

THE CABOOSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

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March 2010

Editor's message (by Jeannie Smith and Randall Ash)

The time has come to hand over the publishing of The Caboose to a new team. Since January 2003, Randall Ash and I have been proud to create a quality product for you to learn more about Cumberland Township's history. Dorothy-Jane Smith will produce the May and September issues. The search is on for someone to take up the reins for future newsletters. Thank you for contributing lots of great stories, ideas, pictures, poems and suggestions. It has been fun to resurrect tales of the past. [Randall: 44 newsletters; hundreds of priceless stories; thousands of great memories. It's been my pleasure to have been associated with the production of The Caboose and the Society. Thanks!]

Our Society

The Cumberland Township Historical Society (CTHS) was founded in 1986. We are a non-profit, volunteer and community-based organization whose goal is to preserve Cumberland Township history.

Our newsletter

The Caboose is published six times each year by the Cumberland Township Historical Society.

Our Executive

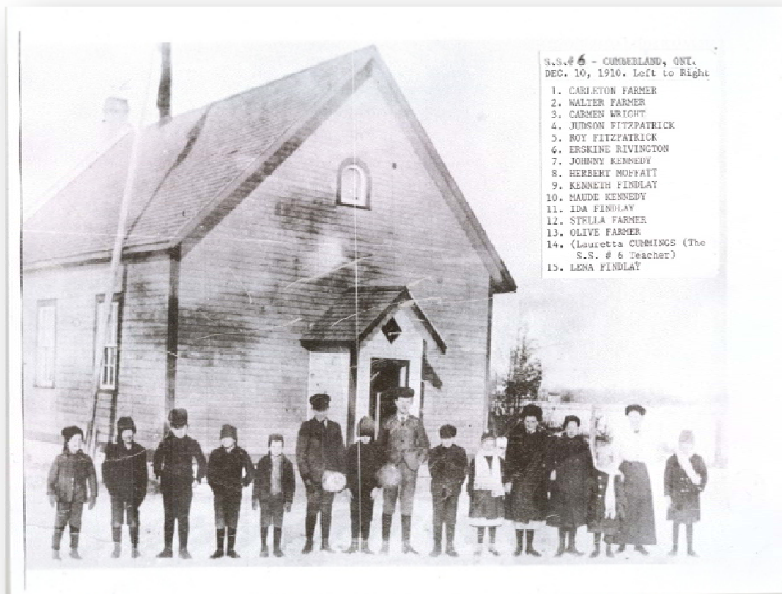
- Dorothy-Jane Smith, President
- Jean-François Beaulieu, Vice President
- Randall Ash, Past President, Newsletter production
- Jeannie Smith, Director, Newsletter Editor
- Bill Woodruff, Treasurer
- Verna Cotton, Director
- Ross Bradley, Director
- Dan Brazeau, Website

Our address and local history room

Cumberland Branch
Ottawa Public Library
Local History Room
1599 Tenth Line Road
Ottawa, ON K1E 3E8

Our World Wide Web address

www.cths.ca



SS#6: December 10, 1910

Carleton Farmer, Walter Farmer, Carmen Wright, Judson Fitzpatrick, Roy Fitzpatrick, Erskine Rivington, Johnny Kennedy, Herbert Moffatt, Kenneth Findlay, Maude Kennedy, Ida Findlay, Stella Farmer, Olive Farmer, Laretta Cummings (Teacher), Lena Findlay.

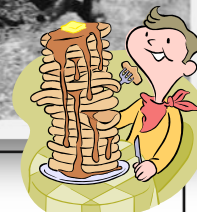
Picture contributed by Patricia Drew, daughter of Edith Kennedy Drew.

Next meeting of the CTHS

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 3rd in the boardroom of the Ottawa Regional Police Station, Tenth Line Road and St. Joseph Blvd. Plan to arrive at **6:45 pm** as the meeting will begin at **7:00 pm**. Guest speaker Roger Laporte will give the history of his business, Laporte Flowers, which is celebrating its 50th Anniversary. Be sure to bring a friend along. Light refreshments, as always, will be served.

