CHAFFEY'S LOCK
and
Area Heritage Society

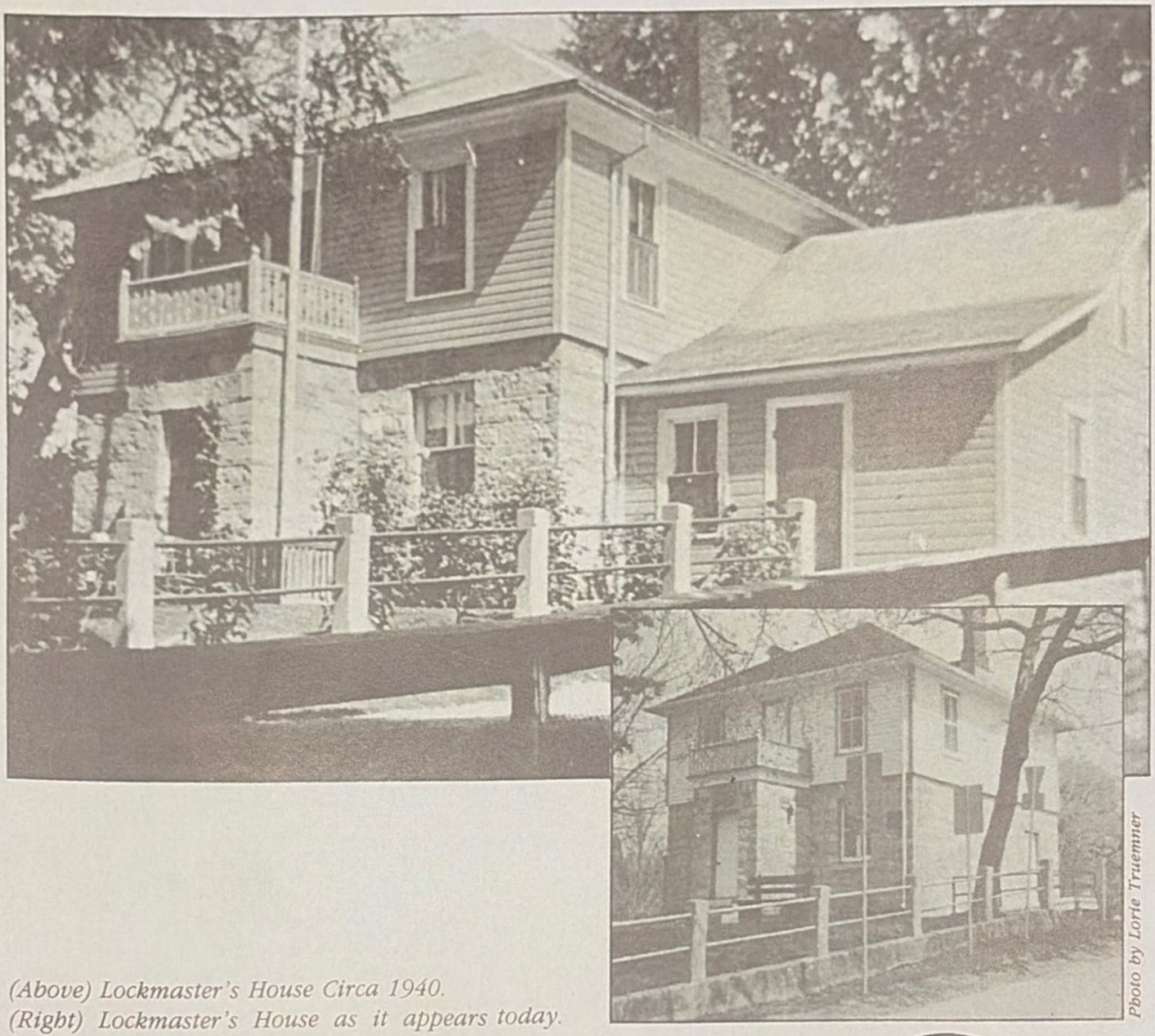

Photo by Lorie Truemner

(Above) Lockmaster's House Circa 1940.
(Right) Lockmaster's House as it appears today.

THE CHAFFEY'S LOCK AND AREA HERITAGE SOCIETY

1989-1990 Newsletter

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Thea (Fleming) Dodge
President

President's Message

By the time you read this newsletter, the museum will be open. We urge you and your friends to come in this summer and see the exhibit "Early Architecture". Sue Warren, our local well-known historian, along with Janice Chornehus the museum co-ordinator have put together an interesting and informative display.

