

# OPEONGO LINES

*The Voice of Heritage Renfrew*

*Saving Yesterday for Tomorrow*

No 2 March 1997

**TOP O'THE MORNIN' to all**  
*and may the leprechauns be especially good to you!*



**ANNOUNCING:**

**GENEALOGY CLASSES**

7 to 9 p.m.

starting Wednesday March 27

(and at intervals to be decided by the group)



**A HOST OF HOME CHILDREN REUNIONS**  
including our own at McGill University on June 8th

And as we go to press,  
**NEWS**

that the Ontario Government has completed a three year process and will erect  
**A PROVINCIAL PLAQUE**  
**COMMEMORATING**  
**HOME CHILDREN AND ST GEORGE'S HOME IN OTTAWA**  
in May or this fall.

We are proud to say that Heritage Renfrew Home Children Canada Committee initiated this project. Those interested in attending the ceremony should contact Dave or Kay at Heritage Renfrew Home Children Canada Committee  
107 Erindale Ave, Renfrew ON Canada K7V 4G3  
Tel & Fax (613) 432-2486 E-mail <lorente@renc.igs.net>  
(Please wait a few weeks until we have more information.)

**AND OF THINGS TO COME**  
**AN OPEN MEETING ON THE**  
**POLISH HISTORY OF RENFREW**  
(Watch the newspapers for word of when this meeting will be held.)

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Heritage Year to everyone! The names of your executive officers for 1997 and those of the members of the Board of Directors and of special Committee Chairs follow this message. They are such energetic individuals, each with special talents and skills, that I am finding it hard to keep up to them! At our first meeting (Feb. 5, 1997), I outlined for the Board some of the projects I'd like to focus on this year.

### PLAN OF ACTION 1997 HERITAGE RENFREW (Random order)

1. Arrange for 3 or 4 *adult students at Archives* (27 Jan - 9 May) per Burt Virgin of RCI: Anne Crozier McQuade & Joanne Munford Leclair in a.m., Pat Enright in p.m. Also enlist advice of Sandi Tetu Mercer and invite her to meetings as observer & potential director. (The three adult students have been in place since 27 Jan cataloguing outstanding material, putting inventory on diskette, assisting with Home Children work, newsletter, research, pre-publication work, etc.)
2. *Join Archives Assoc of Ontario & Cdn Archivists' Assoc* with aim of getting *advice & grants* for hiring part-time professional help. (We have since taken out individual/institutional memberships in AAO and FOA [Friends of the {National} Archives].)
3. Proceed with our own *Internet installation* on suggestion of Tom Nagy of NAC. (The initial draft of our home page [courtesy Martin Munhall] was presented at the Board's Feb meeting; a revised version is now ready to air.)
4. As per Tom Nagy's suggestion our Home page contains a *list of what we have and hot keys* to provide immediate access to related info and sites e.g. excerpts from our newsletters, access to the Home Children page, our role in Lumber Baron Festival.
5. Set up monthly *evening genealogy classes*. There will be a cost-covering charge for the hand-out "How-to-do-local genealogy" which has already been prepared by our team. Classes begin March 26, 7 to 9 p.m. Phone 432-2486 for details and reservations.
6. Look into cost of *coin device(s)* to attach to photocopier(s).
7. Price *bus trips* and destinations NOW for next fall. Consider Gatineau Archives tour and/or Ottawa River Cruise.
8. Continue to participate in *Lumber Baron Festival* in at least an advisory capacity, assist *Theatre Organ Group* where possible, also *Opeongo Signing Committee*.
9. Participate in Renfrew Victoria Hospital's *100th anniversary* celebrations.
10. Catalogue *our 9,000 IGI microfiche, plus locality records, Ontario Land Records, etc.*

## SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday 29 January, 1997, at 7:00 p.m.

Despite the very cold, blustery weather, about fifty friends of Heritage Renfrew made their way to Our Lady Fatima School for our annual meeting.

In a brief business session, President Vaughan Simmons reviewed highlights of 1996; Nominating Committee Chair, Dave Lorente, presented the new slate of officers and directors for 1997; and newly-elected President Kay Gollinger-Lorente awarded Certificates of Appreciation to: Dorothy Skinner (former Secretary of Heritage Renfrew), Helen Clark (retiring Treasurer), and Vaughan Simmons (retiring President).

We were then entertained with two excellent talks, the first by Randy Penney, our local hospital administrator, who spoke on "Where We Go from Here in Health Care Programs", and Carol McCuaig, local genealogist and writer, who offered highlights from her book-in-the-making on the hospital's history.

