



# *Historic Gloucester*

Newsletter of the

**GLOUCESTER HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

[www.gloucesterhistory.com](http://www.gloucesterhistory.com)

VOLUME 14, NO. 2

Summer 2013



*The Impressive Hog's Back Falls*

Contents

**From the President’s Desk..... Glenn Clark 3**

**Sgt. Major William (Bill) Stewart’s Talk ..... Joan Scott 4**

**Mary Patterson - 1925-2013..... Mary Boyd 6**

**Just Published: Gloucester From A to Z ..... Robert Serré 6**

**What You May Not Know About Mooney’s Bay and Hog’s Back..... Glenn Clark 7**

**Membership Form..... 10**

THE GLOUCESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 IS HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE  
 THAT ITS HISTORY ROOM WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
 EACH THURSDAY FROM 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.  
 BETWEEN MAY 2 AND OCTOBER 31, 2013,  
 OR BY APPOINTMENT

LOCATION: 4550B BANK STREET (AT LEITRIM ROAD)

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
 Contact Robert Serré at 613-749-0607 or bob.rosealine@gmail.com

**Cover Photo:**  
*The photo on the cover shows the Hog’s Back Bridge and Falls much as they are today. This photo was taken by William James Topley in 1892 and is in Library and Archives Canada PA-009124. (see article on p 7)*

*Historic Gloucester* is published by The Gloucester Historical Society. It is intended as a Newsletter to members of the Society to provide interesting articles on Gloucester’s past and to keep them informed of new acquisitions by the Museum, publications available, upcoming events and other items of general interest. Comments and suggestions regarding the Newsletter are always welcome.



*Gloucester Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the City of Ottawa.*

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

By Glenn Clark

This is my first President’s Report after my election at the Annual Meeting in April. Since then, I am pleased with our ongoing involvement in the community. We have participated in the Jane’s Walk program, Doors Open Ottawa, the St. James Yard Sale, and at Colonel By Day.

We are now developing a new Gloucester photo collection and viewed a first round of recent photographs in July. We welcome all members to submit photos of interesting locations in their own neighbourhoods (if in former Gloucester territory) or any historic photographs in your own albums. Remember the old saying that a picture is worth a thousand words. You may share your photos by e-mailing them to [english@gloucesterhistory.com](mailto:english@gloucesterhistory.com) or bring them to our September 14<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. meeting at our Leitrim office.

**A Special Invitation to All Members – Wednesday, August 21, 2013 10:00 a.m.**

We are pleased to announce **the official unveiling of the Braddish Billings Plaque** by Mayor Jim Watson and former Gloucester Mayor Claudette Cain (now Coulas) in Linda Thom Park at the north end of Billings Bridge on the west side of Bank Street. This is a project that I have been working on since early 2011 on behalf of the Society. The beautiful blue plaque, made of bronze, commemorates the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mr. Billings’s arrival as the first permanent settler of Gloucester Township. I hope to see you there.

**Remember that The Grace Johnston History Room is now supplied with Internet to assist researchers when they come to visit. From May to October this room is open every Thursday and by appointment at other times.**

**Also remember to visit our website at: [www.gloucesterhistory.com](http://www.gloucesterhistory.com). There is a wealth of information available at this website and we invite your comments regarding it.**

**Board of Directors  
2013-2014**

President:	Glenn Clarke	Directors:	Bob Kemp (2015)
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Membership	Shirley McCooeye (2015)		

\* Indicates date when this person is up for re-election to Board of Directors.

## **Sgt. Major William (Bill) Stewart's Talk at GHS Annual Meeting.**

By Joan Scott

Members, friends and guests of the Gloucester Historical Society received a rare treat after the GHS Annual General Meeting on April 21<sup>st</sup>, when Sgt. Major William (Bill) Stewart told about his life with the RCMP Musical Ride and his long and close association with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Bill started off with a bit of history, explaining how the RCMP was founded in Ottawa in 1873 to provide policing in the West. This was shortly after the battle of Little Bighorn and the coming of Sitting Bull and his people to Canada. A force of 300, with their horses, was sent to Winnipeg and then on to Fort McLeod, Calgary and other areas. There were some difficulties with the horses who were not used to the western weather and who also frequently got lost. The native community was very helpful in this regard, however, and soon things improved.