The Lockmaster's House Museum is the pride of our community and with help from Heritage members, Parks Canada, South Crosby Township Council, and lots of volunteer help, we manage to have a new theme each year.

We appreciate your support and urge you to renew your membership.

Thank you.

Thea (Fleming) Dodge

The Craft Market

By Lorie Truemner

Every summer, on the last Saturday in July, the peaceful shady lawn in front of the Opinicon Hotel undergoes a transformation. Cars and trucks begin arriving early; people carry tables and chairs and interesting looking crafts onto the grass. Eager shoppers start appearing even before the vendors have all their wares on display. The Chaffey's Lock and Area Heritage Society's Summer Craft Market is underway again!

The Summer Market actually began with Rideau Crafts back in the 70s. When I was approached to co-ordinate the market back in 1982, it was the last year the Rideau Crafts was to do a summer show. I had never co-ordinated a market before and learned a great deal from the Rideau Crafts board members in 1982. The 1982 market, held in conjunction with the Rideau Canal's 150th anniversary heritage events, was the first held on the Opinicon lawns and vendors and customers alike loved the location. My main memories of that year were of listening to a series of thunderstorms the night before the market... and being devoutly thankful for clearing skies at daybreak!

Since Rideau Crafts did not wish to continue with a summer market, the Heritage Society decided to take it over as a fundraising event. A board member for both the Heritage Society and Rideau Crafts, I continued with the market, with the support and assistance of other Heritage Society members.

Organizing the market begins with invitations sent to prospective vendors. Almost immediately we start receiving applications to participate in the show along with letters and phone calls from potential new vendors. Normally about 30 vendors take part in the market.

Early in July the advertising begins on radio, TV and in the newspapers. Posters are distributed throughout the region most informally — anyone going anywhere is given a poster to place on bulletin boards or in store windows.

Each year there is a pleasant mix of crafts people from previous summers along with vendors attending for the first time. The crafts include a melange of woodworking, knitting, stained glass, tole painting, photography, and much more! The vendors come from various parts of Ontario and Quebec.

This market is strictly an outdoor market and with one exception it has always seemed to fall on the hottest day of the year. Last year's 35°C (95°F) temperatures contrasted with 1986's market in the rain when 36 vendors waited patiently in their cars for the morning's deluge to end. Undaunted, they visited one another in their cars and wasted no time setting up as soon as the sun broke through.

The Heritage Society has had the support of every

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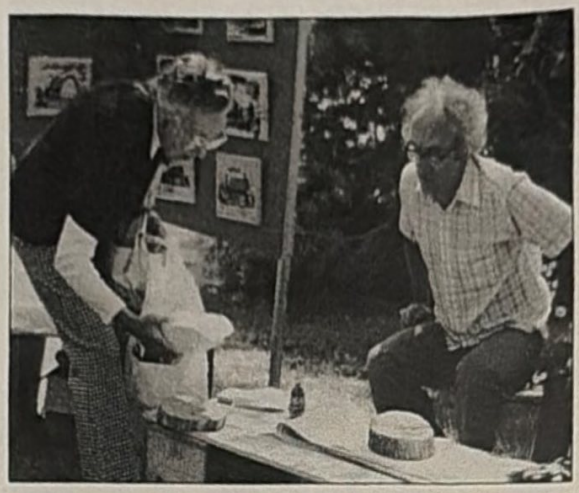
local business in running the Market. The Opinicon Hotel has been most generous in allowing us to use their lawns each year. Parks Canada kindly allows us to park vendors behind the museum. Last summer Peter and June Alford distributed coffee and tea to the vendors, opening their take-out shop early to be available to a hungry and thirsty crowd. Farther away from the site, the folks at Brown's, Dorothy's and Simmons' have always helped meet the demand for parking and food that the increased influx of people generate.

At the end of a market we help the vendors pack up. After everyone is gone we walk the again empty lawns, ensuring that no garbage is strewn about. We always try to leave the grounds exactly as we found them.

This year the Market is on Saturday, July 29, from 10-4. We hope to have about 30 vendors and expect their wares will be of the same high quality as that of other years. **All** vendor's fees go to the museum.

See you at the Market!



