



The Historical Society of Ottawa News

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Past President's Report by George Neville

We like to think of The Historical Society of Ottawa, founded on 3rd June 1898 by The Women's Canadian Historical Society of Ottawa as the oldest heritage organization of the community, but that is not correct. Over the 2016 Christmas period, I was surprised to learn of L'Institut canadien-français d'Ottawa (ICFO), the oldest French-language men's club in Ontario, founded in 1852, registered in 1856, and incorporated in 1865! I was aware of L'Alliance française and had some dealings with it some years ago, but I regret to say I was ignorant of the ICFO and made a point of finding its location at the north-west corner of York and Dalhousie streets (2nd floor) with entrance off York St.



ICFO quarters on the second floor of the building at Dalhousie and York streets. Photo by G. Neville.

My introduction to the ICFO came via an e-mail order for a complete set of the Bytown Pamphlets (Nos. 1-100, with #88 having been assigned to our 2013 HSO booklet history, *(To Be Continued...)* submitted by André Lajoie who is the current custodian of the Institut's library that was created in 1856, preceding by 50 years the Ottawa Public Library, opened in 1906. The ICFO library now contains more than

FRENCH PRESENCE IN OTTAWA FOR OVER 150 YEARS

Francophones contribute to Ottawa's development since the founding of Bytown in 1826. They work on excavation of the Rideau Canal, in the forest industry, and after 1859, at the construction of the Parliament buildings. With Confederation in 1867, the Nation's capital becomes home for many French speaking politicians, judges and public servants. Many French-Canadians settle on farm land east of the city, others in the working class neighborhoods west of Parliament. A significant number of francophones settle in the Vanier ward at the end of the XIXth century. Francophones contribute to the development of Ottawa in all areas of society.

Lower Town remains the cradle of the francophone community as well as of many of its institutions: the General Hospital of the Soeurs de la Charité (1845), Guigues school (1864) and La Salle Academy (1899) ran by the Frères des écoles chrétiennes, and also the University of Ottawa (1848) and Le Droit newspaper (1913) both founded by the Oblates of Mary-Immaculate. The Episcopal Palace, diocesan symbol of catholic religious authority, is present in Ottawa since 1847. The Institut canadien-français, founded in 1852 by J.B. Turgeon first francophone mayor of Bytown, is today the oldest cultural francophone institution in Ottawa.

This plaque unveiled on June 24th, 2005 commemorates the 150th anniversary of the City of Ottawa.

English plaque on Dalhousie side (French version is around the corner on York). Photo by G. Neville.

3,000 books and periodicals. I promptly delivered the pamphlet set on 23rd December to the ICFO impressive quarters complete with a bar, billiard tables, cafe tables and chairs, meeting rooms, etc. As a Christmas gesture, I included gratis copies of each of the HSO History, Eva Taylor's 4-page HSO history, *Who was Darcy McGee*, and a pamphlet on Lt.-Col. John By published entirely in French. While cordially received at the ICFO quarters, I was

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OTTAWA REGIONAL HERITAGE FAIR

(Official Sponsor- The HSO)

Tuesday, 25th April 2017
9:00 AM – 2:30 PM

Site: Canadian Museum of History

Come to view wonderful exhibits and chat with youthful exhibitors. Today's youth need our support!

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HSO Speaker Profile for Monthly Meeting of April 2017

HSO Speaker: Kelly Rae - Thomas Ahearn – Electrification of Ottawa

Abstract. Thomas Ahearn, born in Lebreton Flats to Irish immigrant parents, was an early adapter of new technology. He brought innovation to Ottawa by introducing electricity to the city. He provided lighting, powered his streetcars, and developed a number of electrical devices such as irons, stoves and heaters. He was the first person to prepare a meal on an electric stove, among other things. Hear about his technological and political achievements that helped shape the city of Ottawa and see documents and artifacts from this Canadian inventor and businessman.

Profile. Kelly Ray works in public affairs for the Canada Science and Technology Museum. Holding degrees in anthropology and public relations, it is quite fitting that as a great, great grand-niece of Thomas Ahearn, she makes a career in sharing stories of innovation and Canadian technology. She has worked for over a decade in

French plaque for Institut canadien-français d'Ottawa on building face of York Street. Photo by G. Neville.



the cultural and tourism sectors at the Calgary Zoo as well as with multiple museums here in Ottawa.



