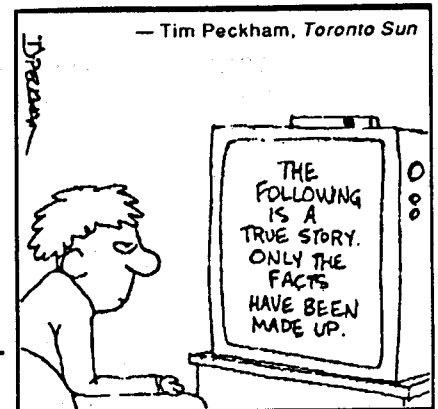
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**ACQUISITIONS, DONATIONS & A LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN 1993** will be included in the next newsletter.

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#### **COMPUTER, PRINTER AND COPIER IN PLACE**

We have completed all but the final phase of our five-year plan to provide RENFREW ARCHIVES with state-of-the-art equipment. The Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications provided a grant to subsidize the purchase of a copier on which we can now print our own Newsletter; the copier was installed in late September. Fiscal restraints did not permit a further grant to purchase a computer and printer, but that did not stop us. We channelled donations from the Burwell's Steam Show, from Ed Hall, and from other sources into the purchase of a computer and printer. The computer has CD-



ROM capabilities so that as soon as the Mormons release their latest CD-ROM's of the world's population (IGI or Individual Genealogical Index) we shall order a set to permit you to access genealogical information in microseconds. The final item on our wish-list is an up-to-date microfilm/fiche reader/printer that will also facilitate research. We hope to purchase it in two years.

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#### **ADULT STUDENT HELP**

The presence of a computer will give us a better chance to again get a candidate or two who can help us while we train them in archival procedures. We hope to have an adult RCI student with us daily from mid-February to mid-June.

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#### **WHEN CAN YOU USE RENFREW ARCHIVES?**

Heritage Renfrew's RENFREW ARCHIVES is open every Wednesday afternoon unless we are training students, in which case, we are open half-days from Monday to Friday. Directors are on call to assist you any other time the main building is open. A list of directors to contact is posted in the Town Library on the right wall of the reference room. To paraphrase an old Rudy Vallee song: "Your Time is Our Time..." (Now how many of you remember that one? Be honest!)

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#### **BEHIND THE SCENES**

If no one is in the Archives, that doesn't mean that we are not actively working on your behalf. The TROBRIDGES, for instance, do most of their work at home with their battery of computers, microfiche, books and censuses. They are currently at work putting Bathurst District (pre-Renfrew County) information into a database that will be made available to our Archives. THE LORENTE's Home Children files and resources are in their residence too so that they can respond quickly to requests at any hour. MARGE LINDSAY has her own extensive collection of files on local history. CON HUNT is on the road a lot trying to get Heritage designation for the Opeongo Road. Our Secretary DOT SKINNER and treasurer HELEN CLARK do most of their letter writing and tabulating at home, as do JOHN STEELE, your president, and all the other directors.

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#### **AND WHO MADE ALL THE ABOVE POSSIBLE?**

Your 1993 Executive: President John STEELE, Secretary and Past President Dot SKINNER, Treasurer Helen CLARK, Directors Judith ANDERSON, Con HUNT, Jim FERGUSON, Kay LORENTE, Grace and Vaughan SIMMONS, Irene and Bob TROBRIDGE; Past Presidents: Les ANDERSON, Les CHURCH, Doris HUMPHRIES, Marge LINDSAY, Dave LORENTE; Advisors Hank LEGRIS and Mary LESTER.....and YOU, the membership at large.

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We invite your involvement in OPEONGO LINES. Send your letters, suggestions or articles to Dave Lorente, Editor, OPEONGO LINES  
107 Erindale Ave, Renfrew, ON, K7V 4G3 (Tel.432-2486)