Many of the early RCMP members were former cavalry officers, including one Charles Dickens, son of the famous author. As a result of their former cavalry experience, the concept of the musical ride was popular and the ride was brought to the RCMP. The musical ride was first performed in Regina but after five performances it was discontinued for a time due to a number of factors including the Northwest Rebellion, the cost of presenting it and the complaints from Toronto newspapers of the force being involved in doing 'frivolous' things. When the ride was reintroduced it was usually for various special occasions on a hit and miss basis.

In 1920, when the RCMP took over from the Dominion police it moved to Ottawa's Lansdowne Park with 186 horses and over 200 men. Each year it moved to Rockcliffe for a few months while fairs were held at Lansdowne, and, in 1925 it moved permanently to its present location in Rockcliffe. Travel to outside venues was arduous at that time. Bill mentioned an example of the ride leaving Lansdowne Park at 5 am, riding to North Gower where they stayed overnight, then riding to Prescott for another overnight and on the next day to Brockville for a special July 1 performance. The schedule for the musical ride was still hit and miss until 1961 when an annual program was designed and it became an official part of the RCMP. The main mandate was to perform across Canada in small towns, particular where RCMP were policing, outside the country in Europe and such far away places as Abu Dhabi, Dubai, etc. They also performed all over the USA and in Bermuda as well and did escort duty for many heads of state and other dignitaries, both in Canada and abroad.

The power point presentation was comprised of a vast array of wonderful photos, some of the musical ride, some of escort duty with dignitaries, old photos such as one of the musical ride at Lansdowne Park in 1933, and a few of Bill riding with the Queen. One photo was of Dr. Don Cherry and his wife Harriet with the Queen. Dr. Cherry was the official veterinarian for the RCMP for some 53 years. He and Bill accompanied the musical ride on one of their one-month stays at Buckingham Palace while the horses enjoyed the accommodations in the Royal Mews. Bill's room in Buckingham Palace contained furniture from 1830 which had belonged to Queen Victoria and King George. In fact there was even a quilt

which bore the name 'Queen Victoria' on it in the room. A photo from the Queen's 1989 visit to Canada showed her riding in an open carriage which had been used 50 years previously at the opening ceremonies for the National War Memorial and which, at that time, was driven by Bill's father.

To celebrate the Queen's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002 the Musical Ride participated in some of the incredible shows which took place in London and included over 1000 horses. Escort duty was also provided for the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the monument at Vimy. Another occasion in London was the proclamation highlighting the role of Sir Sam Steele in the RCMP. During the stay of the Musical Ride at Buckingham Palace in 2009, the Queen learned that it was Bill's 28<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and so she had a cake made to celebrate the occasion. Attendance at the Olympics in Vancouver in 2010 was a highlight for the ride, as was the visit to Canada of Prince William and Kate in 2011. Also in 2011 there was a chance for some members to ride with a contingent of foreign police horsemen in the Andes during a conference in Columbia.

The RCMP has, over the years, given five horses to the Queen – *Burmese* in 1969; *Centenial* (sic) in 1973; *James* in 1998; *George* in 2009 and *Elizabeth* in 2012. Bill was privileged to present the last three to the Queen. He was also responsible for the training and presentation of this last horse, Elizabeth, on April 21, 2012. It travelled by land, sea and air over 48 hours before arriving in London, accompanied of course by Bill. This horse appears with the Queen and Sgt. Major Stewart on the 2012 commemorative \$20.00 coin. When she came to Canada in 2002 the Queen gifted the RCMP with a horse called *Golden Jubilee*.

Her Majesty is Honorary Commissioner of the RCMP and her son, Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, is Honorary Deputy Commissioner. She is very fond of the Musical Ride and calls them "my Mounties." There exists also a close personal bond between the Queen and Sgt. Major Stewart which has developed over the 30 years he has been with the Musical Ride. This was shown on his last visit to London in 2012. He went to the stable to check on the new horse before the presentation. The Queen met him there and looked at all her horses as is her usual practice (she also gives each one a carrot before she leaves the stables after she goes riding). She then expressed her thanks to the RCMP for the 5 horses it has given to her, and, as a token of her appreciation to Bill for all his services to her, she presented him with the Royal Victorian Order medal. He was the 163<sup>rd</sup> Canadian to receive this honour and the only one in the jubilee year. There are many privileges attached to receipt of this medal, including a family coat of arms.

The Gloucester Historical Society thanks Sgt. Major Bill Stewart for the great talk and power point presentation and also for the years of service he has devoted to his country and the RCMP.



