CHAFFEY'S LOCK
and
Area Heritage Society

STEAMER LOCKING THROUGH, CHAFFEY'S LOCKS, ONT.

Newsletter

1990 91

THE CHAFFEY'S LOCK AND AREA HERITAGE SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

Greetings again, friends of the Museum, from your President, Thea Fleming Dodge.

Did you get into the **Lockmaster's House Museum** last year? If you visited, you know that our display was "Early Architecture" with large blow-ups of some of the first dwellings in South Crosby Township.

This year our co-ordinator, Janice Chornohus, and the board members will be featuring a display on "Steamboating on the Rideau", with special emphasis on the Chaffey's section.

Thanks for your past support and I hope we can continue to count on you. Donations are especially welcome, also memberships, articles, and ideas. A few members listed on the back page did not renew their membership. I believe they all want to belong to the Society but just forgot to renew. It's time now to renew for 1990. Last year there were 117 names listed. This year we aim for 150. Without support from the public, this small private museum will have to close. We are proud to be able to run a high calibre museum in such a small community. We therefore, ask that you be generous. Remember, all members are admitted free and we urge you to visit.

Don't forget, our annual open meeting at the Community Hall, Chaffey's Lock, will be August 26th, 1990. Please plan to attend. There will be entertainment and refreshments.

Thank you.

Thea Fleming Dodge

WE DO NEED YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE NOW DUE FOR 1990.

DUES HAVE INCREASED

$10.00 FAMILY; $7.00 SINGLE

IF YOU HAVE ALREADY RENEWED/CONTRIBUTED -- THANK YOU!!

MUSEUM FUNDING

We are in a real funding crunch at the ***Chaffey's Lockmasters House Museum.*** As you are probably aware, we receive minimal funding and rely heavily upon our memberships and donations to keep the Heritage Society and the Museum operational. This year we received an operating grant of $500 from the Township of South Crosby ... for which we are very grateful, but it is down from $1000 donated in 1989. We were also delighted to receive assistance in the form of a SEED grant to allow us to hire one student to man the Museum during the summer, but its dollar value has been cut as well.

In an effort to reduce spending, we are producing our annual newsletter ourselves. The format we were able to offer last year is just too costly for us in our present financial state.

On the bright side, our Fundraising activities are more numerous and aggressive than they have been in the recent past. To date we have already conducted one raffle for a Dinner for Two which was kindly donated by ***Al and Janice Cross*** of the ***Opinicon Hotel.*** The winners of our first draw were *Doug & Jeanne MacIntyre* of Elgin. We are presently holding another Dinner Raffle, this time a Dinner for Two at ***Dorothy's Lodge,*** kindly donated by ***Doug and Vivian Liss.*** It will be drawn at the Annual Craft Market being held on Saturday, July 28th, 1990. Tickets are available at the Museum, from Board members or at various local commercial establishments. We hope to have a third Dinner Raffle to be won at the Heritage Society Annual Meeting on Sunday, August 26th.

The ***Lock-A-Thon*** is being resurrected this year and will be held rain or shine on Sunday, July 15th. If you would like to sponsor one of the hearty crew, a pledge sheet is available at the Museum. Be sure to come and watch the fun!

This year we will be holding a bake table at the Craft Market with proceeds going to the operation of the Museum. You may be contacted by one of our Museum staff requesting baked goods as a donation. Your generosity will be much appreciated. If you could volunteer an hour or so to assist with sales we would be grateful for all the help we can get!

We would ask you for one more thing ... memberships for the calendar year 1990 are now due. We very much appreciate your support and if you haven't yet had an opportunity to renew your membership, please drop by the Museum. We'll be happy to bring you up to current status and remember ... your visit to see the exhibit will then be free!

PINE GROVE SCHOOL by Lincoln F. McIntyre

Pine Grove School was a community effort. Everyone contributed in one way or another to ensure the children of the area would have a school. The *Women's Institute* were always involved with projects to improve the conditions of the students. Various activities at the school were tied into the community. Even in the 1890's school picnics were a community event. Christmas time brought everyone together to enjoy the students' efforts. Until the Hall was built in Chaffeys' in 1932, the school house was used for meetings (religious and otherwise.)

