



Historic Gloucester

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This photograph of the Centre Block of the Parliament Buildings shows the Christmas Lighting on Parliament Hill .

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President's Report

By Glenn Clark

Another year is about to end, and there is new hope of a vaccine for COVID-19. It cannot come soon enough.

We have decided this year that our Christmas edition of Historic Gloucester will actually include a Christmas story. How appropriate considering the limitations that we all face in our celebrations this year.

I do hope you enjoy reading about our Christmas heritage. You will now learn where the Christmas light displays are located, where to buy a Christmas tree, where to see a parade, and where those special gifts can be purchased. You may not be able to do all of these things this year because of COVID, but it may come in handy for next year's plans. Let us hope.

I don't know what challenges the Gloucester Historical Society will face in 2021 but I expect there will be some. But, whenever there are challenges, there are also opportunities and we all look forward to taking advantage of those opportunities.

On behalf the Board of Directors, I wish you and your family and friends the healthiest and happiest Christmas season possible.

Christmas Memories in Gloucester

By Glenn Clark

The Christmas of 2020 will be unlike anything previous, at least within living memory. Our celebrations will be muted by the COVID-19 pandemic and we will be greatly restricted on what we do and who we can see. Familiar public holiday events have been mostly cancelled or pale virtual versions substituted. Many of us will face unusual anxiety. But with vaccines on the way, there is great hope that Christmas 2021 will see a return to more normal activities.

Gloucester and its former territories east of the Rideau River have developed many Christmas traditions particularly in recent years. While we cannot enjoy all of them this year, it is heart warming to remember the history of those traditions and to learn a little bit about what lies behind them.

A Brief History of the Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree is believed to trace back to an 11th century Advent mystery play titled "The Play of Paradise" which portrayed the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden after eating from the forbidden tree. The so-called "Paradise Tree" from this play was the precursor of the Christmas Tree. By the 15th century, plays of this nature were banned in Europe as they had become a distortion of proper religious themes. However, the people of Western Germany were anxious to preserve 'The Play of Paradise' and they began setting

up "Paradise Trees" in their homes on the 24th of December, then regarded as the "Feast of Adam and Eve" in the medieval church.

Christmas Trees at Your Service

The Gloucester Lions Club has sold Christmas trees as its main fund raiser at up to three different lots since 1971. In its first year, it sold 500 trees at the former Dairy King parking lot at the corner of Bank Street and Kingsdale Avenue in Blossom Park. At the time, Scotch pines were the most popular tree, with up to 80% of the market. They relocated the tree lot to Peter Knippel Nursery, then located opposite from K-Mart, just south of Queensdale Avenue for the next two years. In 1974 through 1998, they set up shop in the K-Mart parking lot. When White Rose Nursery opened in the same shopping centre in 1999 [*Ottawa Citizen*, November 7, 1999 p.A12], the Lions Club was forced to relocate again, this time to the Capital Golf Gardens, 3798 Bank Street. The golf course closed in 2018.

When White Rose Nursery first arrived in the Ottawa market in 1992 [*Ottawa Citizen*, November 6, 1992 p.B6], they were amongst the first volume retailers of Christmas trees. This created stiff competition, collapsing prices and a market surplus of trees. White Rose was offering trees in 1992 for just \$11.44 and some trees were given away for free at the end of the season. There was an incident at White Rose's Orléans store when kerosene was poured onto some trees, ruining up to 100 of them. Some damaged trees had already been sold and needed to be



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

replaced. At the end of that season, Gloucester Township offered to grind up surplus trees from the Orléans store as well as those put at the curb in residential areas to make mulch for recreational trails [Ottawa Citizen, December 18, 1992 p.B3, December 30, 1992 p.B2]. White Rose Nursery went bankrupt in 2002 [Ottawa Citizen, June 21, 2002 p.E4].

The Gloucester Lions Club also had some members in the north half of the township and through the efforts of those members, a second tree lot was established in 1974 at the Apple Saddlery adjacent to the home of Doug Woodburn at 1875-1877 Innes Road. Between the two locations, as many as 2,700 Christmas trees have been sold each year.