Can anyone offer names of these Cameron/McMillan siblings, children of Anne Quigley who first married Daniel Cameron, then Archie McMillan? Bella Cameron Morin is in the middle. Do you recognize: Jack (John) Cameron, Alex Cameron, Isabella Cameron, Mary Cameron, Dan Cameron, Hugh Cameron, James McMillan, Archie McMillan and Annie McMillan. This could be 1929 when Sarah Summers Morin died.

Gerry Boyer gboyer@reztel.net



Maplefest 2010

The Cumberland Lions Club is celebrating the 41st anniversary of MapleFest.

Pancakes, Sausages, Maple Syrup, Orange Juice, Tea, Coffee, and all the Pancakes you can eat!

**Saturday and Sunday, April 10th and 11th,
8 AM to 3 PM.**

Cumberland Lions Maple Hall
2552 Old Montreal Road,
Village of Cumberland
(8 minutes east of Place d'Orléans)

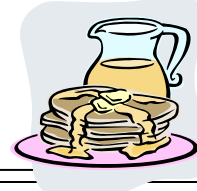
Adults	\$6.00
Children (12 & under)	\$4.00
Seniors	\$5.00

Maple Syrup products on sale by the
Cumberland Scouts

A Bake Sale by the three village churches is being held across the street from Maple Hall at the United Church on Saturday from 8 AM to 2 PM

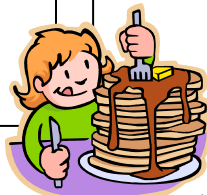


We Serve



Jean Hamilton a former Vars resident who now lives in Russell, has recently published a book of her poetic biographies about people, places and things in the Ottawa Valley and beyond. To order a copy, please contact Jean at 613-445-8267.

The price of the book is \$15.00.



Membership renewal for the 2010/11 season (March 2010 to February 2011) is due by March 31st. Just \$15 for membership includes bi-monthly presentations and six issues of The Caboose. Send your \$15 to Dorothy-Jane Smith, 17 East Adams Street, Ottawa, ON, K2G 0H8

The CTHS and the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum

The Cumberland Heritage Village Museum resulted from the visioning of dedicated Cumberland Township residents. In 1975, Councillor Pat Wright, along with Bob McNarry and Barry and Verna Kinsella, took advantage of the West Carleton-Russell Historical Society's search for a place to display its artifacts and initiated the transfer of the vacant CNR station from Vars to Cumberland. The museum grew as more buildings were acquired. Carl Hansen directed restoration. Volunteers from local community groups supported programs. Cumberland Township, along with provincial grants, funded projects. The Cumberland Township Historical Society evolved in 1986 to assist with research and exhibits. Since 2002, the museum has been managed by the City of Ottawa.



Pat Wright and Bob McNarry

Bob McNarry donated photos that he had taken of the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum to the CTHS and the museum. These portray the reconstruction of township buildings that were moved to the museum site and provide an excellent source for the history of the museum.

Take time to visit the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum this summer.

Tales out of school

by Jeannie Smith

Did ya' ever sing "I got my education out behind the barn"? Or maybe you got more education on the school bus than in the classroom! All that I ever needed to know I learned in kindergarten. I loved my teacher Miss Dorothea Graham who, in 1955 at Elgin PS, taught the basics: reading, writing and arithmetic, enhanced with music and art. My parents, my first teachers ensured that I was able to tie my shoes, dress myself, behave politely and be independent.

Kindergarten furnished me with the building blocks of life-long learning. Now that I'm retired, I realize that I'm still functioning at a kindergarten level! Playing in the sandbox, watering the plants and watching seedlings grow established my love of gardening. Miss Graham's 'circle time' included singing to her piano music and moving about playing rhythm band instruments. Music fills my soul! Daily reading of picture books and stories sparked my imagination and made creative writing a passion. I performed in concerts, entertained visitors at tea, gathered for the 'Red Feather', baked cookies, played games, organized the little house and pretended to be mother, dressing up with high heels, skirts and jewelry. I built cities with wooden blocks, rode around the room on little vehicles and reveled in playing outdoors at recess. Walking to and from school equipped me for the human experience. I weathered all seasons, watched people from various walks of life and wandered through the back allies behind Elgin Street stores gathering all sorts of information. But the greatest legacy that Miss Graham instilled in me was the art of friendship and cooperation.