At school the students learned more than the subjects in the curriculum. With eight (or more) grades being taught in one room they learned to be independent in their work and at the same time have a strong sense of working for the group. (Such as helping younger students while the teacher was busy.) In a small group there was not the luxury of long term feuds. Generally, if there was a problem it was sorted out (or fought out) and things went back to normal. There was a sense of pride in the school.

In June of 1960, *Pine Grove School* had closed its doors for the last time. The students were now bused several miles to a bigger school in Elgin. There, buses brought students from other closed one room schools in the Township. Suddenly students found themselves in a class that had more students than were in their old school! There were many advantages to the new environment such as indoor plumbing, central heating (even if it was a wood furnace), usually more books and equipment and a larger group of your age to play with. It widened the students' world.

This process was known as consolidation. It occurred over a period of years across Canada. It changed forever a way of school life. No one will argue the advantages the new system offered. Why then, do most people speak so fondly of the old one room schools? What was there about life there that changed with consolidation? Was it the atmosphere of activity with 8 grades in one room? Was it because you were more of an individual or because you were part of a family of friends? There are as many answers as there are students who attended the one-roomers.

On July 28th, 1990, there will be a reunion of former students, teachers and people who were involved with *Pine Grove School*. Not to celebrate the anniversary of its closing but to be a part of a special "family" reunion. To see old friends and reminisce on what this little school meant to them. Remembering the hard times, the sad times but mostly the good times. Whether they live in the area or many miles away they are still members of ...

THE COMMUNITY OF PINE GROVE SCHOOL

MUSEUM EXHIBIT OF 1990 by Janice Chornohus

We hope to see you at our exhibit this year called "***STEAMBOATING ON THE RIDEAU***". With over 100 photographs and an exciting array of authentic Rideau related artifacts, you will learn a great many fascinating things about the age of steam and how it affected the local population. We also have two excellent videos which you will enjoy. But, the prize of the show this year is the original wooden wheel from the Steamer ***LORETTA***. Don't miss this opportunity to bask in the romance of steam.