In Memoriam — Robert M. Curtis

By Craig Campbell

The Board of Directors mourns the death of our Vice-President and Treasurer, Robert M. Curtis on Feb. 14, 1989. He is survived by his wife Joan, daughters Alison and Karen, mother Mrs. C.A. Curtis and sisters Carolyn and Katharine.

Robert M. Curtis

Since 1940, the Curtis family has owned the farm and farmhouse which can be seen looking west from the Chaffey's lockstation across Lake Opinicon.

From his summers spent in the area, Robert's relationship with Chaffey's and his farm grew and developed over the years. Two years ago he was persuaded to join the Board of Directors and began immediately to make an intense contribution to all the activities of the Society. He was particularly concerned that the history of this community be preserved in an understandable and permanent manner.

As is the case with most volunteer organizations much time is spent by members on the mundane matters of administration, where the money is going to come from, filling out grant forms, etc. But, when we did have an opportunity to talk about the history of the area — what it was like to be a farmer or lockmaster back at the turn of the century or how people got from place to place, Robert would always be one of the most enthusiastic participants.

His hard work and loyalty to the Society will be missed.

Museum Exhibit of 1989

By Sue Warren

This summer we invite our visitors to explore the rich architectural heritage of the Chaffey's Lock area. Homes, schools, churches and summer cottages can tell us a great deal about early life in the Rideau Lakes area.

Downstairs in the museum, our display concentrates on examples of pre-1880 buildings in South Crosby township. Photographs of township buildings will serve as backdrops to an examination of four types of structures — log, stone, frame and brick. Our display will have a 3-dimensional flavor with models of a log dovetail and a stone mason's work area. Thanks to Allan Bonwill of Skycroft, many unusual 19th-century tools will be featured. If you are curious about log markers or adzes, this is the year to see the Lockmaster's House Museum! Log forts, octagonal schoolhouses, fine stone homes are all part of this area and are described in the exhibits.

We are treating the lockmaster's house itself as an architectural artifact this summer. Visitors can use a "glossary" to find out about interesting features such as the "cross-and-bible" door or gunslits.

Upstairs, we will be concentrating on summer homes of the Chaffey's area. Hand-tinted photographs by Deb Stagg illustrate details of some prominent local cottages.

As usual, visitors can see our videotape about the history of the Chaffey's village — "The Golden Years". Please don't miss us this year!

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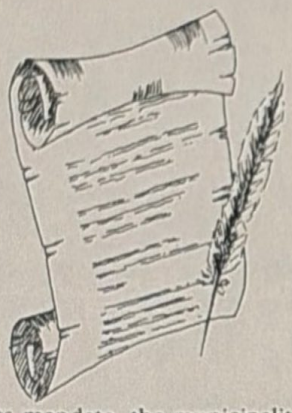
South Crosby Heritage Collection *By Sue Warren*

During the summer of 1988, the Chaffey's Lock and Area Heritage Society launched a unique project. With the financial support of the South Crosby township council, the Heritage Society began to establish local archives.



As part of its mandate, the municipality requested that a safe home be found for fragile township records, Assessment rolls, bylaws and minutes dating from the early 10th century needed to be stored in a safe environment. Throughout the summer, various avenues for this were explored. In September 1988, Queen's University Archives agreed to house the records. Microfilms of the materials will be made available at the township office.

An exhibit on township history based on the municipal records was set up in the upper part of the Lockmaster's house. Our summer students and part-time staff member, Susan Warren, were on hand all season to interpret township history to museum visitors.

Part of the project involved a concentrated search for diaries, letters, photographs, business records and memorabilia of the area. Material could either be donated in the original or copied for the township archives. Advertisements were placed in heritage and geneological publications to this end.

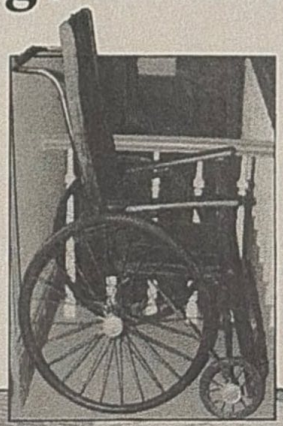
The result was promising. South Crosby family trees come from places as far away as Indiana and California. A number of descendants of early settlers made generous donations of photographs and letters from their family attics. Particularly fascinating material emerges in the Coon papers. Young Abraham Coon sent a series of letters home to Elgin between 1849 and 1868 from points across the United States and Australia. The photograph albums of the late Dr. Berliner recorded Chaffey's and Elgin in the early 1920s. An inventory of existing paper materials was undertaken.