My great-grandmother Susannah Rice McLaurin taught school in Plantagenet before she married Dr. James Ferguson in 1863. James taught in Almonte to earn tuition for medical school at McGill in the late 1850s. My father's mother, Nettie Helmer was the teacher in Finch before her marriage to J. D. Ferguson in 1897. Dad taught at SS#1 and SS#5 in Cumberland from 1923-26 before attending Toronto University to study dentistry. My maternal grandmother, Maude Williams, was an English governess in Italy. I started teaching kindergarten at Meadowview PS in Navan in 1970.



Early 1900s class at SS#1 French Hill

In 1980, Jean Preece got her father, Albert Marshall, to tell his story.

"At school there were four of us. We had a man teacher. He wasn't very strict or very sharp. We used to get down on our hands and knees and crawl out under the desks so he wouldn't see us. We'd go down to the creek and play there 'til recess. Sometimes we got strapped for it but most of the time we didn't. We used to play football in the fields. There was one fellow who used to kick me on the shins sometimes. So one day I went at him and made his nose bleed pretty badly. So he never kicked me anymore!

I was school trustee for a few years. Dave MacRae, the blacksmith at Bearbrook, was secretary. Schools were heated with wood then. We bought for \$2.75 a cord for hardwood, \$1.50 a cord for pine for kindling. We piled it in the old school which was used for a woodshed. I was caretaker for one winter when younger. There were three stoves to get going in the morning to have the school warm for 9 o'clock. We also had to sweep and dust. All for \$10.00 a month."

Verna Rickerd Kinsella remembered Bob Stewart taking the kids to and from SS#2 in the winter. He hitched up his team of horses to the box sleigh and everyone stood up, only to be jerked about and fall off and jump back on again to nestle down into the buffalo robes for warmth. Sometimes the snow reached the horses' bellies. The grade one teacher, Miss Ogg, was terrifying. She would crack her pointer down on the desk and scare the life out of the students. She didn't last long and was replaced by Miss Lebeau, an older lady who made school a little more inviting. Miss Elizabeth MacKay, a young teacher from Maxville who was engaged to John Moffatt from Leonard, taught music. The students would croon, "O Johnny heavens above, O Johnny how you could love!" and Elizabeth's face became beet red! Stan Fisher taught manual training in the senior room where the children enjoyed making bird houses and shelves.



SS#2: Vars 1939

There were four grades in each of the two rooms at SS#2 totally about fifty students. Recess was a free for all with no teacher on duty. Trailing down the front of the schoolhouse was an interesting vine. Some boys took this greenery and wrapped it around Verna's head. It was poison ivy! Verna's face swelled up and she couldn't see for two days. School pranks were customary and there was no punishment delegated. The girls soon learned to run faster and avoid the tauntings of the lads! Soft ball and tag were popular games. The toilets were in the wood shed and upon returning from answering Mother Nature's call, the students carried in some logs to replenish the wood box. Later, two chemical toilets were installed inside the porch.

Many fun times were recalled but Verna never forgot the day when somebody delivered sad news to Beatrice Hill. Her brother Stanley had been killed overseas in WW2. Beatrice went home while the day went on for the rest, as if nothing had changed.

The inspector dropped in frequently and the class had to shape up and behave appropriately. The teacher knew in advance that this 'special visitor' would appear and everyone cleaned the schoolroom making it 'ship shape'. The teacher drilled her class so that her students were ready to respond correctly to the inspector's questions.

To this day, Verna Kinsella continues to document the history of Vars using the skills that she learned at SS#2.

My husband, Glen Smith, grew up on the border of Cumberland and Rockland. His father Norman, his uncle John, their neighbours, Walter Millar and Tom Ryan, farmed this land along the river. The children walked to the Bay School where the OPP Station now stands guard. Mrs. Cecilia Ryan, Tom's wife, was a favourite teacher of Glen's brother, Reg and sister Betty. She was strict, loved geography and encouraged her students to produce top-notch work, and to love reading. Tom Ryan was also the school trustee and he was proud to drive by the school and see his children and their pals working industriously under the eaves of learning, and then play actively outdoors for recess.

On fine weather days, the school chums walked along the newly opened Highway 17 to the one room school. Their fathers would deliver them by horse and sleigh, or tractor and wagon if the weather was inclement. Not only did the children learn to socialize as they travelled to school, they acquired skills for the future: problem solving; event planning; polite debating and community activism.