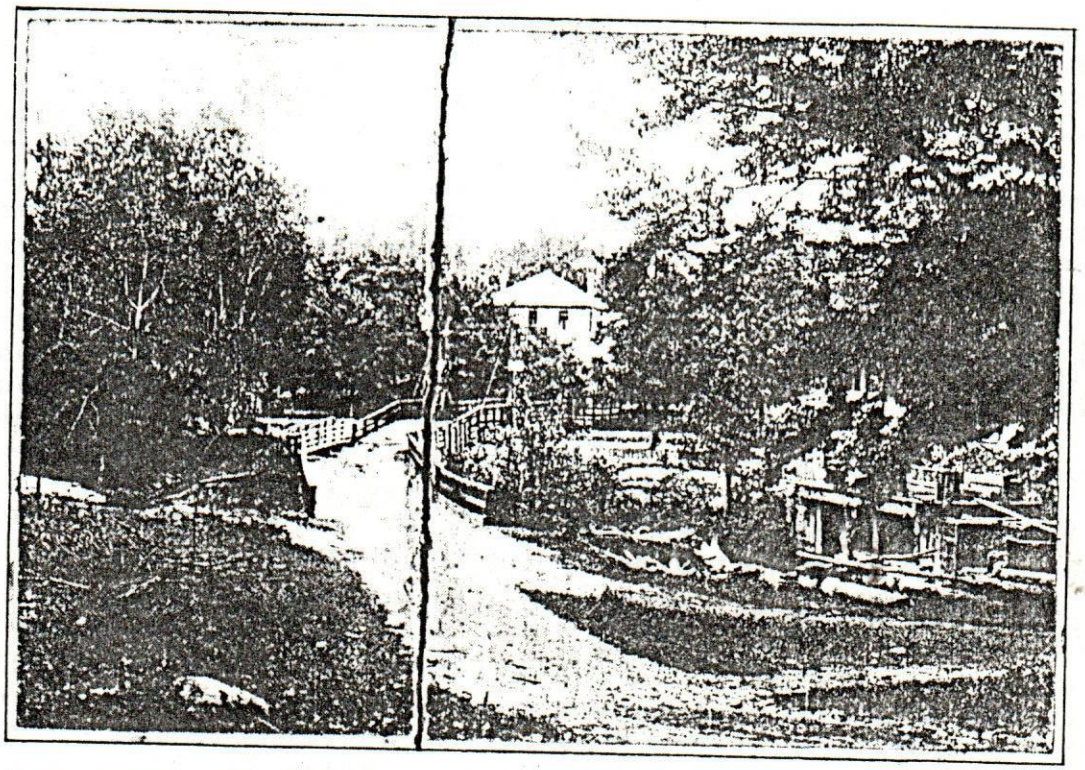
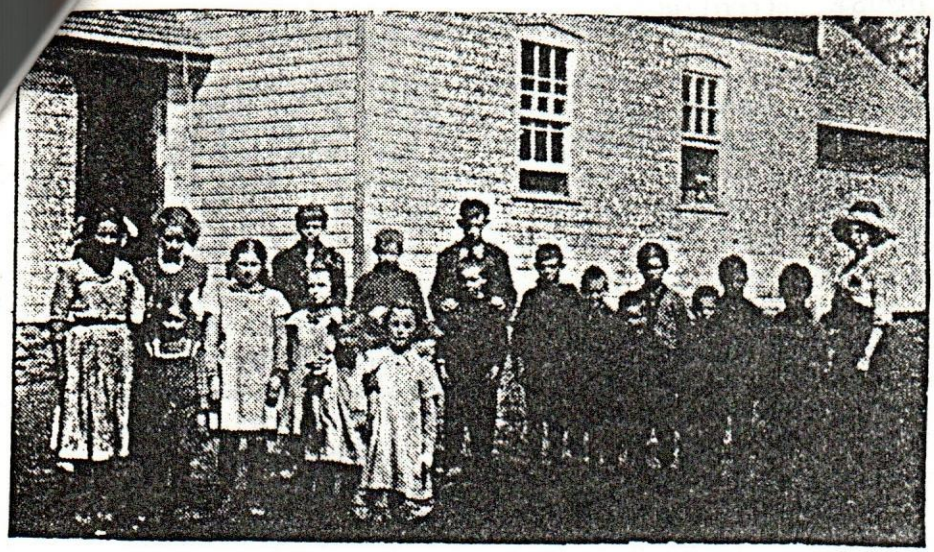


Photo Restoration

You may recall the picture that we were having restored as mentioned in last year's newsletter. It is a photo of the Lockmaster's House taken from the road beyond the bywash in the late 1800's or early 1900's. It is from ***The Fleming Collection*** and was badly cracked down the centre. We commissioned ***Deb Stagg***, a professional artist and restoration expert, to enlarge the picture and repair the damage made by the crack. We are pleased to announce that the restoration is complete and the beautiful finished product is now hanging in the Museum.

We had hoped to cover the cost of restoration with donations. We are still looking for your help in this area. Deb Stagg was kind enough to donate the cost of framing the finished photo. The total cost of restoration was $300. Please come down to the Museum and see it, and if you'd like to donate anything to its cost, we would be extremely grateful.

Many thanks to Deb Stagg, a good friend of the Museum, for a beautiful job well done!



PINE GROVE SCHOOL

Do you recognize any of these children? Teacher? Year?

This picture of the Pine Grove School was published in last year's newsletter asking for help to identify the teacher and or pupils. On page 76 of "HEARTH AND HERITAGE" the same picture is reproduced and the names listed are - Teacher Miss Maisie Renaud; Back Row - boys Bill Fleming, Lawrence Edgers, Wilfred Regan, (Dr.) Jack Fleming, (Dr.) Ray Fleming, Stanley Gifford, Roy Gifford, Herb Regan, Ned Fleming, Merrick Edgers; Back Row- girls Bertha Gifford, Iva Edgers; Front Row - girls Florence Edgers, Frances Regan, Mary Simmons, Hazel Gifford, Edna Kerr.

