

OPEONGO LINES

PRESERVING YESTERDAY FOR TOMORROW

HERITAGE RENFREW

MARCH 2012



Pg 1



Library & Archives Canada
Home to Heritage Renfrew

770 Gibbons Road

Renfrew Ontario

K7V 4H4

Message from the President

Members of Heritage Renfrew

Winter will soon be over we hope and the nice warm weather of spring will be welcome, which we are looking forward to.

Our elections were held at the annual General Meeting in January and our new executive for the year is as follows: Olga Lewis, President, Mary Hass Past President, Jim MacGregor, Vice President, Patti Brydges, Secretary, Ken Stafford-Brown, Treasurer, Joyce McBride, Membership Chairperson, Board of Directors, Earl Martin, Clarence McBride, Audrey Green and Pat Patterson..

While we would like to have more members on the Board of Directors, there are very few who want to serve on the Board, as many of the members are also with other organizations which take up a lot of their time.

This year we are hoping to replace one of our reader/printers, which is no longer working, with a new device which although expensive, has fewer parts that need repair, and should give us good service. Jim MacGregor has been working on this project for Heritage Renfrew for the past few months, getting all the information about it, including costs and maintenance.

We are looking forward to a good year of serving the public, helping them with research of all kinds, and moving ahead with ongoing projects.

In late December we lost a member, Martin Munhall, a past president and volunteer who enjoyed helping a lot of people with their research. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Olga Lewis

President Heritage Renfrew



Membership Expiration Notification

Subscribe to *Opeongo Lines* for the new year!

Subscriptions for the calendar year 2012 are **\$15.00 (\$20.00 outside of Canada)**.

Membership gives You:

- News updates in *Opeongo Lines*
- Microfilm & Micro fiche of Census Records
- Local newspapers
- Land records
- Birth, marriage & Death information
- Cemetery & reference books

Renfrew Archives Directory

Executive

President

Olga Lewis.....613-432-6958

Past-President

Mary Hass613-432-5104

Vice-President613-432-9566

Jim MacGregor.....

Treasurer

Ken Stafford-Brown.....613-570-1076

Secretary

Pat Brydges.....613-432-2749

Membership Chair

Joyce Laird-McBride613-646-2375

Directors

Honorary

Vaughan Simmons613-432-2736

Stella Laviolette613-432-7722

Ambrose Adamchick.....613-432-4069

Directors

Earl Martin.....613-432-4412

Clarence McBride613-432-2375

Audrey Green613-432-4354

Past Presidents Advisory Committee

Dave Lorente
Vaughan Simmons
Dorothy Skinner
Jim MacGregor
Audrey Green
Doris Humphries

Past Presidents

Kay Gollinger Lorente
Marge Lindsay

John Steele
Dean Black

Newsletter Editor Olga Lewis

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QUERIES:

Queries are welcomed in our newsletter. They are free to any member who is searching for ancestors for their family tree.

For information or help in research we have available email addresses to contact:

olewis@sympatico.ca,

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General meeting of Heritage Renfrew took place at the Renfrew Legion on Tuesday January 24, 2012.

The guest speaker was Joy Forbes noted author, teacher, and historian of one room schoolhouses of the past. She had a very informative talk which was very interesting and had a projected display of many of the area schoolhouses in the rural areas, and information on how some were being used today, as they were no longer needed for schools. She has written a book on some of the happenings in the schoolhouses over the years and it can be purchased by going to her website on eroomschoolhouses.ca.

The new executive and Board of Directors for the year 2012 is as follows:

President Olga Lewis

Vice President Jim MacGregor

Secretary Patti Brydges

Treasurer Ken Stafford-Brown

Past President Mary Hass

Directors

Pat Patterson

Audrey Green

Clarence McBride

Earl Martin

The changes recommended to the constitution and by-laws were approved by the membership.

Heritage Renfrew would like more members to be on the board of directors, and would like to see an increase in its members as well.

COMING EVENTS AROUND THE DISTRICT AND AREA

SATURDAY MARCH 17 St Patrick's Day General meeting UOVGG

SATURDAY MARCH 24, 10:30 A.M TO 2:30 P.M. GENEALOGICAL WORKSHOP ALGONQUIN COLLEGE PEMBROKE, REGISTRATION FEE —\$25.00

You must register in advance by March 15 either by mail or at the UOVGG Library. Make cheque payable to UOVGG.

This is a two part seminar.

REGION 8 ONTARIO GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY AGM AND GENEALOGY DAY HOSTED BY OTTAWA BRANCH OGS, SATURDAY APRIL 21, 2012 CITY OF OTTAWA CENTRAL ARCHIVES , 100 TALLWOOD DRIVE, OTTAWA ONTARIO.

More details and registration forms available on Ottawa Branch website ogsottawa.on.ca/ .

Registration forms also available at UOVGG Library. Cost \$25.00 including lunch with pre registration. \$15 without lunch at the door.