## Mary Patterson

April 30, 1925 – July 17, 2013

It was with a real sense of loss that the Board of Directors learned of the passing away of Mary Patterson passing on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Mary was a life member and a Director of the Gloucester Historical Society. Though busy, Mary always found time to help in the work of both the Gloucester Historical Society and the Gloucester Museum.

Mary was involved with the Society and Museum when they were at the Johnson's Corners School and continued on as a Director when the Society & Museum moved to its present location at 4550 Bank. She was a volunteer at many of the events the Society & Museum participated in over the years and gave generously of her time and knowledge.

Mary took a keen interest in the Museum and many of the Artifacts now in the Museum Collection are there due to Mary's hard work in encouraging people to donate artifacts to preserve Gloucester's History,

Her keen sense of fairness and her dry sense of humor were always a big help when the Board had to make a difficult decision.

We know that we speak on behalf of the members of the Gloucester Historical Society in offering our sincerest condolences to her family

Mary you were a true friend, and will be missed.

The Board of the Gloucester Historical Society 2013

## GLOUCESTER FROM A TO Z (TOWNSHIP 1798-1980 / CITY 1981-2000)

Gloucester was created as a township in 1798. It was incorporated on 1 January 1850, achieving municipal status, with James Severight as its first reeve. In 1981, Gloucester Township became the City of Gloucester, and in 2001, by an act of the Ontario legislature passed two years previously, the City of Gloucester was amalgamated into the City of Ottawa, along with the former Region of Ottawa-Carleton, the former cities of Ottawa, Nepean, Kanata, Vanier and Cumberland, the former village of Rockcliffe Park, and the former townships of West Carleton, Goulbourn, Rideau and Osgoode.

This 60-page book costs \$10.00 (postal orders, add \$3.00). Please make your cheque payable to **Gloucester Historical Society**, and send your order to: Robert Serré, GHS Publications, 1057 Riviera Drive, Ottawa ON K1K 0N7. For more information, contact [bob.rosealine@gmail.com](mailto:bob.rosealine@gmail.com) or call 613-749-0607.

### SOME OF THE KEYWORDS INCLUDED IN THIS BOOK

ANNEXATIONS	LIBRARY SERVICES
ARENAS	NEWSPAPERS
BRIDGES	POLICE SERVICES
CEMETERIES	POOLS
CHURCHES	POST OFFICES
CREEKS	RAILWAY STATIONS
EXPROPRIATIONS	RAILWAYS
FAIRS	REEVES AND MAYORS
GLOUCESTER FAIR	ROADS
GLOUCESTER FIRE DEPARTMENT	
GLOUCESTER HYDRO	SCHOOLS (all kinds)
GLOUCESTER RANGERS JUNIOR 'A'	TOLLS
GLOUCESTER RINGETTE ASSOCIATION	
INDUSTRIAL PARKS	SERVICE CLUBS
ISLANDS	WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

## What you May Not Know about Mooney's Bay and Hog's Back

By Glenn Clark

This is a follow-up to my 2013 Jane's Walk and includes some facts that I did not present that day.

My walk commenced at the Mooney's Bay beach building on Saturday, May 4, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. with about 25 people present. The building itself dates from the early 1960s and includes a canteen and change rooms. This replaced the original wooden structures. The beach opened on July 1, 1952 as a safer alternative to the original beach located at Hog's Back near the canal entrance [*Ottawa Citizen*, July 1, 1952 p.2]. During low water when the Hog's Back dam is open, some residual sand can be seen at the original beach, which opened in 1936 when improvements were being made around Hog's Back. Water currents near the dam and falls had contributed to a number of drownings, which had prompted the relocation. Initially Mooney's Bay beach was 250 feet long and had no change facilities or a properly constructed parking lot. Several improvements were made in 1958 to extend the beach to 1300 feet and to add picnic tables and temporary change rooms. A proper parking lot was to be added the following year. The land was owned by the federal government but was on long-term lease to the City of Ottawa [*Ottawa Citizen*, April 19, 1958 p.21]. Prior to federal expropriation, much of Mooney's Bay Park was known as the McMahan Farm [Francis p.14].

Mooney's Bay is named after Patrick Mooney who operated a tavern at the corner of Walkley Road and Riverside Drive. This dated back to as early as the 1830s. The log building survived until around 1960 but was demolished to facilitate road improvements

[Walker]. The river location at the end of Walkley Road was also a popular swimming hole prior to the opening of the current beach. For a time, the bay was also known as Graham's Bay and named after the Graham family, which operated a farm north of Walkley Road prior to the subdividing of the land in the 1960s.