Now that the golf course has closed, 2020 will be the final year at that location, but the Lions Club has already been thinking ahead as they have been gradually establishing a new location at Peter Knippel Nursery (yes again) at 4590 Bank Street. Over the years, the market for Christmas trees has changed dramatically. As quality Balsam and Fraser firs have become available, the demand for pine and spruce has collapsed, and fir is now the king of the tree business.

Do you buy your Christmas tree from the Lions Club? If you do, you should know that all profits are put towards worthy causes within our own community.



Gloucester Lions Club Tree Lot, Innes Road

A Brief History of Electric Christmas Lighting

The incandescent light bulb was perfected by Thomas Edison in 1879 and the Edison Electric Light Company began marketing this new product the following year. An Edison associate, Edward H. Johnson was the first to use coloured electric lights on a Christmas tree at his home on 5th Avenue in New York City on December 22, 1882.

Coloured electric lights could also be used for many decorative purposes at other times of the year. You may enjoy the following excerpt about a party that took place on June 3, 1898 in Rockcliffe:

"It was one of those glorious sunsets that makes Ottawa famous, and from Lornado, the beautiful summer retreat of

Mr. Warren Soper, high above the river in the woods at Rockcliffe, the scene was truly magnificent. But the usual drowsy silence of the mysterious semi-twilight fast stealing round about us was suddenly and wonderfully dispelled; we were in a magic world where thousands of colored electric lights swung high among the trees, and outlined on either side the well-kept paths through the woods. Up the rocky steps in gay groups came crowds of Ottawa's youth and beauty, everyone exclaiming at the loveliness of the fairy-like scene, and then crossing the wide stretch of velvety lawn to where Mr. and Mrs. Warren Soper stood, receiving with the kindest welcome, their large number of guests, one at once realized that 'hospitality was honor of the house' and entered upon the enjoyment of the evening with fresh delight and interest." [Ottawa Citizen, June 4, 1898 p.3]

The first published use of coloured electric lights in Ottawa was at the YMCA on October 12, 1893 [Ottawa Journal, October 13, 1893 p.7].

The first known advertised sale of electric Christmas tree lights in Ottawa appeared in the Ottawa Journal on November 22, 1916 (Page 14) from Byson-Graham Limited, Sparks Street, Ottawa's oldest department store.

Another story explains that the first practical coloured Christmas light sets were made in 1917 by the Sadacca brothers who dipped flashlight bulbs in coloured lacquer and connected to a battery. Household electric lighting did not become popular until after the Great War. They sold 300 sets that first year. The Sadacca brothers also formed another company to make extension cords and when they merged with other small companies in 1925 and 1926, they established a still well-known brand and company, the Noma Electric Corporation. Albert Sadacca was the first General Manager [Ottawa Citizen, December 16, 1967 p.8]

In 1921, Christmas tree light sets were being sold for \$3.75 at A.H. Bertschinger, 76 Queen Street [Ottawa Citizen, December 10, 1921 p.12]. By 1938, this price had dropped to a mere one dollar at Bryson-Graham.

The First Wave of Outdoor Light Displays

The first known use of outdoor Christmas lighting took place in 1904 in San Diego. There popularity became apparent in an Ottawa Citizen article published on December 13, 1929 (Page 37).

"A few simple suggestions which give very colorful Christmas effects are:

1. *Substitute a red lamp for the usual one in the entrance fixture and put a wreath around it.*
2. *Place electric candles in Christmas wreaths in the windows.*
3. *Run colored lights through trees and shrubbery on your ground(s).*
4. *Set Christmas trees in tubs in the yard and trim them with strings of colored lights*
5. *Run strings of colored lights along the verandah, or festoon strings of them along the eaves of the house.*
6. *Place colored lights in flower boxes.*
7. *Twine colored lights in wreaths or garlands and hang them in windows or festoon them against the outside of the house.*

1. Mound illuminated stars over the door or on the roof of the house.
2. Illuminate Christmas trees, both those used indoors and those in the yard, with strings of tiny electric lights.
3. Place colored lights, one red and one green, in twin sockets and place in windows.
4. Hang illuminated Christmas bells in entry windows.
5. And – if the thermometer stands at freezing – try this for the outdoor Christmas Tree. Sprinkle the tree with water and when it freezes, twine colored lights in and out of branches. You will have the most gorgeous Fairy Tree for miles around!”