BECOMING A FAMILYSEARCH INDEXING VOLUNTEER:

Help provide open online access to billions of family history records. These searchable records are made available at familysearch.org where people from all around the world can find records that document the lives of their ancestors. This project allows volunteers to transcribe records to make them freely available online. You volunteer from home anytime with online 24/7. You can stop and start at your convenience. Go to indexing.familysearch.org for more information.

This appeared in the Upper Ottawa Valley Gen. Group newsletter.

The Upper Ottawa Valley Genealogical Group also has access to the Latter Day Saints Library in Utah where you can order films of church, census and other records for a nominal fee.

REGION V111 OF THE ONTARIO GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY IS PROUD TO HOST
CONFERENCE 2012, ST LAWRENCE COLLEGE — KINGSTON ONTARIO JUNE 1—03, 2012
BORDERS AND BRIDGES; 1812—2012

Pre-conference Workshops and Tours— Large Marketplace— “Ask a Pro \” sessions

Computer Research Room— Wall of Ancestors

Featuring eight workshops, 22 speakers and 39 sessions. For more information email or mail

Email conference2012@ogs.on.ca Mail OGS Conference 2012, 40 Orchard View Blvd. Suite 102, Toronto, On M4R 1B9

The 1916 census is now online for researchers who are researching in the West. This census is for Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta only.

Photo Copies and Reproductions of materials are available from Collections Canada. There are price lists available online. Researchers may order online or print the order form and fill it out and then mail it in. For full information go to collectionscanada website.

Upper Canada Land Petitions are now online at collectionscanada also. These are for the period 1763-1865

REGION V111 ONTARIO GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY AGM AND GENEALOGY DAY hosted by Ottawa Branch OGS

SATURDAY APRIL 21, 2012 , CITY OF OTTAWA CENTRAL ARCHIVES, 100 TALLWOOD AVENUE, OTTAWA ONT. 9:30 –10:00 CHECK IN TIME. COFFEE AND TEA WILL BE AVAILABLE ON ARRIVAL

MORE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT U.O.V.G.G. LIBRARY IN PEMBROKE ONT. COST \$25 INCLUDING LUNCH WITH PRE-REGISTRATION, \$15 WITHOUT LUNCH AT THE DOOR.



Beamish Store 1963

OUR NEW HOURS OF OPERATION POLICY

Hours of operation 10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m Monday and Wednesday. Doors locked at other times

For days we are not open appointments may be made to do research by calling the following numbers
(613-432-6958, Olga Lewis)

Copies of pictures from collections are \$5.00 per copy. Those wishing copies of any pictures must comply with the copyright laws as set down, if using the pictures for publications. A form has been prepared that one must sign to obtain copies of pictures which has the rules listed on it for use of the pictures.

We have copies of the pictures of the Renfrew Mercury which are being entered into our computer. These pictures are from 1967 to 1999. Anyone wishing a copy can obtain a printout of a picture or have it put on a disk for the two dollars each picture. If using a disk from Heritage Renfrew the cost is and additional \$2.50 for the diisk.

OUR ANNUAL YARD AND BAKE SALE WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY JUNE 2, 2012 AT 190 MASSEY CRESCENT FROM 8 AM TO 12 NOON. ANYONE OF OUR MEMBERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO DONATE SALEABLE ARTICLES FOR THIS SALE CAN LEAVE THEM AT 190 MASSEY CRESCENT JUNE 1, 2012. SO IF YOU HAVE ARTICLES IN YOUR ATTIC, SHED OR GARAGE THAT YOU WANT TO GET RID OF, AND ARE IN FAIRLY GOOD CONDITION PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DONATE THEM FOR THE SALE. NO CLOTHING PLEASE.

OUR ANNUAL BUS TRIP IS BEING PLANNED FOR THE FIRST WEEK IN JULY, POSSIBLE DATE JULY 4, 2012, WHICH IS TO BE CONFIRMED AT A LATER DATE, THIS BEING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WAR OF 1812 WE ARE GOING TO BE VISITING A HISTORIC SITE , WHICH IS UPPER CANADA VILLAGE. PEOPLE GOING ON THE TRIP WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING THEIR ADMISSION FEES INTO UPPER CANADA VIL-LAGE AS WELL AS THEIR MEALS, ETC. HERITAGE RENFREW WILL ONLY BE COLLECTING THE FEES FOR THE BUS FARE., WHICH COST WILL BE IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.

IF THE TIME WARRANTS IT AND THERE IS ENOUGH INTEREST IN GOING ON ANOTHER TRIP IN THE FALL WE WILL BE GETTING INFORMATION ON A TRIP TO OLD FORT HENRY IN KINGSTON. THIS TRIP WOULD BE IN SEPTEMBER.

.THESE EVENTS WILL BE WELL ADVERTISED AS TO DATES AND PLACE IN THE MEDIA AND BY POSTER.

Olga: From The Renfrew Mercury.