The Treasurer's Annual Report and the Membership Committee's Report were available in written form for any who wished to peruse them, but were not given orally. These are, of course, on file at our archives for anyone wishing to see them. Following the meeting, refreshments were served.

\*\*\*\*\*

### HERITAGE LUNCHEON A BLAST!

by M. Lindsay and K. Gollinger-Lorente

This year's annual Heritage Week Luncheon was better than ever. The organizing committee under the direction of Helen Clark and Doris Humphries outdid itself in the planning, food preparation, and decorating for this event.

Grace and Vaughan Simmons along with Stella Valliquette made the table centres, dolls, and signs that symbolized heritage in general as well as the hospital's centenary. A new Heritage Renfrew banner (commissioned for HR by Gordon Cross) was displayed above the Membership table and did indeed attract some new members.

The RVH Centennial Committee arranged various displays around the hall including the RVH 100 banner (created by Rachel Pope), the Elizabeth Stewart Collection (*Elizabeth, later Mrs. Allen Derry, was the first graduate of RVH School Nursing in 1905; her daughter, Kay Derry, loaned the collection to RVH for its centennial year*), an ink sketch of RVH and other buildings and gardens of Victoria Heights (by Jack East as he remembered them from the 1940's), and several hospital news stories and photographs. A special RVH anniversary cake from the hospital kitchen was displayed in a prominent spot against a silhouette of Queen Victoria (courtesy of Dorothy Cooke) and flanked by our Canadian flag and the Union Jack.

As usual, most members of Heritage Renfrew lent colour to the occasion by dressing in period costume, but a special touch was added by the group portraying early personnel

11. Continue involvement with *Home Children*, e.g. presentations in schools and to historical/genealogical societies; organize reunion at McGill (June 8); prepare and make presentations at 1997 HC Reunions: in Montreal, Ottawa (2), Toronto, Richmond PQ, Belleville, and Peterborough as well as to other interested groups.
12. Consider *publishing local works*, e.g. Olga Lewis's excerpts from *Renfrew Mercury*.
13. Reorganize *archives*; facilitate retrieval of materials; offer training to directors and others. (Much has been done as of this writing. Holdings are being more clearly marked, recent acquisitions catalogued, and records put on computer for easier access. Finding Aids and Standard Operating Procedures [S.O.P. sheets] have been written and assembled in one binder. A second computer is on loan as well as TV monitor for our VCR so that we can transcribe taped material for publication.)
14. Assist *local history research projects*, e.g. Carol McCuaig's possible book on SFX.

\*\*\*\*\*

Central Executive

President:	Kay Gollinger-Lorente
Past President:	Vaughan Simmons
Vice President:	Martin Munhall
Secretary:	Olga Lewis
Treasurer:	Frank McMahon

Directors

Helen Clark   Joyce Laird   Stella Laviolette   Lois Leclaire   Brian Long   Doris Long  
 Jim MacGregor   Gladys Sidock   Grace Simmons

Past Presidents' Advisory Committee

Les Anderson   Les Church   Doris Humphries   Marge Lindsay   Dave Lorente  
 Vaughan Simmons (Immediate Past President, see Central Executive)   Dorothy Skinner  
 John Steele   Irene Trobridge

Honorary Directors, Genealogical Contacts, Volunteer Committee Chairs

Don Campbell   Hank Legris   Mary Lester   Carol McCuaig  
 Gordon Cross   Sylvia Hodgins

and friends of Renfrew Victoria Hospital. These special guests included *Dr. Norman McCormack [M.O.H. of 1897]* portrayed by Lewis MacDonald, *Mr. James H. Walford [Chair of Renfrew Board of Health, 1897]*; Neil Ritchie, *Miss Lila MacAdam [an early superintendent of nurses]*; Anna Burwell, *Dr. Stephen Murphy [another doctor of 1897]*; Tom McDowell, and *some members of the Ladies Committee*. The party was led into the hall by Town Crier, Jack Lockwood, who introduced them with a flourish.

The luncheon of homemade soup, sandwiches, muffins (with homemade preserves), tea or coffee was enjoyed (and said to be the best ever!) by all 130 persons in attendance. Trinity St. Andrews United Church Hall provided an ideal setting for this year's very successful event.

Very special thanks to Helen Clark, Doris Humphries, the United Church women, and the many other volunteers who contributed the food, lent support and made our luncheon such a huge success!

\*\*\*\*\*

### *CLEAN SWEEP?*

Archivist Dave Lorente and Vice President Martin Munhall have spearheaded a thorough pre-Spring cleaning of our Renfrew Archives which saw its complete *overhaul and reorganization* as a more user-friendly research centre.