Was this 1929 or 2020?

Indeed, we were seeing the beginning of the first wave of popular outdoor Christmas lighting with competitions and prizes given out by local service clubs and donated by electrical appliance retailers. In 1930, ‘Light Up for Christmas’ was a major initiative. *“From the main street to usually dark side streets, the reporters went. Everywhere was the same story. Christmas lighting reflected Christmas spirit in its truest form to the people who love the Yuletide, and they had accordingly joined heartily in the campaign. But there were a number of other reasons in addition to the paramount one. Some did it to be neighborly; others to delight their children and still others because they wished to share their joy in the season with the strangers within our gates.”* [Ottawa Citizen, December 23, 1930 p.1, 2].

But this could not last with the onset of the Great Depression. By 1932, service clubs could no longer give out prizes but nonetheless, people were still encouraged to decorate their homes [Ottawa Citizen, November 28, 1932 p.20].

Christmas Light Safety Concerns and Notable Fires

Even in those early years, the risks of using Christmas lights were being publicized. *“Captains of the various (fire) stations have been instructed to make inspections of stores, theaters, dance halls, etc. in order to see that Christmas trees, drapings, cotton for snow scenes etc., are not placed near lights or electric wires.”* [Ottawa Citizen, December 13, 1927 p.1]. These and other warning were repeated many times over the years but still there were disastrous fires. An exploding light on a Christmas tree at Guigues School on Murray Street resulted in a two-alarm fire. It was necessary to rebuild the upper storey and roof of the school following the fire [Ottawa Journal, December 21, 1953 p.1]. Even worse, two young children lost their lives in Beacon Hill South on December 8, 1976, when curtains caught fire that were too close to Christmas tree lights [Ottawa Citizen, December 11, 1976 p.3]. Remember how hot incandescent Christmas lights could get.

The War Years

The use of Christmas lights may have been curtailed during the Depression and war years for economic reasons, however, a December 17, 1940 editorial in the Ottawa Citizen suggested that even under the dire circumstances of those days *“There is no patriotic reason for imposing a Christmas blackout on Canadian consumers. Christmas lights should be kept shining brightly.”* Throughout the war years, permission was granted to use Christmas lighting on the streets of downtown Ottawa when requested. When the war was over, it became even more important as the soldiers returned home, often injured. *“Everywhere people remember that it is ‘more blessed to*

give than receive,’ and in all institutions, homes and hospitals the resident will be remembered at Christmas. Christmas lights and trees will be placed in wards in hospitals, the Veteran’s Pavilion will be specially decorated and turkey, plum pudding and all the trimmings will be served.” [Ottawa Citizen, December 24, 1945 p.3].

No, Don’t Turn on those Christmas Lights

There were two periods when the use of outdoor Christmas lighting was actively discouraged, both for similar reasons.

For periods of the winter of 1947-1948, and again in the fall and winter of 1948-1949, there were serious power shortages, resulting from increasing domestic demand and demand from New York State. At the time, the Ontario power grid was mostly dependant on hydro-electric sources. To a degree, rainfall determined the amount of power available, and when rainfall was significantly below normal, power capacity was reduced. Power outages became necessary to maintain the integrity of hydro grid. One measure taken to reduce power consumption was to restrict the use outdoor Christmas lights for Christmas 1948 [Ottawa Journal, December 14, 1948 p.3].