Renfrew's Skating Rink Totally Destroyed by Fire On Thursday Night--- April 15, 1927

Renfrew's skating rink is gone. The Argyle street arena, extending from Argyle to Lochiel street and ranking among the best rinks in Ontario, fell a prey to fire on Thursday night. The fire, which broke out shortly before 11 o'clock, was first noticed by Dr. McCann, whose premises adjoin the rink.

Seven lines of hose were laid by the firemen, who paid no attention to the rink, which was a mass of flames a few minutes after being first noticed. They directed their energies toward saving property adjoining, which caught fire from the excessive heat from the burning rink.

There was no wind and no sparks were flying. Sparks rose in a column from the burning building, and the sight presented as the embers rose high over the town was more spectacular than any pyrotechnic display put on at the Renfrew Fair or on other fete days.

The fire alarm of the fire hall and St Francis Xavier's church sounded and people looking out saw a great glare in the centre of the town. Many surmised that the skating rink was ablaze before learning where the fire was burning. A big frame building, with a runway beside it extending from street to street, it was regarded by many as something which sooner or later would be licked up by Vulcan. Only last summer cigarette smokers had menaced it.

The fire brigade set the LaFrance pumper to work at the nearest point on Raglan street and worked for nearly an hour before assured that the fire was under control.

From the excessive heat residences near by, one of them the Perrier home caught fire but only the exterior was hurt. It was not so with the Chinese Laundry across the alley from the rink. It a frame building is now no more, and the same is true of stables adjoining owned by Mr. G.A.Ellis and Mr James Biggar, both of whom lost horses, in addition to other articles. The flames communicated with Ottawa House sample rooms across the street, and those were all but destroyed. Tons of water were poured on the building; but still the building burned with it were many associations, for that building was once Gravelle's hall, the opera house of Renfrew in former days.

The firemen as they fought the flames were watched by an audience of several hundred people, who were attracted by the glare, which was exceedingly bright despite the existence of a full moon.

Many people near by brought garden hose into play, among them Dr. McCann, who while watching the blaze and expressing the view that the rink only would burn had his attention called to the fact that his own home was menaced. Then the doctor proceeded to make a hurried operation making use of a ladder and garden hose.

From different homes household furniture was carried out, and in the majority of instances it was from Raglan street. The only homes on Argyle street menaced seriously was a duplex just north of the Chinese Laundry.

For years something of the kind had been feared in Renfrew. There was a runway beside the skating rink, from Argyle street to Lochiel, and in this runway often mere men and boys, the men drinking, and smoking and the boys pulling away at cigarettes, (cont'd on page 8)

(cont'd from page 7)

Often the police made a chase.

The rink destroyed was one erected a little over 20 years ago. It took the place of the firemen's rink at the corner of German and Elizabeth streets. It was a rink complete in all its appointments. Joined to a spacious ice surface was a plentitude of space, for onlookers, including a gallery. In the rink was a restaurant, with dining room accompaniment, and on the same floor was a big organ which enjoyed a popularity with skaters.

When the rink was first erected there was no gallery, the gallery coming after Renfrew secured a National Hockey League franchise. At that time a telegraph office occupied a part of the gallery, and it is recalled now that in the telegraph office \$1,000 wagers were sometimes waged, even on the scoring of a goal.

Renfrew rink was owned by a company, of which Mr George J. Barnet was president. The question now is, will it be rebuilt? A rink of frame construction cannot be erected on the same premises, the fire-limit bylaw barring the way. A rink of the same material would require to occupy a less central site. People living near the rink have always been afraid of just what occurred on Thursday night.

Everybody was rejoicing that there was no wind Thursday night. There prevailed what mariners all "a dead calm". Sailing vessels were "as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean." Sparks ascended in a column to a great height; and appeared to turn into ashes there. Had there been a wind it would have impossible to save several other buildings in the path of the breeze, and had a wind been coming out of the west much of the business section of the town would have inevitably been destroyed.

Good work was done by the fire brigade. Thanks to the presence of the LaFrance pumper, there was considerable force to every one of the seven streams in operation. At times the streams were diverted from buildings by telephone poles, which like buildings ignited from the heat of the burning rink.

The rink was built less than a quarter of a century ago: the sample rooms of the Ottawa House were built a little over fifty years ago. These rooms were gutted. They constituted what was once Gravelle's music hall and ignited from sheer force of heat from across a street. Those who were first at the fire think that it started in the shed or stables beside the rink. Communicating with the rink, it was only a matter of moments before the huge building was a mass of flames. Many a pair of skates were lost in the rink, and lost also were furnishings in the rink restaurant.

In this rink it was that Renfrew's professional hockey team of half a generation ago engage in matches; here it was that the horse-shows of former days took place, and within the same four walls political meetings were held, the last one in September of 1926, when the Rt Hon. Mackenzie King was the principal speaker. There were hundreds at the fire on Thursday night, and next morning as many more were there to look over the situation and express regret that one of Renfrew's institutions had been wiped out. It is understood that both the Rink Co. and the other losers carried insurance.