

THE CABOOSE

Ottawa



Newsletter of the Cumberland Township Historical Society (CTHS)

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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 two times a year, spring and fall, by the Cumberland Township Historical Society.

Our newsletter is printed by Sure Print & Graphics, Ottawa.

Our address and local history room

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



Our World Wide Web Address

www.cths.ca

Our Webmaster is Christine Boyer.



Message from the Caretaker Committee

FIELD TRIP!!

Your Caretaker Committee has some exciting news to share. We're going to try something a little different for our fall meeting. Our friend Henry Staal has opened up his excellent private *Pioneer Power* collection for us to have a tour. Besides a large number of various agricultural tools and implements, some of them very rare, he has numerous other items that are guaranteed to catch your attention.



The trip will be Saturday, October 5th at 1:30 p.m. at Henry Staal's farm at **664 Hamilton Road** in Russell, Ontario. You are responsible for your own transportation. We will have a brief meeting at that location followed by a tour. Please note, some of the collection is only accessible by stairs.



This trip is open to our paid members only. Buy your membership now and join us for the afternoon! Memberships are available by downloading the printable form at <https://cths.ca/membership-application-bilingual> or fill out the form on Page 3 and bring it with you on October 5th. The membership fee is \$25.



We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter; there is a bit of a railway theme running through it. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

*Bill Woodruff,
Gilles Chartrand,
Tom McNeely,
Marcia Kennedy,
Laurie Watson
and Ivan Tanner*

CTHS at the 2024 Navan Fair – August 8-11

Notwithstanding the unfortunate near wash out of the Fair on Friday, the Cumberland Township Historical Society had a really good weekend. Our Treasurer Gilles Chartrand supplied an excellent variety of antique wood working tools from the Clarence-Rockland Museum. Some very old farm tools were also on loan from Henry Staal's private Pioneer Power Museum.

Over the course of the four day event hundreds of fair goers viewed our very interesting display and a great many stopped to discuss the various intriguing and eye-catching pieces that were on display. We had some excellent photos that helped to graphically demonstrate some of the tools in action.

Many of our publications were on display and our visitors made a number of purchases. Also attracting attention again this year was the display of aerial photographs as people tried to identify the various farms from decades gone by. Our regular volunteer staff were supplemented on Saturday by Bob Walsh and Brian Findlay, both of whom were able to share information on bygone farming practices.

We were able to answer other questions about the Township's History and even add members. All in all another good fair.



Barn Building – Part 2

By Tom McNeely

Early settlers in this country built dual purpose buildings, one side for the farm animals and the other side for the family. As farmers began to prosper, they were able to build separate structures for their animals. Barns were first constructed primarily of logs, but soon the use of timber frame construction began. "English barns" emerged in the 1850s. Barn builders used post and beam construction with gable roofs, and, later with the influence of Dutch settlers, changed to hip roof or gambrel style roofs.

Preparing For Construction – Choice of site

The choice of site was an important consideration when locating a barn. Often a farm property lacked trees due to the extensive logging of the Ottawa Valley. Ideally a barn would be located north of a house to provide a windbreak from the prevailing northwest winds.

Type of Barn

The style of barn was important as they were needed to house farm animals as well as to store straw, hay, oats and other crops. Some barns had two storeys built on a

foundation and were called "banked barns." This type of barn used the basement or ground floor to house the animals. The hay was stored above in mows which provided insulation as well as storing the animal fodder essential for the winter months. In many cases foundations consisted of field stones placed on grade to support the timber sills. In other cases foundations were constructed by stone masons using quarried stone. The barn on our property used stone from the Rockland quarry. Carried by rail on the Canadian Northern line along what is now Regional Road 174, the stone was dumped from a rail car near our home at Becketts Creek.

Lumber for construction

The construction material used in many cases was white pine. It would be harvested in the winter, skidded out with horses and readied for debarking and squaring up into timber uprights for the superstructure of the barn. Adzes like the ones pictured on the next page were the primary tools used in squaring up timber.

A significant amount of lumber was needed to build a barn in the mid-1800s. The size and quantities are simply mind boggling because all the components were fabricated by hand. The figures below are based on measurements of material from my own father's barn which I tore down in 1984 on our property. The barn's footprint was 32 feet x 48 feet built on top of 24 inch thick masonry walls which were banked with soil on three sides.