The other event was of international importance and related to the Arab-Israeli war that began on October 6, 1973. As a result of American President Richard Nixon’s plan to provide military aid to Israel, the Arab oil producing nations began to cut back oil exports to many western countries including Canada starting on October 17, 1973 and this reached a 75% reduction of oil exports by December of that year. This caused an energy crisis that resulted in long line-ups at gas stations and shortages for power generation. Any means in reducing energy consumption became critical. It was so important, that even the federal government got involved suggesting the reduction of the use of Christmas lights for 1973 particularly during peak hours of 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. As a result, there were no Christmas lights on Parliament Hill that year. Concerns were also expressed about the Christmas light displays along Bank, Sparks and Rideau Streets, which brought this practice to an end. Everybody old enough will remember the lighted decoration of our downtown streets. Conservation measures, and recommendations for operating Christmas lights only between 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. continued right through 1980.

The Second Wave of Outdoor Christmas Lighting (1950 to 1972)

Outdoor Christmas lighting was available in every store during the 1950s and 1960s and once parallel circuit light sets became available (meaning that one bad light bulb did not turn off the whole set), the popularity of putting up Christmas lighting grew exponentially. Display of outdoor Christmas lights grew every year bringing joy to every child who grew up during that era. Specific information on the best local light displays was not well documented, however, at near its peak in 1970, a newspaper story was published including pictures of a group of homes on Lavergne Street and Michael Circle in Vanier [Ottawa Citizen, December 26, 1970 p.21]. Light displays were also mentioned for a group of homes on Smyth Road. During Centennial year, the Christmas light display on Parliament Hill was described as impressive and remained lit all winter until finally turned off at Easter.

The Third Wave of Outdoor Christmas Lighting (Post 1980)

Through the eight years of two energy crisis (1973 and

1979) and the associated restrictions and social pressure to not decorate homes with Christmas lights, the public was soon eager to again show their design flare and Christmas spirit with outdoor lights and other decorations. Add to this the great energy savings associated with LED lighting and the recent improvements in the brightness of that technology, it was inevitable that we would see with awe and wonder, another explosion of Christmas lighting. Who has not been to Upper Canada Village or Wesley Clover Park for their amazing light displays?

Christmas Lights Across Canada

The federal government got back into the lighting act in 1986 when Prime Minister Brian Mulroney turned on a 30,000-bulb display on December 10th of that year at 7 p.m. [*Ottawa Citizen*, December 10, 1986 p.C2]. The following year, it had become a national event named 'Christmas Lights Across Canada' when the Prime Minister again turned on the lights at 7:00 p.m. on November 30th. Ottawa's display had increased to 100,000 bulbs and simultaneously lights were turned on at most of the Provincial legislatures and in the Yukon [*Ottawa Citizen*, November 30, 1987 p.C2]. 'Christmas Lights Across Canada' remains a public lighting event in 2020.

Private Light Displays

Impressive private displays have also developed in recent years, some that still exist, while others have sadly disappeared as people have passed or homes sold. Some have faced controversy, as a result of traffic and other neighbourhood concerns. Many of the best displays have been featured in the newspaper or on television.

Perhaps the most notable and longstanding Christmas light displays has been on Taffy Lane in Orléans. It is believed that the father of this street display was Jean-Guy Chénier and it all began around 1978. Other important participants have been Peter Abercrombie (the Clark Griswold of Taffy Lane) and his wife Suzanne, and Andrée Bélanger.

The 'Christmas House' of 158 Marier Street in Vanier was so well known for many years that one had to pop by when in the neighbourhood just to see it regardless of the time of year. It was a creation of Gilles and Aline Robitaille starting around 1972. Every inch of their property was devoted to a celebration



Taffy Lane, Orléans

of Christmas, and decorations were swapped in and out depending on the season. It was truly a 12-month show. Some considered it tacky while others were in awe, but nobody could avoid looking. Sadly, the display was dismantled following the death of Aline and when the house was sold in 2016 [*Ottawa Citizen*, December 23, 2016 p.A4].