Our walk moved to the south end of Mooney's Bay Park, where we viewed the former site of Bayview Public School. The school has relocated to Owl Drive in Hunt Club and the Mooney's Bay school was demolished in 2009. Originally known as School Section 7 Gloucester, a brick school had been at this site since 1924 although expanded a number of times especially since the 1950s as the population in the area increased substantially. The first school was located near the intersection of Revelstoke Drive and Riverside Drive and known as Otterson's School and named after John Otterson, who had a farm there. That first log school dated back to the 1850s but collapsed in 1894 and was replaced with a wooden frame building the following year [Bayview].

Our walk then moved to the Riverside Drive entrance of Mooney's Bay Park. Riverside Drive assumed its name following the 1950 city annexation of the area from Gloucester Township. Previously, Riverside Drive was known as Bowesville Road as far north as Billings Bridge. Bowesville Road was a historic forced road which had been used to bypass the falls and rapids around Hog's Back. It had also served as an access route into the interior of the southern part of Gloucester Township and onward. Its first name was the Bytown and Prescott Carriage Road, the original Prescott Highway! It connected Billings Bridge with South Gloucester (prior to the existence of south Bank Street), Greely, and onward to Prescott. It was

superseded by the Bytown and Prescott Railway, which began operations in December 1854. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was known as the Long Island Road [Belden]. Bowesville was located near the current airport passenger terminal and had been expropriated and demolished in 1951 to expand the airport for air force and commercial airline use [Johnston p.160].

Opposite from the beach entrance is St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral, which serves the Lebanese Christian community. The church was built in phases. The first was the hall and school which began construction on October 24, 1984 and was completed in December 1985. The previous church on Lyon Street was sold on December 23, 1988. The church construction contract was signed on September 22, 1989 and construction started soon after. The basement was completed and enclosed by December 15, 1989 and the full church by August 30, 1990. The external stone veneer was applied in January 1991. Starting in July 1991, the cathedral has hosted the Lebanese Fun Festival on an annual basis in conjunction with the feast of St. Elijah [St. Elias]. Just to the north of the church and the apartment building and where the parking garage is located is where the late parliamentarian, Lloyd Francis grew up on a 5 acre poultry farm [Francis, p.14].

Our walk continued to the north until we reached the Terry Fox Athletic Facility, a track and field complex. Originally named the Mooney's Bay Sports Complex, the first track and field event was held on August 26, 1972 [Ottawa Citizen, August 26, 1972 p.18].

Terry Fox became famous for his Marathon of Hope to raise money for cancer research. Terry had a leg amputated because of cancer in 1977 and he began his run across the country starting from St. John's Newfoundland on April 12, 1980. His run

picked up momentum when he arrived in Ottawa and he made the ceremonial kickoff at an Ottawa Rough Riders football game on July 1, 1980 to a standing ovation. I was there. His run ended on September 1, 1980 just east of Thunder Bay and his cancer had returned. Terry passed away on June 28, 1981 and the flag on the Peace Tower was lowered to half-mast [Wikipedia]. Only five days later, on July 3, 1981, the City of Ottawa renamed the Mooney's Bay Sports Complex in Terry's memory [Ottawa Citizen, July 4, 1981 p.4].

The Terry Fox Athletic Facility is located partially on a former apple orchard, a few trees of which still exist on the north side. This was known as Bailey's Orchard and Greenhouse [Johnston, p. 19]. On land at the corner of Hog's Back Road and Riverside Drive resided the family of George H. Nelms, the well-known Ottawa optician and Ottawa mayor from 1957 until 1960. Mr. Nelms' accomplishments as mayor included the opening of the new city hall on Green Island, the inauguration of the construction of the Queensway and the termination of streetcar service in 1959 [Wikipedia]. The family operated a berry farm at this location [Kemp]. Their neighbours to the west on Hog's Back Road were Maurice and Joan McCallum who operated a chicken hatchery [Ball].

Across Riverside Drive from the Terry Fox Athletic Facility, is St. Patrick's Home. This is a nursing home and in 2013 a new home is under construction to replace the current building that opened on June 4, 1964. The home was renovated and expanded in 1985 and 1986. Prior to the 1964 opening, the home had been located at Laurier Avenue and Kent Street. In 1887, a few acres were acquired near the Rideau River for a children's summer home. It is believed that this was adjacent to the Terry Fox Athletic



Facility and in later years, it may have served for convalescence. It was expropriated and demolished at the start of the 1950s as Mooney's Bay Park was developed [St. Patrick's Home].

