



Historic Gloucester

Newsletter of the

**GLOUCESTER HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

www.gloucesterhistory.com

VOLUME 14, NO. 4

*Merry
Christmas*

Winter 2013



Original Memorial Cairn for John Innes

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THE GLOUCESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DURING THE WINTER MONTHS,
THE GRACE JOHNSTON HISTORY ROOM IS OPEN
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.
PLEASE CALL 613-822-2076 OR E-MAIL appointments@gloucesterhistory.com

LOCATION: 4550B BANK STREET
(parking behind St. James Anglican Church off of Leitrim Road)

Cover Photo:

Our cover photo shows the original cairn which had been placed at the corner of Russell Road and Walkley Road. It was to be a memorial to John Innes, late Reeve of Gloucester and a sundial was planned for the top. Photo courtesy of Doug Innes. See story on page 6.

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

The Society has enjoyed a very good fall. The unveiling of the John Innes plaque was well attended and the reception that followed brought much friendly sharing of stories of the Innes family and Gloucester history in general. The reception was hosted by our neighbours, St. James Anglican Church. As a result of the money raised, the church has been lit up for the Christmas season. If you have not done so already, please drop by the Gloucester South Seniors' Centre to see the plaque.

On November 10th, Claire Trépanier made an excellent presentation on her book, 'A Woman of Valour'. The story told us that the old days were not always good and we should be thankful that society is not as rigid and unforgiving as in days gone by. Through this book, family secrets were revealed allowing healing to take place. Please read Joan Scott's article on Claire's presentation later in this newsletter.

Also included, is the first part of the story of another lost Gloucester village, this time Ellwood. The Society has previously told stories of other lost villages including Bowesville in Grace Johnston's Book 'Bowesville, A Place to Remember', Finter in our booklet titled 'The Emergency Shelters at Finter (Rockcliffe) and Uplands 1946-1954' and the Quarries in Robert Serré book title 'Pioneer Families of the Gloucester Quarries'. All are available from our Book Counter.

Now that 2013 is coming to a close, I wish to thank all the members of our Board of Directors. Without their hard work, our Society could not succeed in keeping Gloucester history alive.

Finally, I wish to extend to you on behalf of our Society, good health, and good cheer, during the Christmas season and a prosperous and happy 2014.

Board of Directors 2013-2014

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

Talk by Claire Trépanier on “A Woman of Valour”

By Joan Scott

On November 9th, the Gloucester Historical Society had a guest speaker come to tell us about her book. Claire Trépanier, at the request of the granddaughter of the subject of the book, has written a very interesting story of the life of Marie-Louise Bouchard Labelle. This is a true story of a woman who lived for many years in the Rideau Park area of Gloucester near Billings Bridge.

Marie-Louise was born in 1891 in Escoumins north of Quebec City but her family moved to near Copper Cliff in Northern Ontario so that her father could work in the mines. Two years later he was killed in an accident in the open-air foundry where he was working. The young widow and her daughter moved to Capreol to stay with her brother and his wife. Shortly afterwards, Napoléon Labelle, the man who had informed her of her husband's death, began visiting Marie-Louise's mother, Georgianne, and soon asked her to share his dream of purchasing land from the Ontario Government and become a pioneer on his own farm. She agreed, they married and moved to Hanmer, Ontario. Life was very difficult but they persevered and gradually a small settlement began to grow in the area. Marie-Louise did not have the opportunity to attend school so her education was very limited, concentrating on how to manage a household and look after a family. Even when a teacher came to the community Marie-Louise had to stay home to help her mother who was in poor health. When Marie-Louise was 15 years old she met Father Joseph A. Roy, the first parish priest in Hanmer.

The author has been told many of the facts of Marie-Louise's life from her granddaughter and other relatives whom she interviewed at length over a period of several years. This combined with extensive research stretching across the country and personal travel to

many parts of Canada has allowed Claire Trépanier to put together a reliable picture of the life of this remarkable woman. Researching Fr. Roy was even more difficult. In her talk, Mrs. Trépanier gave many interesting, and sometimes humorous anecdotes from her search for clues to the life of her subjects. In fact, because so much of Marie-Louise's life was kept secret even from her family, it was necessary to delve deeply into government, church and municipal records to trace the path of this woman. In many cases the surviving family members were able to verify certain details that came to light, such as places of residence and employment in later life.