The project is still ongoing from year to year. If you have any interesting South Crosby information you wish to donate or have copies, please let us know.

Do You Have a Message from the Past?

As a small museum with limited space we cannot acquire many large actifacts as we simply do not have room to store them at this time. We do, nevertheless, still depend on donations and loans of material to help us in bringing the past to life. It is said that a museum is only as good as the people who support it. That is, no doubt, why Chaffey's Lockmaster's Museum has been so successful in the past. Our yearly exhibits are composed almost entirely of artifacts that society members have loaned to us.

Although we are happy to accept gifts we are also very glad to be able to borrow pictures, letters and other messages from the past only long enough to photograph the item and then return it to the owner. This way the museum has the benefit of using the material while the owner does not lose possession of it. We hope to do an exhibit in the near future with the boats of the Rideau Canal as its theme so we are particularly interested in obtaining pictures, drawings and letters relating to the many crafts which have used the canal for the past 157 years. If you have any of these messages you would like to share, please call Janice at 359-5022.



"Does anyone know anything about this chair such as who donated it, where it came from, etc... please help us find out!"

Pine Grove School,
Do you recognize any of these children? Teacher? Year?

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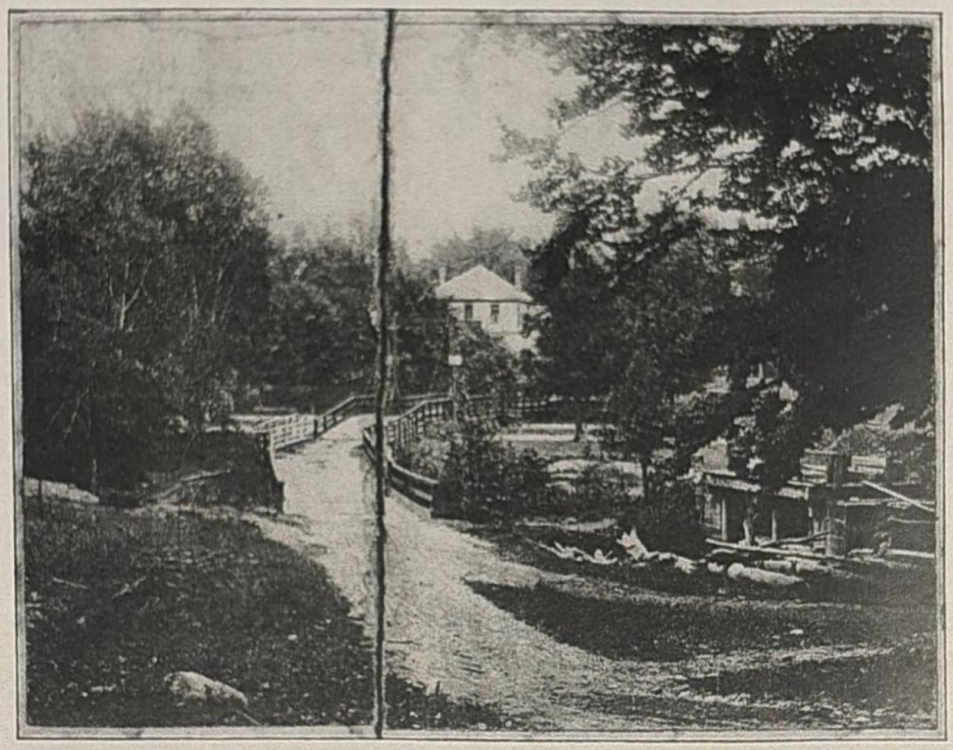

Photo Restoration

This photo, from the Old Fleming Collection, is of Chaffey's in the 1800s. Our goal is to have this photo restored, framed and hung in our museum. As this will be a fairly costly endeavour, any donations would be greatly appreciated!!!

Board Members

Janice Chornehus
Co-ordinator

Front (L-R)
Thea Dodge, Lorie Truemner
Second Row
Sharon Fleming, Sue Warren
Third Row
Jane Monaghan, Craig Campbell
Inset
Cathy Crane.

