

# OPEONGO LINES

PRESERVING YESTERDAY FOR TOMORROW

HERITAGE RENFREW

SEPTEMBER 2012



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Library & Archives Canada  
Home to Heritage Renfrew

770 Gibbons Road

Renfrew Ontario

K7V 4H4

## Message from the President

### Members of Heritage Renfrew

Our summer is almost over and soon the leaves will be turning colour as fall arrives. I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer although it was a very hot in July, but more comfortable in August with some rain.

I have helped several visitors in our facility and some who emailed me for information. Our new device has arrived and when Jim MacGregor returns from holidays we hope to have it set up. We will be re-arranging some of our machines, to accommodate this new device which will allow us to read our microfilms and print out the information we want. There are few moving parts so maintenance will be minimal, compared to our other reader printer.

Joyce McBride and I have been re-cataloguing our collections and hope to have them set up for easier access and also to know just what each collection holds. A full inventory of each collection done so far helps us to know just what each collection holds.

There are several pictures of our bus trip to Upper Canada Village on the computer, and anyone interested in seeing them can do so. I

We hope to have more new members this fall, we have had some new members join us this summer.

I have been busy putting together a book with directories and voter's lists for Renfrew and area which I hope will be a useful aid to research for those doing family histories. These are articles that I have found online and other places which I hope will provide help in finding ancestors in the area.

Olga Lewis

President Heritage Renfrew



**Membership  
Expiration  
Notification**

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## Renfrew Archives Directory

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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,

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Our garage and bake sale was held on Saturday June 9th and was successful, but in future we should dispense with the bake sale portion of the sale. While most of the baked goods were sold it was not as successful a part of the sale as it was hoped it would be. I wish to thank all who donated articles for both the yard and bake sale.

Our bus trip to Upper Canada Village was not a great success as was hoped it would be. We did not have a full bus, and actually only had thirty passengers, who for the most part were from out of town, only 3 members of Heritage Renfrew availed themselves of the trip, although several had mentioned that they wanted to go somewhere different from the backwoods in the area which we seemed to visit each year. Most of the people wanted a coach with air conditioning which would have made the cost of the trip double in price. While school buses are not air-conditioned nor do they have bathrooms, they are not all that uncomfortable to ride in. My arthritis was none the worse for travelling in a school bus. Since the majority want only air-conditioned charter buses, my recommendation is that Heritage Renfrew no longer have bus trips anywhere. The cost of using a bus to accommodate people who want to travel in comfort is much too expensive for a group as small as Heritage Renfrew. For those who availed themselves of the trip, they all seemed to enjoy the trip to Upper Canada Village, and it had its interesting moments. It made it all worthwhile and pictures were taken of the village which I have put a few in the newsletter.

### **1871 Humour**

A lawyer once said to a countryman in a smockfrock, who was undergoing his examination in the witness box "You in the smockfrock, how much are you paid for lying?"— "Less than you are unfortunately was the reply," or you would be in a smockfrock too."

The man who "couldn't find his match" went to bed in the dark.

Everyday we hear of the environment in one way or another, be it a newscast or in the paper, and we sometimes assume that this is a new thing, but people were concerned with the environment a hundred years ago, when it affected them and their well being. Below is a letter from the District Health Officer replying to a complaint from a concerned citizen about environmental concerns.

DR MALONEY'S REPORT:

The new District Health Officer Reports on Mr Hilliard's Complaints— The Mill Creek Must Be Kept Clean.

Cornwall Ont. Nov. 21, 1912

To J.W. S. McCullough, Chief Officer of Health, Toronto

Sir:

Acting on your instructions, I investigated the complaint of Mr Fred Hilliard of Renfrew, also the Query of the Town of Renfrew, re contamination of their water supply by a tannery on Smith's Creek in Renfrew.

On November 15th wrote, asking an official report from the local Medical Officer of Health. Visited Renfrew on the 20th. Invited Mr Hilliard, the Mayor and Officer of Health to accompany me in my investigations. A sharp cut ravine runs through the town, terminating at Smith's Creek. This ravine is being gradually filled up by refuse and earth and the made ground used for building purposes. The town uses this ravine as a dump. No animal matter or refuse of an offensive smelling nature is allowed to be deposited there. There is nothing here which in itself would be injurious to health, but it is unsightly particularly as it is in a residential quarter. At the bottom of the ravine there is an old sewer pipe. I was informed by the mayor that no closets or urinals are connected with it, and at most one kitchen sink. The outlet of this sewer is in the ravine and on the property of Mr Hilliard. I do not consider his complaint in this regard at all well founded.

The tannery is situated on Smith's Creek and its refuse enters the stream. The stream also passes through Mr Hilliard's property and his complaint in this regard is justifiable. It is a small affair but quite sufficient to pollute the stream. This stream, Smith's Creek runs through a well settled section of country and I was creditably informed that besides the tannery its waters were always much polluted. It enters the Bonnechere River about one hundred yards below and on the opposite side from the town's intake pipe.

Owing to a dam lower down the current in the river here is very slight, and during the time of low water, this might be by itself affecting the current.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- (A) That no action be taken regarding Mr Hilliard's complaint re the old sewer.
- (B) That the refuse at the dump be burned at least once a week.
- (C) That a layer of ashes be spread over the remaining refuse at regular intervals. I think this should remove all reasonable objections, and the resulting made ground would be more stable
- (D) The raising of the town dam for power purposes makes Smith's Creek a grave menace to the health of the citizens.