Marie-Louise, with the blessing of her mother and step-father, went to work in about 1912, in the presbytery for Father Roy who was 33 years older than she was. They became friendly during Father Roy's many visits to the Labelle family to discuss business with Marie-Louise's step-father. In September 1913 Father Roy was assigned to Cache Bay near Nipissing. Very little information about the budding relationship between Marie-Louise and Father Roy was available except that she did occasionally visit him to assist with setting up his household and maintaining order there. Such visits necessitated overnight stays because of the train schedule, but no one questioned the good intentions of the priest who was looked upon as a family friend.

In 1916, while still residing with her parents in Hanmer, Marie-Louise discovered that she was pregnant – a result of those overnight stays with Father Roy. The 58 year old priest felt a great responsibility for this 25 year old woman and he soon takes action to leave the priesthood, even though he does so without the permission or dispensation of the Catholic Church. The couple moved to Ottawa and Father Roy changed his name to Joseph Ray and Marie-Louise now uses Marie-Louise Ray. Historical records show several different names attributed to Father Roy, including Désirée Jérémie on his baptismal certificate in Quebec, and Jérémie Alphonse in western records.

In the book Claire Trépanier tells us that they purchased a house in Rideau Park in 1917 shortly before their first child, a son, was born. They continued to live as common-law partners and to have two more children, a girl and a boy. They got along well and Joseph worked hard to make a good life for his family. Despite being a devoted husband and father Joseph decides, in 1928 to return to the priesthood. He apparently discussed this with Marie-Louise and showed her where his metal box of Canada Savings Bonds was hidden in the basement. He also arranged to have title to the property transferred to her name. Presumably he believed this would ensure the welfare of his family. He left, not telling the children where he was going or why. He made Marie-Louise promise to never talk about him to anyone, not even their children – a promise Marie-Louise kept so no one ever knew exactly what transpired.

In the book, Claire Trépanier suggests several hypotheses regarding Joseph's departure. The catalyst seemed to be when Marie-Louise was hospitalized for a serious operation and he feared for her life. At that time he went to the attic and retrieved his chalice and other religious objects and, to the astonishment of his children, said mass in his home. Could he have promised God that he would return to the priesthood if Marie-Louise was spared? Another contributing factor to his decision might have been his friendship with a minister in a church which allows its clergy to marry. This man visited Joseph frequently and they had long discussions. Perhaps, because Joseph was now 70 years old, he may have feared the loss of his soul unless he returned to the priesthood. There are many other scenarios and reasons which may have contributed to his decision, but with Marie-Louise honouring his request not to talk of him, the truth will never be known.

Marie-Louise was a determined woman of strong character and she did what she thought best for her family. Despite her being almost illiterate and with minimum resources, she

managed to try her hand at many endeavours to feed and house her family. If you read the book you can see why she is called "A Woman of Valour". In French the book was called *C'est le temps d'en parler* (It is Time to Speak). So as not to spoil the enjoyment of the book, the details will not be given in this article. The book gives a great picture of the problems, torment and troubles that this woman overcame in her life. It also tells of her joy in her children and grandchildren.

One of the most interesting aspects of Claire Trépanier's talk was the details she told of her research. The subjects of the book were deceased and there was no existing correspondence and very few documents. Personal interviews were of paramount importance and research on Father Roy was especially difficult. Fortunately there were many very good leads which the author was able to follow up. She spoke with people in each of the places where Father Roy had been assigned and visited libraries for information on church policy at that time.

Compiling all this research and analyzing it was a time consuming task. It was also necessary to rely heavily on circumstantial evidence, consistency of characters and context of time. Because so much of the evidence was based on research, it was necessary in many instances to hypothesize about what might have occurred. In these cases the author has carefully identified such hypotheses.

This talk by Claire Trépanier was most interesting and also very enlightening about the difficulties that can arise in writing a biography of this type. The book is well written and the subject carefully and sensitively handled. It is well worth the read.

Time is more valuable than money because time is irreplaceable.