158 Marier Street, Vanier



2455 Alta Vista Drive

Another impressive display that no longer exists was at the home of Jacques and Monique Millette at the corner of 6th Street and Rosebella Avenue in Blossom Park. This was written about in the *Ottawa Citizen* on December 12, 2005 (Page B3). The house was sold some years ago, but a good light display has returned to the same house in 2020.

Creating impressive displays, can be problematic if you don't have the full support of the neighbourhood. Michael and Candace Currey learned this the hard way when their light display at 2740 Kingwood Lane, also in Blossom Park faced petitions and action from the local community association. The display was impressive, perhaps "over the top," and was often featured on television through its relatively short run from 1992 to 1995. It was thoughtful that the Currey's were supporting the Children's Wish Foundation but perhaps this just added to the apparent mayhem in the neighbourhood. During its final year, restrictions were imposed. The display could only be lit from

December 1st to the 26th and it had to be removed in its entirety by January 15th. Naturally, the display did not reappear in 1996.

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Another display at 2455 Alta Vista Drive has existed at least since 1992. This display has been bright and tasteful and never 'over the top'. It is followed by immaculate flower gardens during the summer months.



Waterford Retirement Community, Bank Street and Hunt Club Road

Also for many years, the Waterford Retirement Community (formerly the Southway Inn), on Bank Street at Hunt Club Road has had an impressive Christmas lighting display. While it was still a hotel, there was always an official lighting night hosted by local city councillor Diane Deans. The hotel transitioned into a retirement home in 2016 [Ottawa Citizen, June 22, 2015 p A3 History of Southway Inn and its planned transition].

St. James Anglican Church Leitrim at 4540 Bank Street has established a light display that was somewhat inspired by "Alight at Night" at Upper Canada Village. Built in 1860 of modest clapboard construction, what seemed to be a

vague unattainable dream, became reality after an 80th birthday wish of Vera Guy became donations towards 'lighting the church'. The church was first lit in 2013 and has received countless accolades from those living in the area or travelling by on south Bank Street. Because of the pandemic, church considered it more important than ever to "light it up." So many people are under stress this year and perhaps the light display would lift their spirits. And yet the church itself worries of its future and has not been able to have in-person services since the pandemic restrictions were imposed in March 2020. But all consider the hope of the vaccines soon to become available.



St. James Anglican Church Leitrim, Bank Street and Leitrim Road

Perhaps the most spectacular Christmas light displays ever to take place in Gloucester occurred just last year and was named "Glow Around the World." It was held from December 5, 2019 until January 4, 2020 at the EY (Ernst & Young) Centre on Uplands Drive. What are your memories of this event?

Santa Claus Parades

Who doesn't love a parade?

Every year, a Christmas parade is hosted in Gloucester and now known as Santa's Parade of Lights. Although, the traditional parade was cancelled for 2020 due to the pandemic, a drive through event was organized at the Place d'Orléans Park'n Ride lot for December 5th, 2020 between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

This parade was originally known as the Gloucester Santa Claus Parade and first held on November 21, 1987 beginning at 10:30 a.m. with a route following along St. Joseph Boulevard from the Eastern Parkway to Place d'Orléans.



Glow Around the World — 2019 EY Centre

It was sponsored by the Gloucester Chamber of Commerce and the Gloucester and Cumberland Firefighters Association. It was estimated that there were 17,000 spectators for that first parade. There was a tradition for firefighters to collect toys, non-perishable food, cash and more recently winter clothing along the parade route. Donations were distributed by the Gloucester Resource Centre to local service clubs who helped those in need in the community.

By the 1990 parade, the route was extended to start at the Gloucester City Centre at the new Gloucester Shopping Centre, with the route following Blair, Ogilvie, Montreal Roads and following the previous route to Place d'Orléans. In 1996, the parade was switched from a morning to an afternoon departure time. For several years, the Gloucester parade was considered the largest Santa Claus parade in the Ottawa area with as many as 100 floats.