Continued on next page

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The tannery should be absolutely prohibited from throwing refuse in the creek. A frequent inspection should be made of the creek throughout its entire course to note any sources of pollution. The intake pipe could be extended farther up the river, but this to be effective would require an extensive addition as the still water in times of drought extends for a considerable distance.

NOTE: The foreman of the tannery stated that he was not now putting any refuse in the creek, but work seemed to be proceeding as usual.

This report respectfully submitted: Paul J Maloney, District Officer of Health

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NEW ITEMS TO RESEARCH AT COLLECTIONS CANADA [www.collectionscanada@gc.ca](http://www.collectionscanada@gc.ca)

On [automatedgenealogy.ca](http://automatedgenealogy.ca) the 1852 census is online now, it is being digitized and is almost complete. It is the intention of the National Archives to digitize the census records and put them online for researchers. Visit the site and see other things that have been digitized with a group of volunteers working together to get records online for researchers. Anyone can apply to aid in the digitizing of the records.

The Ontario Archives can be contacted by correspondence, ( includes fax, mail and email)

Mailing address: The Archives of Ontario, 134 Ian MacDonald Boulevard, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M7A 2C5

By telephone: 1-800-9933 toll free number (Ontario only) or 416-327-1600

Regular Online Register as an Archives of Ontario Researcher, If you are planning a visit to the archives for the first time, you are able to pre-register prior to your arrival.

Walk in services: You will receive staff assisted service in order of your arrival and will be told the expected waiting time. The best times to receive quicker service will also be posted

At the National Archives Site one can find directories and gazetteers of cities and towns, and townships, as well as old advertisements from the 1800's and early 1900's. These are great research tools for those researching ancestors.

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 Olga Lewis at 613-432-6958

Copies of pictures from collections are \$5.00 per copy. The copies of pictures from the Renfrew Mercury are \$2.00 per picture. 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 disc for the cost of two dollars a picture. If using a disk from Heritage Renfrew the cost is an additional \$2.50 for the disk

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Some of the passengers of the bus trip to Upper Canada Village July 3, 2012

Olga—— from the Renfrew Mercury.

Interesting article about a fire at St Andrew's Church in 1897

### THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BADLY SCORCHED

On Tuesday morning at six o'clock, as Engineer W.M. Young was proceeding to his labors for the day, he observed that the basement of St Andrew's Church was in a blaze. He ran to the basement door, and discovered that there was considerable amount of fire and a great deal of smoke. The R.C. church bell was just ringing the six o'clock hour, and Mr Young rushed along and soon had the fire gong striking its rapid notes. At that hour, people were wakeful: and there was soon a crowd hurrying on to the street. The hand engine was brought down to the tank at the Barnet block, and the steamer was drawn by a team, through the newly fallen and heavy snow, up to the creek.

The early-comers on the scene had discovered that the fire as yet seemed confined to the basement, above the furnace. The heat had broken out one window, and Mr A.A. Gilmour, with good sense, wrenched off the light basement-porch outer door, and placed that against the broken window, keeping down the draft of fresh air. The hand engine was manned by the time the hose was in position, and soon branchmen George Box and John Murphy were directing a good stream against the burning timbers of the floor. Soon the blaze was pretty well quenched in the basement; but it was something of a problem how far the fire had extended above, and the smoke was so dense that it was impossible to get into the main building to see what the danger there was. Finally it was decided to run the stream from the steamer— which had been playing for some time,— down the inclined floor towards the furnaces. This was done. As the volume of smoke decreased, it was found that the danger was over. The engines were called off, and the Hook & Ladder Brigade called in. The fire was slowly burning up the wall. This wood work was cut out, and then the danger was over. A considerable hole was burned in the floor around the register on the north side, nearly above the furnaces. Several seats were badly burned, the walls were much damaged by smoke and steam and the ceiling and carpets in the basement much damaged by water. The loss will be from \$1,000 to \$1,500. There was insurance of \$10,000 on the edifice.

There is little doubt the the fire originated from the overheating of the wood work around a closed register. There is also little doubt that it had been burning all night. Some youths passing the church at eleven o'clock on Tuesday night, smelt smoke quite distinctly. Messrs Wm Airth and D.T. Elliott, returning from Council meeting after midnight, smelt smoke about Mrs. Ross' on Main street; but that it was a burning chimney was the idea they had.

While the fire must have been smouldering long, still it had such a hold when discovered; and was making such headway on the flooring, that it is quite possible that that the church would have gone but for the readiness with which water was secured from the hand engine.

Fire Chief McAndrew was at this fire. This fire was put out. We do not know that there is any connection between the two facts; but still they are facts.

The steamer threw a very fair stream for the length of hose (continued page 8)

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but we learn that it had to be given a drink of five pails of water before the suction was properly started.

The flames crept up the inside of the walls to within two feet of the roof. Had they gained that two feet more headway, it would be a more stirring account. The Mercury would have to write of the conflagration. Had the flames once caught in the dry and heavy timbers of the roofing there would have been a splendid spectacle though a disastrous fire.

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**QUILTING AT UPPER CANADA VILLAGE**