The best way to forget your own problems is to help someone solve his.

Finally, a Memorial Cairn for John Innes

By Joan Scott

Originally from Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1890 the family of Alexander Innes settled on Lot 26, Concession 3 Ottawa Front, in Cyrville in the Township of Gloucester. They had a successful dairy and mixed farm of 65 acres. Bantree Road today runs through the old farm. Prior to coming to Cyrville they had resided on land which later formed part of Beechwood Cemetery and Alexander Innes worked for the cemetery company. Later they moved to Hurdman's Bridge where they kept the Hurdman's Bridge toll gate and also, at one time the Russell and Smyth Road toll gate.

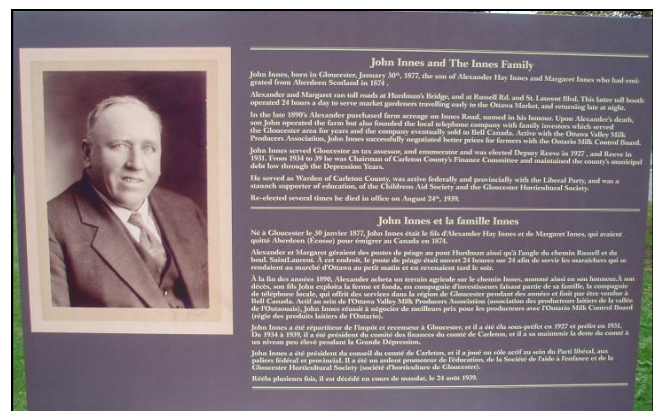
John Innes, son of Alexander, was born on January 30, 1877. In 1915 he married Margaret Little Moxley. They had three children, Winston, Lloyd who was a Pilot Officer in the R.C.A.F. and was killed in 1944, and May who married Keith Craig. Winston, who married Irene Smiles, lived on the family farm in Cyrville and shipped milk to the Ottawa Dairy. The land was annexed by the City of Ottawa in 1950.

The present Innes Road, named after this family, stretches to the Cumberland boundary and was originally called the 3rd Line. When the road was remade much of it ran north and parallel to the original roadway. Part of the original road that still survives is now named Windmill Lane and runs to Ritchie's Feed and Seed Store and past other businesses. Some changes to the road were necessitated by the construction of Highway 417.

John Innes was Reeve of the Township of Gloucester from 1931 until his death in 1939. In addition to this he was also the Finance Chairman for 5 years and was responsible for marked reductions in the municipal debt and was considered an authority on equalization of assessment for county rate purposes. Innes was also a former warden of Carleton County. For a

number of years he was on the executive of the Ottawa Valley Milk Producers' Association and took an active part in negotiating with the government and the Ontario Milk Control Board for better prices for farmers. On the death of John Innes, Carmen Guest, Clerk-Treasurer of Gloucester, paid tribute to him:

"Mr. Innes was a man of very genial and sociable nature and possessed a fine sense of humor. Widely read and well informed on public questions, he also had an exceptionally retentive memory. The people of Gloucester and Carleton will forever be indebted to him for the nearly 13 years of public service rendered throughout his municipal career. His wise leadership, keen and analytical mind, high principles, remarkable foresight, sound judgment and courage, combined with a fine sense of fairness and justice, irrespective of race or creed, won the respect of the electorate."



There is a unique story behind the erection of a memorial cairn which had been approved shortly after the death of the Reeve. In 1940 the Gloucester Horticultural Society had a stone pillar erected and placed on the island which at that time existed at the corner of Walkley Road and Russell Road. There was to be a sundial on top of the cairn but it never was installed. The war had started, metals were scarce and everyone was focusing on the war effort so the memorial was forgotten. Despite the family efforts in the intervening years to have it completed, it was not until this fall that a cairn was placed outside the former Gloucester

Hall (also the home of the Gloucester Historical Society) at 4550 Bank Street. As you will see from the photo, a very nice plaque was included on the new cairn in lieu of the originally proposed sundial.



The above photo from the unveiling ceremony shows John Innes' surviving daughter, May Craig on the right, together with her cousin, Mary Augusta Bailey (nee Moxley) on the left. Unfortunately Mary Augusta Bailey passed away on November 11, 2013.