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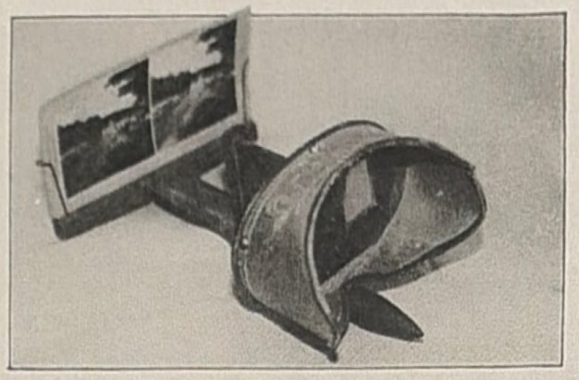
New Children's Activity Centre



This year for the first time we are going to have a children's activity table to try to help make the museum experience an enjoyable one for the younger members of the public. There will be simple activities such as colouring for the younger children, some challenging puzzles for the older children and in keeping with our architectural theme this year, there will be some log sets so that those budding architects can try their hand at building a rather small scale log cabin. We will also have a stereoscope to provide a three dimensional look into the past.

The activities will be appropriate for unsupervised children as we do not have sufficient staff to monitor the table as well as interpret the exhibit. We would, however, welcome volunteers who could come in for a morning or afternoon on the weekends to lend a hand. If anyone has any other ideas for museum appropriate activities for children, please contact Janice at 359-5022.

The Lock-A-Thon

By Cathy Crane

Fundraising...some people love it, some are ambivalent about it and still others hate it. But no matter where each of us fits into the picture, one of the inescapable realities of running the Lockmaster's House Museum requires an ongoing commitment to it.

Keeping ideas fresh and exciting for the volunteer workers and the paying public is a formidable challenge year after year.

One of the earliest events conceived before the museum even opened was a variation on a proven formula: the "Thon". The Chaffey's version came to be known as the "Lock-A-Thon".

For pledges of monetary donations, six Heritage Board members agreed to surrender a mid July Sunday in 1981 to lock up and down through the lock at Chaffey's as many times as possible without generating any lockages themselves. "Marge the Barge" was pressed into service as the vessel of choice and official permission from Parks Canada was secured.

Up at the crack of dawn, these giving souls boarded Marge armed with liquids and comestibles to carry them through a flurry of lockages to benefit the museum. Personally selected trinkets for the amusement and delight of onlookers were carefully placed about the hull perimeter, among them a small plastic Great White Shark for occasional trawling and an inflatable "Heritage Bug" dangling from a flexible wire.

Hours passed...the number of lockages grew and the donation jar filled until the canal closed for the night and 30 lockages had been logged by Marge and her hearty crew. The 1981 Lock-A-Thon netted $1,500 in funds to aid the Chaffey's Lockmaster's House Museum.

Members of the Chaffey's Lock and Area Heritage Society

Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Acton
Keith Adams
Greg & Chris Alford
Ms. Susan Alford
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Alford
David Alford
James & Anne Barton
Mrs. Margaret Bartley
Mrs. R.M. Billings
Allan & Ellen Bonwill
Mr. John Bonser
Mrs. Wm. Bredbeck
Brown's Marina
David Brown
Allan (Pep) Burt
Miss Martha Campbell
Dr. & Mrs. H. Campbell
Mr. Craig Campbell & Barb Chamberlain
John Campbell
Mr. C.V. Carlson
Mr. Doug Chaffey
Geo. B. & Susan Challies
Ms. Susan Chamberlain
Mr. & Mrs. J.S. Chamberlain
Mr. & Mrs. L. Chester
Don & Mandy Collins
Edgar & Phyllis Connell
Cathy Crane & Terry Murray
Al, Janice & Karen Cross
Marshall & Doris Crowe
Gord & Grace Curry
Mrs. C.A. Curtis
Mr. & Mrs. R.M. Curtis
Mrs. S.F. Deutsch
Ron & Marlene Dobson
Mrs. Thea Dodge
Dr. John M. Earle
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Mrs. Marjorie Fleming
Richard G. Fleming
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Turid & Adrian Forsyth
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Bill Glover
Mrs. Marion Goulah
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MEMBERSHIP

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

.....

PHONE.....

SUMMER PHONE.....

Individual $5_____ Family $8_____

CONTRIBUTION

We(I) wish to make a contribution to the operating costs of the museum.

Amount $_____

HERITAGE RESERVE FUND

We(I) wish to make a donation of $250 or more under the following name:.....

.....

Do you wish a tax receipt for your contribution?

Chaffey's Lock and Area Heritage Society
Box 50, Chaffey's Lock, ONT
K0G 1C0

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