CHAFFEY'S LOCKMASTER'S HOUSE by Sue Warren

In 1844, tenders were called in a Bytown newspaper for the construction of a lockmaster's house at our lockstation. Like its counterparts along the Rideau Canal, it was equipped with a tin roof, gunslits, two stone porches and four rooms. Over a century later, a pine lintel was discovered inside the wall of the house during renovations. This lintel was once used as a cover for the gunslits. A (circa) 1885 photograph shows large casement window. By its late date, it would appear as if the Chaffey's House was one of the last of its kind erected on the waterway in the aftermath of the Rebellion of Upper Canada. The fine sandstone used in the structure probably was quarried in a pit near Elgin.

The first residents of the little building were William and Elizabeth Fleming. William, a former Sapper and Miner, had already been lockmaster twelve years before moving into his new home. When the Flemings retired to their Opinicon Lake farm in

(continued)

CHAFFEY'S LOCKMASTER'S HOUSE *(continued)*

1856, James Simmons, Elizabeth's son by an earlier marriage, assumed duties as lockmaster. James had been orphaned at the age of nine when his father, another Sapper and Miner stationed at Newboro, had been killed in an explosion. James and his wife, Angelina Warren, raised seven children in the building. James' tenure was amazingly long. He did not leave his job until he was seventy-three years old!

In 1894, the house was completely altered for new tenants. After fifty years, it was becoming unhealthy and damp. The four rooms also caused very cramped conditions. During that year then, the house was totally gutted. A top frame storey with four bedrooms and a walk-in pantry was attached. As well, a frame kitchen addition completed the extensive renovations. The stable across the road probably was erected about the same year. Turn of the century photographs reveal that the building was painted a dull colour (apparently an ugly battleship gray!).

The new occupants were Henry and Sarah Fleming. Henry was a grandson of the first lockmaster and nephew of the second! During this second Fleming stay from 1894 until 1928, the building saw many modern changes. Gas lights were installed. The Flemings also received the first private phone in the village. It was used by long lineups of tourists during the summer months. A "Ram" from the bywash sent water to a tank located above the kitchen roof providing a means for washing during the warm months of the year. Sarah assumed responsibility for the village post office as well. With raising nine children and sorting mail, she must have been a very busy lady.

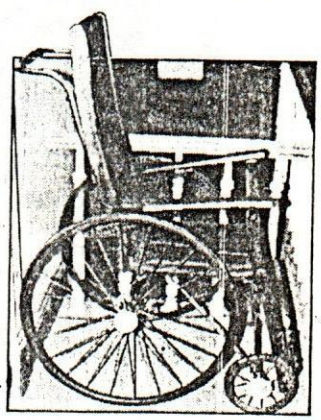
In 1929, Herman and Alice Warren moved to the lockstation from Newboro where Herm had been working as a canalman. Years later, he recalled that the inside of the house was painted dark green when the family arrived in their home. In time, the unreliable gas lights were replaced with electricity. The Warrens quickly fell in love with the "old house". After Herm's retirement in 1956, Alice always missed the beautiful view from her upstairs bedroom window.

William McIntyre and his family lived in the structure for eleven years until Bill's death in 1967. After that date, the building was boarded up by the Canal authorities and left vacant. The only inhabitants were hundred of bats in the attic. For nearly a decade, Chaffey's residents bargained with Parks Canada for use of the building as a village museum. In 1982, this dream was realized. Renovations were undertaken to give the interior of the house an 1890's appearance. Since that date, it has operated as an interpretation centre for Chaffey's and area history with annual changing exhibits. Many members of the Heritage Society are descendants of the five lockmasters who once proudly lived in the house.

THE CHAFFEY'S LOCK CEMETERY by Sue Warren

There are no records of burials in this tiny cemetery. Any information about its past is based on oral tradition and a few scattered facts in the Tett Papers at Queen's University Archives. The plot, like a similar plot near Jones Falls, was probably used to bury malaria victims during the construction years of the *Rideau Canal* (1827 -32). However, at Chaffey's, most of the work force of 70 men stayed alive. The only known victim was John Sheriff, the first contractor at the site. Samuel Chaffey, the founder of the village mills, died of malaria on a trip to Bytown in 1827. He certainly does not rest here. The one surviving marker, however, is a memorial to his widow Mary Ann. It was erected by her brother, John Poole, after her death in 1888 to commemorate her close connection with the village. Mary Ann herself actually was interred in Newboro where she had resided for the last fifty years of her life. Another Chaffey briefly was buried here. In 1963, Mrs. John Chaffey died at their home in Crosby Mills. Her body was shipped by barge to Chaffey's but was later transferred to the family plot in Newboro. The main occupants of the cemetery are members of the Simmons and Fleming families, the first two lockmasters in the village. One small footmarker in the cemetery still attests to the death of one Simmons' child. As late as the 1950's, other gravestones existed for Simmons' family members. In the 1970's, Parks Canada carefully underbrushed and groomed this historic little cemetery. Today, it can easily be viewed by interested members of the public.