Glenn Clark, President of the Gloucester Historical Society spoke at the unveiling and told of John Innes's life in Gloucester. John's grandson, Doug Innes, also said a few words.

Sources:

Gloucester Historical Society family files

Blackburn-Glen Ogilvie Centennial History

Ottawa Citizen

Ottawa Journal

Many a good man has failed because he had his wishbone where his backbone should have been.

Your companions are like the buttons on an elevator. They will either take you up or they will take you down.

The Village of Ellwood Lost to The Gréber Plan

By Glenn Clark

Ellwood is another of Gloucester's many lost villages whose life was cut short by progress, suburbanization, city annexation and particularly the Gréber Plan of 1950. It was originally a farming community centred at today's intersection of Bank Street and Ledbury Avenue and where the Bank Street railway overpass is located.

The community had a school, post office, two churches, general store, hotel, restaurant, railway station and even a police station. It was a loose collection of farms, market gardens and in later years a number of suburban homes. It was never a large community and in 1913, its population was only 30 [Carter].

Bank Street and Its Various Names

Ellwood developed along Bank Street South and Bank Street itself evolved over a number of years in the 19th century but the current route between Billings Bridge and Leitrim was established by By-law 19 of the District of Dalhousie on August 16, 1844. It had various names prior to Bank Street including the Bytown and Prescott Carriage Road, Prescott Road, Ottawa and Gloucester Road, Metcalfe Road, Metcalfe Highway and The King's Highway 31 [Clark p.9]. Metcalfe Road was officially renamed Bank Street in 1951 following the annexation of this portion of Gloucester Township the preceding year [Ottawa By-Law 101-51].

The Railway

The railway to the west of Bank Street was first known as the Bytown and Prescott Railway. It opened on December 25, 1854 and was the first railway to run into Bytown and then Ottawa [Churcher]. It later became part of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Today the O-

bed at the Greenboro Transitway Station. Inevitably, railway accidents occur and a derailment of a passenger train took place on January 21, 1922. The engine, baggage and two passenger cars left the tracks as the train approached Ellwood Station on a run from Prescott to Ottawa. The overturned engine left engineer Howard Edward White dead and twelve passengers were hospitalized. A broken rail (possibly caused by cold weather) was blamed for the derailment [*Ottawa Citizen*, January 23, 1922 p. 1]

Chaudiere Junction

On December 13, 1871, a branch railway line opened between Greenboro and Lebreton Flats to serve the burgeoning lumber industry that was establishing around Chaudiere Falls [Churcher]. The junction between this branch line and the original railway was named Chaudiere Junction and a station was opened named Chaudiere Junction Station [Carter]. The junction was located behind the Liquor Control Board warehouse on Bank Street.

School Section 3, Gloucester (Ellwood School)

In 1851, the Common Schools Act was proclaimed, which brought public schools to the Canada West, now the province of Ontario. Within the next decade, several schools opened in Gloucester Township. Each was called a School Section and they were administered by local community school boards. School Section 3 opened by 1855 in what 50 years later would be called Ellwood. Generations of Gloucester children from the district were schooled there. The school section covered Bank Street from just north of the Blossom Park subdivision (Rosebella Avenue) to about Heron Road, and Albion Road from near Lester Road to Walkley Road, and Walkley Road from west of Bank Street to Heron Road. The school was likely of log construction in the first years but had a brick exterior by the 1880s and was further rebuilt in

1901. Two extra school rooms were added to the rear in later years. It popularly became known as Ellwood School in the 20th century. On January 1, 1950, this part of Gloucester was annexed into the City of Ottawa and Ellwood School became part of the Ottawa School Board. However, part of the old school section also served a portion of Gloucester Township that had not been annexed south of Hunt Club Road. By special arrangement, Gloucester students continued to attend this school. Schools serving more than one municipality such as this were called union schools. At the same time, the areas near the school both in Ottawa and Gloucester began to quickly expand in population as the post war suburban boom began. New schools were needed to serve the growing population. In 1955, it was announced that the special arrangement for Gloucester students would end in December 28, 1955 [*Ottawa Citizen*, May 6, 1955 p.3]. The school remained in use by Ottawa students for the next few years but the building was finally offered for sale in 1964 [*Ottawa Citizen*, May 22, 1964, p.5]. The school was used for several more years by Tobin-Everedy Ltd., which sold oil burners and heating services but was finally sold and demolished in 1981. This was the last surviving original building of Ellwood. The school was replaced by an apartment building at 2019 Bank Street.