Olga Lewis, Sylvia Hodgins, Frank McMahon, Joyce Laird and Jim MacGregor were major "sweepers" helping to sort materials and to sift through boxes and drawers which hadn't seen such activity for some time. Sylvia was especially instrumental in getting our 9000 IGI microfiche catalogued quickly. She actually took home file folders and other materials to make them ready to receive these valuable research files. *Thanks, Sylvia!*

The three *adult students* are still very much involved in assisting with various tasks designed to make our records, whether on tape, microfiche, or in written form, more easily accessible. They are making good use of the two computers now at their disposal and are learning many other facets of archival research.

*Make a point of paying a visit to YOUR ARCHIVES!*

*OPEN MON-FRI 9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.*

\*\*\*\*\*

### *THE PLAY'S THE THING!*

Lewis MacDonald and Jan Wilson of Renfrew Collegiate met recently with HR's new executive to bring them up to date on their plans to present a series of historical enactments at the Lumber Festival of 1998. They explained that a long-range plan was required to ensure that this program could emerge as part of their regular classroom activities.

They expect students to begin their reading and research this year and to present a script or story at the end of term. These would then be further worked on with a view to their enactment by RCI drama students at next year's Lumber Baron Festival.

Heritage Renfrew was asked to provide support and supervision of students while they do their research at our archives.

\*\*\*\*\*

*MONTREAL'S MCGILL UNIVERSITY  
TO BE SITE OF HERITAGE RENFREW'S HOME CHILD REUNION  
Saturday & Sunday, June 7-8, 1997*

This year's Home Children Reunion will be held in conjunction with the Quebec Family History's 20th Annual Conference. More details in the Home Children section of this newsletter. Suffice to say here that overseas guest speakers are coming at our invitation and their expense and that the Reunion is moved from city to city each year to enable more Home Children (average age 90) to attend. SEE ALSO LATE NEWS RE SPECIAL BARNARDO GATHERINGS THAT WE WILL BE ATTENDING IN '97.

\*\*\*\*\*

*HERITAGE MONTH ACTIVITIES*

**RVH 100 CELEBRATIONS:** A 30-minute program on the story of Renfrew Victoria Hospital consisting of anecdotes, artifacts, and a short video (courtesy of Rogers Community 22) was offered in several Renfrew and area schools starting on Heritage Day, Feb. 17, 1997. Over 35 presentations are scheduled from now until Education Week in May, ensuring that several hundred students will enjoy a slice of Renfrew's history they might otherwise ignore. Scripts for the show were written and read by Jim Bristow, with Marge Lindsay as producer along with Janie Bilson and Brian Laverty of Cable 22. Presenters are Eileen Richardson and HR directors Lois Leclaire, Marge Lindsay and Gladys Sidock. The program is also being offered to local service clubs and other organizations, with the Rotary Club being first in line on March 18, 1997. Members of the RVH Pageant Group also attended the raising of the Heritage Renfrew flag at the Town Hall by Mayor Howie Haramis and members of Heritage Renfrew on February 17, 1997.

Meanwhile, as you will see elsewhere, other directors have made presentations in Killaloe and Cobden and are booked for several other sites in Ontario and Quebec.

\*\*\*\*\*

*NEW EDITOR FOR "OPEONGO LINES"*

As I take on the role of editor of this prestigious publication, I am not unmindful of the challenge facing me. How to follow a creative and talented writer like Dave? Fortunately I can count on his assistance (*with a little gentle persuasion!*) and that of other HR members who have expressed a willingness to help.

Please send along your suggestions or requests; they are most welcome. The Editor.