In 1998, the parade became known as Santa's Parade of Lights when it switched to an evening departure time of 6 p.m. At this point, the parade route followed St. Joseph Boulevard from Youville Drive to Place d'Orléans. By 2000, the parade was extended into Cumberland as far as Prestone Drive before doubling back via Centrum Boulevard. Following amalgamation of the municipalities and fire departments in 2001, the sponsor became the Ottawa Professional Firefighters Association.



Santa's Parade of Lights, Orléans

Another Santa Claus parade has also been held just outside of Gloucester's boundaries in Manotick. Originally named the 'Manotick Old(e) Fashioned Christmas', it was first held during the afternoon of Sunday, December 3, 1989 as a village celebration that included caroling, free horse drawn wagon rides, and a visit from Santa Claus. It also allowed village stores to open before Sunday shopping was fully legalized. Over the years, the afternoon also included theatrical productions, music, events at Watson's Mill, the lighting of a village tree and suppers at nearby churches.

The Olde Fashioned Christmas was expanded to a full weekend event in December 1997 (December 6-7) this is when the first Santa Claus Parade circulated the village starting at 1:30 p.m. The parade was organized by the Manotick Lions Club and sponsored by Rideau Township Firefighters who col-

lected non-perishable food along the route.

By 2005, a Christmas Craft Market was established at Watson's Mill, first open only for the Olde Fashioned Christmas weekend but gradually expanded to include the last two weekends of November as well. In 2019, the event was renamed the "Manotick Village Christmas."

With the pandemic, the Manotick event was mostly cancelled, however, the Watson's Mill Christmas Market was held virtually from November 1st to December 6th 2020.

Other Christmas Craft Shows and Markets

Another popular Christmas tradition is Christmas craft sales and markets held at a number of locations within Gloucester. I will not attempt to capture all of them as many churches have held Christmas Bazaars for many years, but I would like to mention a few of the larger markets that have been held annually for some time. Most if not all of these markets are not being held in 2020 due to the pandemic.



Manotick Olde Fashioned Christmas

The first I will mention is the German Christmas Market also known as Christkindlmarkt and held annually since 1980 at the Maple Leaf-Almrausch German Club (Ottawa's German social club) at 3928 Farmers Way usually over an extended weekend in late November. This is a German style Christmas market with German inspired meals also available.



Another market was created by the Gloucester Craftsmen's Guild, formally established on January 29, 1975. They held their first Christmas craft market at Colonel By

Secondary School before relocating to Gloucester High School for their 1976 sale. They remained there until they relocated to Lester B. Pearson High School in 1996, where they continue to have craft sales both for the Christmas season and during other times of the year. Their Christmas market is usually held in mid November. In 2007, the Gloucester Craftsmen's Guild was re-named the Ottawa Artisans Guild and in 2019, they merged with the Capital Artisans Guild to form the National Capital Artisans. Sales are now held at several different locations.

High Schools have also used Christmas craft sales as fund raisers. A notable one has been held annually at Cairine Wilson Secondary School, 975 Orléans Boulevard since 1991. The first sale took place on November 30, 1991 and the most recent on November 16, 2019. At times, the sale featured more than 100 vendors.

This was also the case with the St. Mark's High School Christmas Craft Sale, which was first held on the weekend of November 27, 1993 at St. Leonard School, 5344 Long Island Drive, Manotick before relocating to the high school at 1040 Dozois Road at Mitch Owens, just south of the Osgoode/Gloucester boundary for the weekend of November 12, 1994. The 2019 sale took place on November 9th and 10th, 2019.



St. Mark High School
26th Annual
Craft Fair

Saturday, November 10th 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. , &
Sunday, November 11th 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Get a jump on that Christmas shopping!
One of the best craft fairs in the Ottawa area
Free parking • Over 100 Vendors • More than 3000 visitors

1040 Dozois Road, Manotick, Ontario
Admission:
A donation of canned food for local foodbanks, or \$2.00

Arguably, the biggest of all the Ottawa Christmas Craft Sales has also moved to Gloucester. The 'Originals Christmas Craft Sale' was established in 1972 at Lansdowne Park but when the park was renovated between 2012 and 2015, it relocated to the CE Centre (now known as the EY Centre) on Uplands Drive in 2012. It was originally scheduled to take place between December 10 and 20, 2020 but was cancelled due to the pandemic.