One of their teachers took pleasure in basking in the sun as he monitored outdoor play. The children outsmarted their sleeping master by moving the hands on the clock ahead to speed up the beginning of recess, then when "Sir" was snoring,

askew on a chair at the school door, one very clever child would sneak over, put the minute hand back to extend their freedom.

Tom Ryan, on his drive to Rockland, would notice the students playing outdoors. Sometimes on his return, he would wonder why the children were still out for recess! But the day of reckoning fast approached when one child miscalculated and moved the hands too far ahead and school was dismissed early. Everyone arrived home much before the expected time! Needless to say the teacher was fired! Mrs. Ryan by this time, took time off from her long teaching career to raise her younger children. She certainly would not have tolerated such nonsense.

Playing 'hooky' was not an option for the children of Ferg and Kay Minogue. Their mother kept a watchful eye on them as they paraded down the lane of their farm into the yard of SS#6, almost directly below Minogue's hill. John Minogue and Elaine Russell Findlay were the only two students in the grade eight graduating class of 1962. A few years earlier, the grades 6, 7 and 8 students were shifted off to SS#5 in the village leaving John and Elaine to compete for high marks. The children from the Wright, Scharfe and Findlay farms trudged through the bush, down the gully and up to join the Minogues on their trek to school. Besides learning 'the basics', the children loved to sing, enter public speaking contests, memorize verses and listen to their teachers read. Doris Cotton Reid, Maysie Edwards Rivington, Letitia McCullough Russell and Madeline Eastman Findlay were popular teachers who demanded best effort from their pupils, yet provided time for fun. The 'west-enders' were excellent athletes. Soft ball tournaments between SS#6 and SS#10 were the highlight of the year.

Gladys Scharfe Eggert accompanied her parents, in their 1928 Buick, to the Byward Market to sell farm produce. One Saturday, a yellow puppy, a mix of Lab and German Shepherd, caught Gladys' eye. Driving home, they followed many army jeeps as this was during the war years of the 1940s. Gladys named the dog "Jeep" and he became an instant family member. The dog developed a funny 'grin' by bearing his teeth as if to bite, but actually it was a sort of a 'smile.' Upon meeting people, Jeep would wag his tail and show off his pearly whites. The Scharfe, Findlay and Fitzpatrick kids with lunches in hand, hiked off to SS#10, stomping over the hard crusty snow. One day, Jeep followed the clan and the boys opened the door to let him in. The teacher didn't kick Jeep out of school. Instead, Mr. Norman Levitan, being terrified of dogs, jumped up onto his desk and the kids laughed themselves silly. Mr. Levitan lasted that one school year, 1941-42.

There has been a school on the site of the now abandoned Riverview PS in Cumberland Village

since the 1850s. Four generations of my family received their elementary schooling there. One day in October 1890, my great Aunt Susie Ferguson Kennedy played with Eliza and Mary McGonigle in the school yard. Tragically, a few days later, she was part of the throng of students who stood in silence as the funeral procession for the two murdered sisters somberly made its way to Dales Cemetery.



1922 Cameron's Hill SS#5 in background.
Doug Ferguson and pretty gal!

In December 1912, the second school building burned to the ground and the students were schooled at Maple Hall until the new two-storey red brick building was opened in 1915. My Uncle James Abner Ferguson, with precise etching, carved his initials JAF into the wood of the new doors. The letters were barely visible, foretelling of James' skill as a surgeon in New Hampshire years later. My father, John Douglas Ferguson, emulating his oldest brother,



SS#1 on Brennan Farm at French Hill, abandoned from 1936-1978.

also knifed his initials. But his JDF was largely obvious causing both boys to get a trimming from their father

John Darby Ferguson. During the 1940s and early 50s, my grandfather, an evangelist with the Plymouth Brethren, preached to the school children several times a year. Often, he would walk from his home in Cumberland Village out to the local school houses.

When Dad taught at SS#5 in 1926 he often took his students on excursions into the bush, down to the river, or up over a hill. Florence McEachern Hill told



SS#1 resurrected at the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum 1979. Ed Summers with his team of horses at museum Christmas programme

me that when Dad was her teacher, the class created a time capsule with examples of their work and this was planted under new trees along the west fence line of the school. In 1997 when I taught at Riverview, a time capsule was set into the ground near a spruce tree at the front of the school.