## HOME CHILDREN NEWS:

1. Your Home Children (Canada) Committee is now on Internet. Find us at <lorente@renc.igs.net>. We can also be reached by phone or fax at (613) 432-2486.
2. Our "home pages" are not yet complete; we are new at this and it will take time to develop some expertise. When the pages are finished (one for "lorente" and one for "home children") they will contain the updated research kit and "hot keys" to connect immediately with overseas agencies, our own Renfrew Archives, and other interested contacts in North America and elsewhere.
3. Perusing Ship Manifests can reveal interesting facts. While searching an 1888 reel I discovered that home boys as young as 12 were listed as in-coming "Labourers", while home girls are shown as "Children" if under 12 and "Domestics" if over 12. One 14-year old lassie - that's "fourteen" - is shown as "Spinster". Even when you know things like this happened it is overpowering to see it in print.
4. Another interesting entry shows that early "exporters" of home children did not learn from Lord Shaftesbury's experiences. The good man had been sending children to Canada a good fifteen years before Maria Rye ostensibly started the Home Child Movement in 1869. Shaftesbury children who were sent to a home in Wingham, Ontario in 1888 are shown as 14 and 15 year old "Scholars". No stigma there!
5. Barbara Haworth-Attard's book "HOME CHILD", Roussan Publishers Montreal, is also available (for \$8.95 plus P&H) from University of Toronto Press. A good read and a great gift for the young adults in the family. (And we're not just saying that because we wrote the foreword.)
6. You may have noticed elsewhere in the OPEONGO LINES, that in the last month we have made four presentations at schools in Killaloe and Cobden and one to the Ross Township Historical Society. We are also booked to talk to Ottawa Masons in June and can report that several descendants of Home Children have been in touch to get information because they too are going into the schools and giving talks to interested groups on Home Children generally or their parent's life story.
7. Watch for an interesting article in **HOMEMAKER'S MAGAZINE** by Beth Oldfield in the HERstory section. We arranged for Beth to interview Home Girls Vera O'Dacre (87) and Sister Norah Over (88) in Pembroke. When asked why she agreed to be interviewed, Sister Norah, who will celebrate her 70th Jubilee as a nun on May 10, said that she wanted to be an example - that she would do anything to encourage other Home Children to speak up with pride and tell their story too.
8. It's never too late to lobby Canada Post to issue stamps commemorating the Home Children Story. Do it now. Write to your Federal M.P. and ask him/her to forward your letter with his/her support. Ask for a reply. No stamps required.
9. The children of Home Boys and Girls sent from Quarrier's of Scotland are planning a fall trip to "The Village". Details about the trip or the Quarrier's Canada group from Beth Bruder, 93 Elmwood Ave, Willowdale ON M2N 3L8.

HOME CHILDREN REUNIONS '97 - We hope to see you at one or all of these.

\*\*\*\*\*

HERITAGE RENFREW'S HOME CHILDREN (CANADA) COMMITTEE REUNION '97 will be held at McGill University in Montreal in conjunction with the Quebec Family History Society Annual Conference which is on 6, 7 & 8 June. As part of that conference Kay and Dave Lorente, your Home Children Canada Committee, will present a Saturday afternoon (June 7) program on searching Home Child roots. We have invited Ian Wakeling, Chief Archivist for the Church of England, to be our overseas guest speaker on the afternoon of the Reunion on June 8th. Ian will also give a presentation open to all at the Conference that same morning. Details about the QFHS Conference are available from the Quebec Family History Society, Box 1026, Pte Claire, Quebec H9S 4H9

(514) 695-1502

<http://www.cam.org/~qfhs/index.html>

We shall have more information about the Sunday afternoon Reunion later in March.

\*\*\*\*\*

BELLEVILLE REUNION on 21 September.

From 1870 to 1924 ANNIE MACPHERSON - and after she died in 1903, her organization - brought Home Children to her Marchmont Home at Belleville. Before they got distribution homes of their own in the mid 1880's she also brought children over for Barnardo, Quarrier and others. Her several homes and records were handed over to Barnardo's organization in 1924 and this latter consolidated its headquarters in Toronto and closed Marchmont in 1925. Rona Rustige and the Glanmore Museum host annual Reunions on the afternoon of the third Sunday in September for ALL HOME CHILDREN regardless of affiliation. There is a minimal charge for the luncheon. Details are available from Rona at Glanmore Hastings County Museum, 257 Bridge St E, Belleville ON K8N 1P4. Collette Bradford of Barnardos, England, will be there.

\*\*\*\*\*

IN THE DAYS BEFORE OR AFTER THE BELLEVILLE MEETING COLLETTE BRADFORD, HEAD OF AFTER CARE OF BARNARDOS, WILL HOST SPECIAL INFORMAL MEETINGS AT TORONTO AND PETERBOROUGH FOR HOME CHILDREN (and descendants) WHO CAME THROUGH BARNARDOS. THIS INCLUDES HOME CHILDREN WHO CAME FROM AGENCIES WHOSE FILES BARNARDOS NOW HAS, ie. MACPHERSONS, MIDDLEMORE HOME, THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY, THE LIVERPOOL SHELTERING HOME AND SHARMANS HOME. These informal gatherings will afford a chance to meet others and to arrange private sessions with Collette. Your Home Children Canada Committee will be there too. Details will be available once when plans are firm.

\*\*\*\*\*

HOME CHILDREN CANADA'S QUEBEC BRANCH will hold their Annual Reunion at Richmond or Melbourne, Quebec, in the fall. More news on this when our intrepid hosts PAULINE and SARGE BAMPTON return from southern climes.