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



The mystery of the old wheelchair has been solved!

Do you remember last year's newsletter in which we printed a photograph of an old wheelchair and asked for your help in determining from whence it came? Well, for those of you who lost sleep worrying about it, fret no more (or at least a little less) ... Years ago when the ***Chaffey's Museum*** *first opened, we were desperate for artifacts and when* ***John*** *and* ***Laurel Fleming*** *were invited to dinner with* ***Sandy*** *and* ***Doreen Gray*** *of the* ***Gray Hardware Store*** *in Seeley's Bay, they spotted an old wheelchair in a storage shed. Sandy knew very little about it and was only too glad to donate it to the Chaffey's Museum. We don't know who owned it originally or its date, but it looks about 1850. Any ideas????*

Members of the Chaffey's Lock and Area Heritage Society

William & Bev Acton
Keith P. Adams
Chris & Greg Alford
Susan Alford
Margaret Bartley
Jan Berry
Mrs. R.M. Billings
John & Judy Bonser
Allen & Ellen Bonwill
Nancy Preston Bredbeck
Capt. & Mrs. William J. Bredbeck
Brown's Marina
Dave Brown & Cindy Rotar
Martha Campbell
Craig Campbell
Barb Chamberlain
John Campbell
Douglas Chaffey
George & Susan Challies
Janice Chornohus
Bill Clipshaw
Don & Mandy Collins
Edgar & Phyllis Connell
Cathy Crane & Terry Murray
Gord & Grace Curry
Mrs. C.A. Curtis
Nelson & Rae Darling
Mrs. S.F. Deutsch
Thea Dodge
Dr. John M. Earle
Donald & Betty Ecobichon
Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Edwards
Joyce & Rich Falkner
Alan Fleming
Arthur & Lorraine Fleming
John & Laurel Fleming
Richard G. Fleming
Bob & Sharon Fleming
Dave Fleming
Vera & Fred Fleming
Turid & Adrian Forsyth
David & Wilma Francis
Don & Betty Franklin
Bill Glover
Marian Goulah
Wayne Grady
Glynn & Irene Guthrie
William & Margot Hamblen
Bill & Mary Hamilton
David & Madeline Hamilton
J. Hamilton
Jim & Isabel Henniger
Libby & Dennis Henson
Mr. & Mrs. John M. Huffman Jr.
Caroline Isard
Mr. & Mrs. Kjeld Jensen
Brad & Mary Johnson
June C. Kennedy
George & Charleen King
Pat Lawrence
Allen & Wendy Levin
J. Edward & Adele W. Lloyd
Mr. & Mrs. R.C. Lovering
Nasrene & John A. MacDonald
Margaret McNally
David & Hilda Manning
Lincoln McIntyre
Jean & Michael MacPherson
James & Susan MacLatchie
Dennis Monaghan & Angela Borrett
Jane Monaghan & Bill Mather
Frank & Beth Moores
Frank Oakes
Opinicon Hotel - Al & Janice Cross
Marg Phelan
Mrs. D.H. Robinson
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas M. Russell
Dave Sadler
David & Julia Scotland
Arlene Seigal
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph O. Shanks
Mr. & Mrs. D.G. Sillars
Fran Simpson
Bob & Darlene Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur H. Stark
Mr. & Mrs. David Struthers
Don & Lola Timpany
S.C. Torno
Lorie Truemner
Pat & Ross Truemner
Larry Turner
Bill Vankoughnet
Ed Thibault & Catherine Veitch
Ann & Frank Vitale
Don & Mary Warren
Susan Warren & Bob Taylor
John Watt
Vince Watters
James & Mary Wesbecher
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Toni Yagoda