The Historical Society of Ottawa presents

A DAY IN THE BUNKER

Wednesday, June 28th 2017

at the Diefenbunker, 3929 Carp Road, Ontario

featuring
a presentation on the Gouzenko Affair

10 a.m. Tour of the facility

12:00 p.m. Luncheon in the cafeteria

1:00 p.m. Presentation

Including transportation by coach to & from facility

\$65.00

Contact: George Shirreff for tickets
shirreff@rogers.com or call 613-692-9080

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informed that admittance is by membership, that ladies must be accompanied (not admitted singly), and that the language and ambiance is French. Exercising my non-fluent French, I was surprised but pleased to be told that since I speak French, I could become a member. Its membership has been running at the 600 level.

When André Lajoie soon responded with another e-mail noting the pamphlet collection as a “nice addition to our library” and proposing that he would purchase new Bytown Pamphlets as they are produced to keep the collection current, I responded drawing his attention to the following unnumbered earlier booklets published by the HSO with the editorship of (the late archivist) Edwin Welch:

SIGHTS AND SURVEYS – Two Diarists on the Rideau (53 pp.)

YANKIES AND LOYALISTS, Bytown to Kingston in 1830 (32 pp. coloured covers)

LETT'S BYTOWN – Recollections of Old Bytown by W.P. Lett (indexed, 112 pp.)

THE COMMISSARIAT – Survivor of the Bytown Era (52 pp.), JOHN BY, Builder of the Rideau Canal, Founder of Ottawa by Robert Legget (66 pp.), and

Introducing WILLIAM PITTMAN LETT, Ottawa's First City Clerk and Bard, 1819-1892) by Bryan D. Cook (412 pp.)

André and the ICFO President quickly approved purchase of this additional collection that I delivered to the Institut on 27th December shortly after 11:00 AM, its daily opening time and picked up a ready-prepared cheque.

The ICFO is preparing a publication on its founder, Joseph-Balzara Turgeon (1816-1897) who also became the first and only French-Canadian Mayor of Bytown (1853). The Institut is also hoping to bring out a comprehensive history of the ICFO for its 165th anniversary coincidental with Canada's Confederation sesquicentennial. The

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its legacy with a talk by Stuart Clarkson, spotlighting a few transferred items of interest.

Profile. Stuart Clarkson is the Community Archivist at the City of Ottawa Archives, helping Ottawa's citizens connect with private historical documents. Stuart took a Masters of Arts in Scottish history in his hometown of Guelph before proceeding to Halifax to obtain a Masters of Library and Information Science at Dalhousie and can draw upon a heterogeneous background of work in libraries, archives and museums. With his wife, great-great-granddaughter of an asthmatic keeper of the Stewarton tollgate on Bank Street, Stuart has raised three children in Ottawa since arriving in 2009.

HSO Volunteers Needed (Cont'd from page 2)

HSO Social Convenor for program year 2017:

Responsible for arranging catering and facilities for a Christmas Luncheon and promoting such events through soliciting reservations from HSO

Note of Appreciation from British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO)

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa is pleased to make a small donation in support of the work of The Historical Society of Ottawa to increase public knowledge of the history of Ottawa and surrounding region. A cheque in the amount of \$200.00 has been contributed.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and membership of BIFHSGO, please accept our best wishes for success in all your future endeavours.

Sincerely, Barbara Toes, President



The Historical Society of Ottawa gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the City of Ottawa and the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Ontario.



Ontario

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Insitut, as a socio-cultural organization, offers four programmes: library, social activities, cultural activities and games. It has staged more than 1,000 lectures, some 3,000 musical soirées, and more than 100 theatre plays, having registered more than 4,500 members since its inception! I have yet personally to meet André Lajoie, Président du comité 165e-150e ICFO.

Membership Renewal Form The Historical Society of Ottawa

Date _____ Renewal/New _____ No. Members _____
Name _____
Name (for mailing) _____

Address Unchanged(Show Changes Below)

Street _____
Postal Code _____ Phone (res) _____ Phone (work) _____
E-mail Address _____
Interest _____
(Activities?) _____

Volunteer? _____

Membership fees

Single \$35/year
Student \$10/year
Family \$50/year
Single Life \$350

Payment

Membership	\$ _____
Donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Charitable receipts for federal income tax purposes will be issued for donations.

Please photocopy and complete this form and mail it with a cheque, made payable to The Historical Society of Ottawa, to:

Membership, The Historical Society of Ottawa
P.O. Box 523, Station B.
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5P6