A walkway passes immediately south of the Terry Fox Athletic Facility running towards the river. This was formerly a laneway that was known as Cowan Lane. It served one of the Cowan Ice Houses near the river that burned down in the late 1940s and Paul's Boat Lines that had a dock just south of the Hog's Back dam. Paul's Boat Lines is named after Paul Duhamel and they operated tour boats at Mooney's Bay from 1936 until 1949, when they relocated to downtown to provide Rideau Canal and Ottawa River cruises. They are still in operation today.

As we walked westward towards the river, I pointed out 3 small white bridges that cross no water. At an earlier time, this part of Mooney's Bay Park was set up with a series of small canals or waterways. These bridges crossed those canals. At some point the canals were filled in.

As we walked north towards Hog's Back, we passed a gravel area. This is where Paul's Boat Lines operated in the 1930s and 1940s and later a small marina served private pleasure boats. The marina was closed and removed in the 1990s. For a few years in the 1980s, a steam boat offered excursions between here and Manotick. At present, Pirate Adventures operates a Pirate boat excursion on Mooney's Bay from this location [Pirate Adventures].

We are now at Hog's Back, one of the most historic locations in old Gloucester. Hog's Back is named after the rock formation that resembled the spine of a hog. It was named by John MacTaggart in 1827

Before canal construction began. To the surprise of most people, the official name of the waterfalls is 'Prince of Wales Falls'. Prior to the building of the Rideau Canal and the dam at Hog's Back, the area was substantially different. Hog's Back was previously known as Three Rocks Rapids, a set of rapids that extended for 2000 feet. The rapids still largely exist to the north of the falls. To the south of Mooney's Bay, was Three Island Rapids, which can only be slightly seen during periods of low water.

Prior to the building of the Rideau Canal, one major historic event took place here. Following a visit to Merrickville in 1814, Braddish and Lamira Billings and their first child Sabra (the first Caucasian child born in Gloucester Township) met up with Philemon Wright above the rapids. While in the midst of conversation, the Billings' canoe was caught in a strong current and was swept through the rapids. Philemon Wright, expecting the worst, raced to the end of the rapids but somehow the Billings family managed to navigate them and escaped unscathed. This dramatic event may be tempered somewhat by the fact that there were no falls in 1814 and the Three Rock Rapids were considered navigable with only a drop of about 6 feet over its 2000 foot distance.

...to be continued

**Note:** This article will be continued in the next issue of *Historic Gloucester* coming out early this Fall. Be sure to read more about this very interesting piece of Gloucester history next time.

*All things in life are temporary. If it's going well, enjoy it, that won't last long. If it's going badly, don't worry, that won't last long either.*

**Members Wanted:**

The Gloucester Historical Society is always looking for new members. Regardless of age, anyone who is interested in the history of Gloucester, as a Township, City, or part of the City of Ottawa, can benefit from membership in the Society. There is a well-stocked history room at our Leitrim Road office. Every Thursday, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm from early May to the end of October, there are knowledgeable people there to help you in all aspects of research about your family, friends or neighbours in Gloucester.

Your membership entitles you to receive the *Historic Gloucester* newsletter four times a year so that you can keep up with what is going on with the GHS and read interesting articles of times and places of long ago. For more information on the Gloucester Historical Society be sure to check out our wonderful website at **www.gloucesterhistory.com**.

**Family Histories Wanted:**

If you have information on any family who resided in Gloucester, we would be happy to add this to our records. There may be others who would like to share this information but have been unable to find it. And, you may find that the family of someone you know was once a neighbour of your ancestors!

**Volunteers Needed:**

The GHS is always looking for volunteers to assist others with research, to assist at society functions or to help the Board of Directors in many other ways.

**IF YOU HAVE NOT YET RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP, OR IF YOU WISH TO BECOME A NEW MEMBER, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND SEND IT IN WITH YOUR CHEQUE.** (Membership year runs from Jan 1 to Dec 31 calendar year)

**\*\* NOTE: NEW MEMBERSHIP FEES EFFECTIVE APRIL 2012 \*\***

**Membership Form—Gloucester Historical Society/Société historique de Gloucester**

Membership/Adhésion - \$20.00 for one year..... \$150.00 for life membership.....

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ PROV \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

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