

# Merrickville and District Historical Society

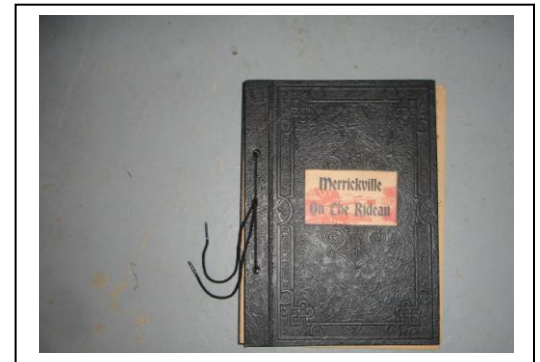
## Archival Update, Spring 2014



They say (whoever they are) that spring is around the corner, in fact March 20<sup>th</sup> to be precise, and although it did get above the zero mark on that day, there is still a lot of snow around especially at the back entrance of the archives. Up to your waist, well knee high in some spots, but the community centre does have a front door which is more than convenient during these trying times of a Canadian winter. What did the early settlers do? Some say they used to tie a rope they could hold onto from the house to the barn (if they had one) so that they wouldn't lose their way in a snow storm.

### Items of interest

This book is another treasure that was found in the archives. It is 8 ½ by 11 with a black embossed cover and is entitled "Merrickville on the Rideau". The pages are two holes punched and held together with a black tassel. The inscription on the inside cover reads "Lois Knapp", but has no date. It appears to be a chronicle of events in Merrickville by the way of short stories' generally one or two pages long and is accompanied by old photographs. The handwriting is quite large and is well written in black ink. It covers a number of topics including William Merrick, Colonel By, churches, schools, industry, transportation, interesting buildings, beauty spots, Jasper and Eastons Corners - all in twenty one pages, single sided, bar one.



These stories are not certified historical accounts, but they certainly make for very interesting reading, so we thought we might share a few.

#### "What's in a Name?"

In 1873 the community had a population of 300. In 1828 the people of Merrick's Mills decided at a public meeting to change the name to Colborne however there were two other Colbornes in the province. Then with pride the villagers compromised on "Merrickville".

#### "Churches"

Religious services were held in homes and in the blockhouse in the early days. The first church in the village was erected by the Roman Catholics in 1832. This was a small frame building which served until a stone structure in 1845 which remained until in 1900 the present church was erected. (photo of St. Andrews Roman Catholic Church erected in 1902)

The first Anglican Church was built in 1837 and served the congregation until it was replaced by the present one in 1908. (photo of Trinity Anglican Church erected by/in 1908).

The first Methodist church was built on the north shore of the river in 1854 and the second one on the south side in 1889 (photo of Merrickville United church erected in 1889)

The Presbyterian Church was erected in 1861.

#### Beauty Spots

1) This page consists of the following five wonderful old photographs, all taken at the residence of Harry Falconer McLean: 1) Residence of Mr. H. F. McLean; 2) Elk; 3) Red Deer; 4) The Caretaker and young fawns; 5) Artificial Pond with Wild Geese.

These photographs would be of Mr. McLean's own private zoo.

If you would like to read more of these stories, arrangements can be made for you to visit the archives, and it would also be an opportunity for you to see just what else we have that you might find interesting.

## Looking for photographs.

The Historical Society often gets enquiries from individuals from around North America and Europe regarding their ancestors and, as we all know, this is a growing field of interest. We search through the Archives, Library, and talk to some of the more senior residents in the area to gather any information that might be relevant. This doesn't always work in our favour, a case in question was a request we received from a person who indicated that their grandparents had lived at 306 Elgin Street (the old Langford house) and could we find an old photograph. In actual fact, after some research the house in question was determined to be located at 206 Elgin Street, the old Duke house. Once this was established the next question would be, do we have any old photographs of the original house; and unfortunately the answer was no, we had nothing in our files.

Another question was about the old Errett Brothers Store which was located at the South West side of St, Lawrence Street, and did we have any old photographs that showed the actual name "The Errett Brothers Store" in the store's front windows. Unfortunately again the answer was no. Which brings us to the question; **do you have any old photographs?**

I am sure we all have that box of old photographs that we have been meaning to sort out over the past years, so perhaps this might be a good time to take a look through the box and see what you might have. We are not suggesting that you spend hours on end trying to sort through them, as spring is around the corner and we all want to be out and about to see just what's underneath all that snow. Still you may just come across the odd picture that you know would be of significant historical interest to the community and to the Archive Collection. When we receive enquiries about a certain property or its past residents in the future, such photographs would allow us to back up our research.

If you think that you might have some photos of interest, please contact us. We are particularly interested in photographs of buildings, equipment and people whether they be in the village or the country side, farms, the old homesteads, barns, village homes, transportation-wagons, sleighs, cutters, carriages, farming machinery, families photographs, and perhaps portraits of people, whether they be your own family or your friends, or even pictures you have taken while out on an afternoon drive; the possibilities are endless. Members of the Society Executive who work within the archives could arrange to pick up anything you think might be of interest. In addition, any background information you could supply at the time the documents are picked up would allow us to add text to the file - we have all experienced looking at a picture, and not being sure just who it might be, turning it over to find nothing, very frustrating.

And please be reassured that, using today's technology, we will have your documents scanned and digitized, or do what is necessary to copy and preserve them, and then return them back to you without any loss or damage.

We would like to suggest that we all make this our summer archive project - you find the pictures and we will place the images on file in the community's Archives for future generations.

## Archive Computer Equipment

Over the past few weeks, the Historical Society has been fortunate to have one of its members Gordon Glaze help us with our aging computer equipment. Today's technology seems to change overnight and while our systems, which holds the data base for all of the catalogued artefacts, are still sufficient for our needs, updates are required to keep us ahead of the game. But with Gordon's expertise and help we hope to have new programs in place this year. Be assured that the entire existing data base is backed up and kept in numerous locations for safe keeping.

Gordon is also helping us research minimal cost options for providing web access for our archives and we will keep you posted.

Finally, Janet Glaves is still working on the Rural Sites project by converting the existing hand written information plus photographs of each of the properties into a format that will be accessible through our Historical Society web site.