1997 Mayor Brian Coburn, CBE Trustee Fran Stronach, Cumberland School Trustee Bob Edwards, Superintendent Jim Reynolds, Sally Edwards.

To get to his teaching post at SS#1 in 1923, Dad would hitch up his horse Minto and travel by sleigh in

winter, otherwise he'd ride horseback. It was a new experience for him to commute far away to school. As a youngster, he had walked across the street to SS#5. When he attended high school in Rockland, he boarded with the Sheriff Family. Grandma packed his lunch which included milk straight from 'Bossie' and freshly baked bread. By the time Dad arrived at French Hill, the milk had been shaken up and down with the motion of Minto's canter and a small wad of butter appeared. Once, when the school inspector visited, Dad offered to share lunch. The supervisor stated that the lessons were fine, the students were well instructed, the school was clean, but the butter lacked salt! When the Fifth Line was blocked in winter, Dad stayed with the Garvock Family whose farm was a short distance west of SS#1.

I had a wonderful teaching career for thirty-five years and now my son is carrying on the tradition. I taught Albert Marshall's grandson, as well as the children of Elaine Findlay and Gladys Eggert, and the children and grandchildren of Verna Kinsella and John Minogue! I wonder if they have any tales to tell out of school!



Riverview PS: Michael Tomascik, Nikki Gaudin, Jennifer Babe, Chris Green, VP Rick Gervais, Bob Edwards, Michael Brouillard, Annette Teworte, Jeannie Smith, Sean Mandegar, Heather Porter, Erin Lang, Clinton Hodges, Jennifer Porter.

For more school history check past issues of The Caboose on the website www.cths.ca

- September 2003: School Notes, pages 3, 4, 7
- January 2004: SS#2, Vars Public School, Poem by Nicol Mackie, page 7
- May 2004: School's out for the summer, SS#2, Vars, page 5
- September 2005: Old #10, page 3
- March 2006: Cumberland Coronation, 1937. SS#5, page 3
- September 2006: SS#4 and Heritage PS, Navan, page 1
- September 2007: Get us to the school on time! Page 5, 6
- September 2008: School days, page 10, 11
- September 2009: SS#5, page 1, SS#10, page 4, 5



Grandpa's Memories

From the oral history of Vars resident Albert Weston Marshall conducted by his daughter Jean Preece in 1980. Thanks to Albert's grand-daughter, Sharon Preece, for providing this to Verna Kinsella and the CTHS. All Rights Reserved Marshall Dale Farm 1998



Marshall Family, four generations, 1942
George holding great grandson Edward, Albert
standing left of his son Howard

Marshall family roots

George Marshall Senior, born Old Leighland, Carlow, Ireland, on February 22, 1826. Died nears Vars on the farm November 9th, 1902. His wife Susanna James, born in Dublin Ireland on January 1, 1827 died at the same place June 5, 1893, the year I, Albert, was born. George and Susannah were married in Carlow Ireland on September 22, 1845.

After the ship was blown back twice, then George was blown overboard. He grabbed a rope on the ship and hung on all night. They found him at daylight and pulled him aboard. The next try they landed in Canada in 1847. He worked a while at Bells Corners for a farmer. Then he built a log house on the north-west corner of Lot 27 in Cumberland Township which I still have. He used to walk from there to Ottawa through the bush 'round by Metcalfe, which was over twenty-five miles. He stopped in the bush overnight. He carried butter and eggs in and would trade them for flour and groceries and then carry them home. It was the closest place he could get them. He was strong man. They are both buried at Bearbrook also their four sons and six of their eight daughters. Their son George Albert, my Dad, was born February 12, 1868. He died August 1943. His wife Louisa Campbell, born March 17, 1867 died in 1953.



George and Louisa Marshall 1942

They were married in 1892. They are resting in the same plot as my grandparents.