St. Thomas Aquinas School

Starting in 1906, Roman Catholic school children in School Sections 3 (Ellwood), 6 (Billings Bridge) and 7 (Bayview) began attending the new separate school named St. Thomas Aquinas. The brick school was two storeys with one room on each floor. It was located on today's Ohio Street near Billings Bridge next to the Roman Catholic Church of the same name. The school was expanded to four rooms in 1937 but was destroyed by fire on February 7, 1944 [*Ottawa Citizen*, February 8, 1944 p. 7].

school was rebuilt in 1945 with 16 classrooms on the east side of Bank Street at the top of the hill north of Billings Bridge. Finally, the school closed in about 1970 and was demolished [Pelot]. A housing development named Billings Promenade has replaced the school.

The General Store

In the late 1860s, the Cutts family moved out of Ottawa and established a farm near the intersection of Albion Road and Cahill Drive. A nearby street in Greenboro is named in their honour. Within a few years, they relocated to Bank Street, just south of Ledbury Avenue and rented land from Enoch Walkley, for whom Walkley Road is named. Here they would farm and Mrs. Jane Cutts opened a small store in the family homestead to sell candy to the school children who attended school just to the north. Gradually this became a General Store.

The 1888 Cyclone

On June 6, 1888, calamity struck when a fierce cyclone struck Ottawa and Gloucester. The school at Ellwood was struck before lunch while class was in session. The door of the school was blown in and the east wall was blown out, knocking the school teacher senseless and scattering the children around the school yard. Miraculously, nobody was injured but they had to take refuge in the nearby Cutts residence. This storm was extensively covered by Ottawa newspapers of the time and there was widespread damage and a few fatalities

The Naming of Ellwood

Following the death of Timothy Cutts in 1904, a desire was expressed to have local mail delivery. Previously, residents had to travel to Billings Bridge to pick up their mail. But what should the post office be called? It was decided to honour long time prominent residents Charles O. Wood and William Ellis who resided just to the south of the centre of the village [*Ottawa Citizen*, April 18, 1931]. The Ellis homestead still exists next to the Bank Street McDonald's

Restaurant. This is how the Ellwood name was chosen. The post office opened on April 1, 1906 and was placed in the Cutts General Store where Timothy Cutts' widow, Jane became the first postmaster. The post office remained open until November 30, 1943. In 1921, Ellwood was adopted by the Canadian Pacific Railway as the station name replacing Chaudiere Junction [Carter]. This name remained until passenger service ended on October 26, 1957 (Churcher) at which time, the Cutts family removed and preserved the railway station sign. The station was located just north of Walkley Road and west of Bank Street where a shopping center stands today. The railway right of way was where the access road into the South Keys Landing subdivision and the new Marriott Residence Inn is located.

New Subdivisions for Ellwood

During the years preceding World War I, a land boom took place that was partially created by rapid population growth in the city. Ellwood was in line for this prosperity and four subdivisions were registered immediately north of the village. This included:

Ridgmont to the southeast of the Bank Street and Heron Road intersection,
Park Ridgmont southeast of the Bank Street and Walkley Road intersection,
Paardeburgh Square (Park) ran west from Albion Road and included Paardeburgh Avenue (Plan 321 registered September 23, 1911),
Garden City Heights, ran west from Albion Road in the hydro corridor (Plan 322 registered on October 18, 1911).

The boom only lasted for a few years and quickly ended by the start of World War I. Many Ottawa residents invested in lots in these subdivisions but only a small number of houses were built. A few older homes can be found on the streets of these subdivisions.

(To be continued in next issue...)

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 April 1st to March 31st)

*** * 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 _____

Mailing Address: Gloucester Historical Society
4550B Bank Street,
Gloucester, Ontario
K1T 3W6