Ottawa Artisans Guild
Les Artisans d'Ottawa

2011 Christmas Craft Show Series
Liste des Salons d'artisans de Noël 2011

November 12 & 13 / les 12 et 13 novembre
East: Lester B. Pearson High School
Est: École secondaire Lester B. Pearson
2072 Jasmine Cr. (off Ogilvie Rd.)
2072, croissant Jasmine (coin du chemin Ogilvie)

November 19 & 20 / les 19 et 20 novembre
Rockland: River Rock Inn
2808 Chamberland St.
2808, chemin Chamberland

December 3 & 4 / les 3 et 4 décembre
South: St. Francis Xavier High School
Sud: École secondaire St. Francis Xavier
3740 Spratt Rd. (at Limebank Rd.)
3740, Chemin Spratt (au coin de Limebank)

Open from 10am-4pm daily
À partir de 10h à 16h chaque jour

All shows feature:
Original handcrafted items • Local juried artisans
Free admission • Free parking • Door prizes

Chaque salon comprend:
Artisanat original fait à la main • Artisans sélectionnés
Entrée gratuite • Stationnement gratuit • Prix d'entrée

Food bank donations welcomed
Dons pour la banque alimentaire

www.OttawaArtisansGuild.ca
www.facebook.com/OttawaArtisans



*A Special Day of
Holiday Shopping*
Over 100 Tables
*Brimming with
Handmade Treasures*

**CAIRINE WILSON
HOLIDAY CRAFT SALE**

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2014
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

CAIRINE WILSON SECONDARY SCHOOL
975 ORLÉANS BLVD
ORLÉANS

Do you have a Christmas Story to Tell?

What are your Christmas traditions? Do you take a drive to see the lights? Is it hockey, skating, sledding, or skiing? What about that special meal that happens only once each year?

Is there a special Christmas movie, concert or carolling? Tell us some special memories of Christmas in your family, neighbourhood, church, or school. We may publish it in Historic Gloucester next Christmas! Remember also that a picture tells a thousand words.