Narrow escape from death

We had one small horse we used to drive on the cutter. We went to church one Lenten service and the horse used to pull when we tied her in the shed. So I used to tie her with a rope around her neck and through the ring of the bit. I guess she pulled while we were in church and broke the bit and I didn't know it. We started home. Howard my son was a baby. She started to run and I tightened up the lines and I couldn't do anything. The rings of the bit came back to the rings of the back pad and I had no control at all. So I thought she'd turn in the gate and maybe smash the cutter up against the gate. So I rolled the baby in the buffalo and I rolled Hannah and the baby out of the cutter into the snow. When we got near the gate I jumped out. I thought sure the mare would turn in and break the cutter up against the post. But she didn't. She went past, went away around the block and turned east and went in the other road to Vars, came up the back road and turned down to the village and went to the post office. She stopped at a post where I used to tie her when we got the mail. So I phoned around quite a few places and I phoned Will Kennedy that kept the post office and asked him if he had heard any noise of a horse coming in. He says, "Yes I did. I'll go out and see and let you know." He went out and the pony was standing at his post. So he called me back and said "I'll drive her up and then you can bring me back." But when he went to drive her up he found the bit was broke. He had to wire it together before he came. But he brought her home and I drove him

back. Not whip, not buffalo, nothing was broken or lost out of the cutter. Everything was okay.

In 1916 Hannah and I were married. In 1917 we moved over to the Morrison farm that Dad gave me. We lived in the old log house for two or three years and then built a new one. We lived there and I farmed 'til I was 80 years old.

(Below, June 23, 1934 wedding of Albert Marshall & Lulu Taylor Geddes with their children Howard Marshall and Phyllis Geddes)



Maple Syrup

We had a thaw about a week ago. These warm days make me think of sap time. We used to make syrup on the farm enough for ourselves and a little to give to friends.

Had two pans to boil in. One bigger and one smaller to finish in. It took 30 gallons of sap to make a gallon of syrup. Most all day boiling and a lot of wood and work. First I used to boil it in the bush. It was too far from the barn to go back and forth. So I brought the sap up near the house in big cans with team and sleigh then I could



March 27, 1958 Lulu (1895-1981) and Albert Marshall (1893-1985)

do chores and keep fires going too. We only had a small bush, a little over a hundred trees. Around Good Fridays and Easter Sundays most years was our best run.

When my granddaughter Sharon was small at our place I went to show her how to tap a tree. "Yes,"

she said, "You bore a hole, put the spout in, and then put the bucket on." She had seen it somewhere before!

When my aunts were girls, they were boiling in the sugar camp one night. The wolves came. They had to pound the cans and pails to scare them away. They would have to stay 'til daylight to go home.

As for the syrup, I did not finish it in the pan. I boiled it to the right thickness then took it off to the house. Then Lulu put it on the stove and put some milk in it and brought it to a boil. Then the milk brought all the sediment to the top. Then she would skim off the milk and all and then strain it through cheesecloth into bottles then put the bottles in freezers. It would keep for years. Lulu had a lot of work with it too. It used to sell for \$1.50-\$2.00 a gallon. Now it's \$18-\$20.

Wolves

After my grandfather got enough land cleared to grow some grain, he used to sell some oats. He had a team of oxen on the sleigh. He went through the bush to Cumberland, across the river and over to Buckingham to sell the oats. On his way back the wolves got after him. He had to drag a chain behind the sleigh, with the stake out of the sleigh to keep the wolves off the sleigh. The oxen got scared and one of them broke and got loose. The one ox drew the sleigh home and the other followed behind. They got home safe.

They used to have a pit of turnips out in front of the house and they used to cover them up to keep them so they wouldn't freeze. One morning there were eight wolves on top of the pit of turnips.

2010 HERITAGE POWER AND COUNTRY FESTIVAL

Plans are well underway for the 2010 Heritage Power and Country Festival to take place on May 29th and 30th. This is the "show of the year" in Cumberland and the two day family oriented event is held at the Cumberland Heritage Museum. The special event is organized by the Cumberland Lions Club in partnership with the Museum and in collaboration with other community groups and non-profit organizations, including the Navan Lions.

The objective for 2010 is to make the Festival "bigger and better" and it will include activities such as the Capital horse pull, return of lawn tractor races, dog agility groups, Ottawa Police K-9 demonstration, live music entertainment, exhibits of old machinery including rare but working gas and steam engines, antique cars, classic and vintage motorcycles, crafts, traditional trades demonstrations, displays by artisans and special activities for children. There will also be train rides by the Ottawa Valley Steamers and opportunities to send a telegraph through the Cumberland Telegraph Operator's Club and much more...