*Originals Christmas
Craft Sale, EY Centre*

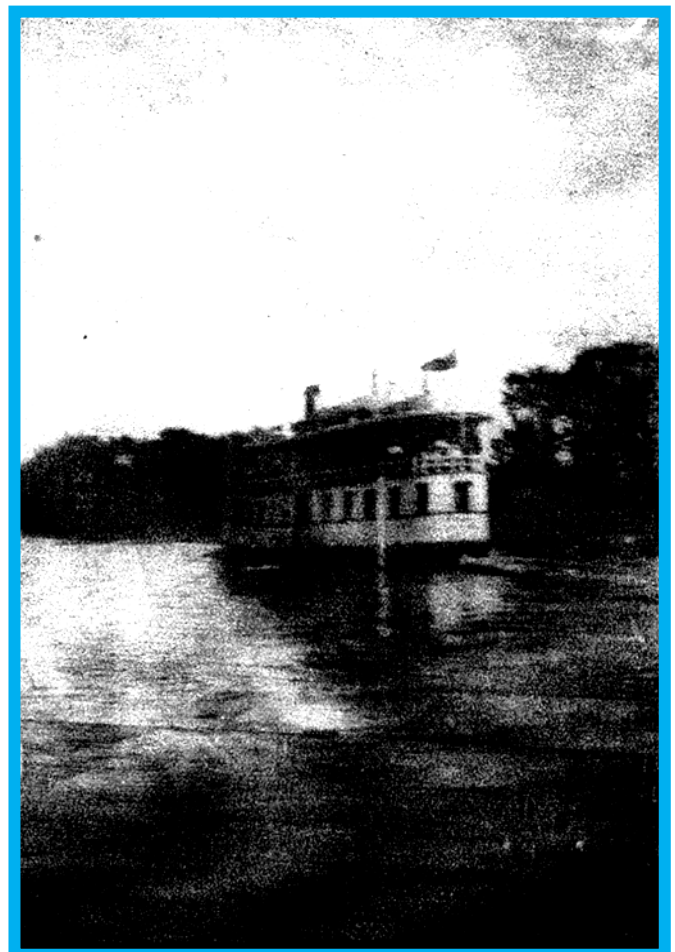
Recollections of Old Manotick

By Jean Matheson

Recently I came across, among my reading material, a copy of "Memories of the Lockstations". This answered a question my sisters and I have had for some time – how to spell the name of a boat which my mother and a friend used to take from Ottawa to Manotick in the early 1920's. It was a result of taking one of these trips that our parents met while visiting friends who lived on a farm outside of Manotick. The name of the boat was "Wanikewan" and I am enclosing a picture of it together with one of my mother Christina Forrest (Moffatt) and Irene Heenan (Telford). The picture of the two ladies seems to be at locks.

Lately, as a result of finding this material I have been remembering my childhood in the area. Manotick has changed a great deal in the 95+ years. Dr. Leach who married a cousin of ours was our doctor. I recollect that he used to come to our farm by horse and buggy to see my elderly grandfather who passed away at the age of 93 years. I remember one time seeing my father loading a bag of potatoes onto the buggy. I don't know if this was a gift or in payment for his call. As my grandfather passed away on my 4th birthday, I would have been only about three years of age when the transaction took place. When we visited Dr. Leach in his office, he had a room that was apparently a dispensary where he kept the medicine which he was recommending for whatever ailment(s) we had.

We also shopped at Gault's store - Desmond Gault another relative. The barbershop, which my father visited and



to which he took me to have my hair cut was run by Mr. Babcock. Mrs. Atkinson lived next to the barbershop. She would come out to various farms and do sewing repairs to items as well as make various items of clothing. Both of these buildings later became a restaurant run by senior citizens (Miller's Oven).

The bank was a red brick building located near the gristmill and I recall that the bank manager lived over the bank.

My recollection is that at the time the gristmill was run by Alex Spratt whose family lived in a large yellow frame house across from the mill. While Dad waited for the grain to be ground, I would visit with Alex Spratt's daughter (I forget her name) who was my age.

Dad, at one time owned two waterfront lots which he eventually let go for lack of paying taxes. Incidentally, each of these lots had a house built on it and they are still there the last time I was through Manotick.

Dad used to cut blocks of ice on the river to be stored in a building which we, as children, referred to as the icehouse. The ice was kept in sawdust to keep it from thawing too quickly.

Now I come to a mystery. I recall being told that some lumber on the farm came from a (grain) elevator, which my family had bought and had torn down. No where can I find any reference to such an elevator. Perhaps, some of the historical material could have a reference but I certainly cannot find any reference on Google. If you have any information about this, I would be pleased to receive it.

Editor's Note: I have not been able to find any information on local grain elevators that may have been dismantled. However, the closest well-known elevator was located at Prescott. A new concrete elevator was built in 1929-1930 to correspond with the opening of the new Welland Canal. A previous elevator opened on November 20, 1895 [*Ottawa Citizen*, No-

vember 21, 1895 p.3] and was being dismantled in late 1925 [*Montreal Gazette*, November 24, 1925 p.15].

Sorry, I have rambled on, but I have reached an age where recollections are important (particularly with isolation from the pandemic), when there is a great deal of time on my hands. As well, some of these recollections are a result of holding, at one time, Moffatt family reunions, where we got to know more about the relationships. As well, the family now has a Legacy programme started by a cousin and which has great family information documented.

Jean's father was Robert Edward Moffatt, grandfather was Robert Moffatt who was son of Thomas. Thomas Moffatt emigrated from Ireland in 1835 and settled on a farm near Carleton Place.



For membership in the Gloucester Historical Society, our membership form is published at:

<http://www.gloucesterhistory.com/ghs%20membership.pdf>.

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Donations are always welcome. We are a registered charitable organization and provide tax receipts.

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