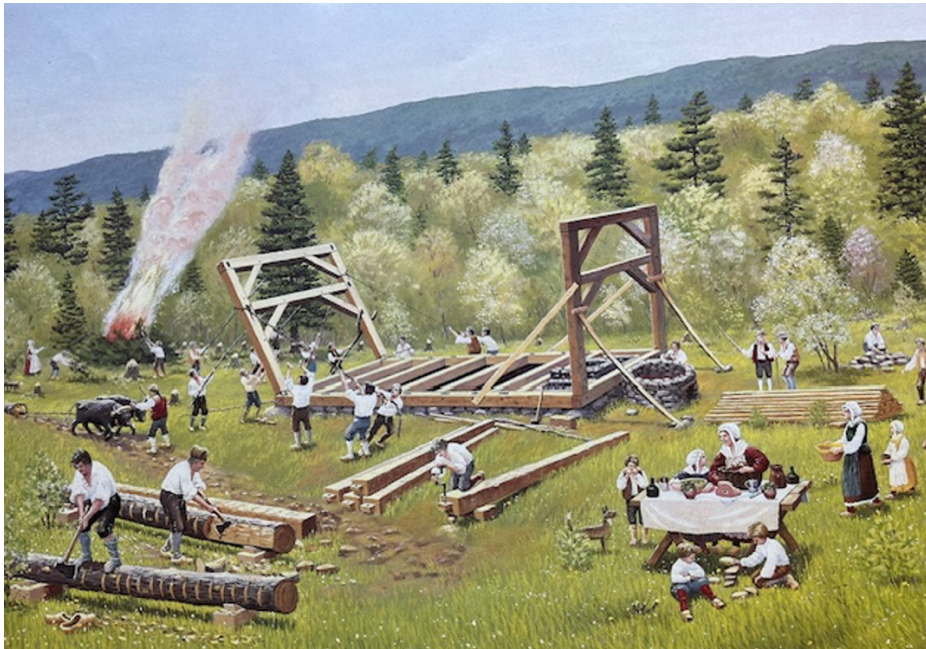
- 1- Bottom sill – 32 feet x 48 feet squared timber logs (2 of each)
- 2- Centre beam – 24 x 24 spliced
- 3- Cross beams – 8 beams @ 10 inches x 10 inches by 16 feet
- 4- Columns – 12 columns @ 10 inches x 10 inches squared logs 18 feet long
- 5- Floor beams – 24 beams @ 16 feet x 8 inches x 8 inches
- 6- Floor planking – 1536 sq. ft., approximately 250 2-inch thick planks
- 7- Roof trusses – 24 trusses @ 28 feet (spruce or balsam)
- 8- Siding – 200+ planks 20 feet long x 10 inches wide
- 9- Roof planking – 2000 sq. ft., approx. 240 planks
- 10- Wood shingles to cover 2000 sq. ft.
- 11- Manpower – Unknown!




Log Squaring Adzes

On a recent trip to Annapolis Royal for a Morin/Martin family reunion I picked up a Nova Scotia Department of Education museum hand-out illustrating building techniques that were used for hundreds of years in barn and house construction.

“The Acadians Building a Home.” The poster at left depicts the construction of a representative Acadian home of the early 1700s. Details of costume, tools and construction are based on both archaeological and historical evidence. A home of this particular style was recently excavated by archeologists in an upper area of the Belleisle marsh in Annapolis County, Nova Scotia. This poster is a reproduction of one of a number of watercolours painted by Nova Scotia Museum artist Azor Vienneau for use in the production of an educational film series, *Premières terres acadiennes*.



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Your membership includes our Society newsletter, the Caboose. Send your membership dues of \$25.00 (cheque or money order) payable to 'CTHS (Cumberland Township Historical Society)' to Gilles Chartrand, Treasurer CTHS, Clarence-Rockland Museum, 687 Laurier Street, Rockland, Ontario K4K 1E6. Payment may also be made by e-transfer to treasurercths@gmail.com.

Name:

Address:

Postal Code:

Phone #:
(include area code)

Email address:

I prefer to receive The Caboose by: ☐ Mail or ☐ Email

Membership Application

Cumberland Heritage Village Museum

Cumberland Heritage Village Museum (CHVM) has been a busy place these last few months! From programming to bringing artifacts back to life, the staff at the museum have made good use of the summer. But let's start at the beginning.

The museum is once again taking part in the City of Ottawa's Play Free program in which children aged 17 and younger, along with their parents, have free admission for general admission. General admission refers to the times when the museum is open, and no event is taking place. The museum's website and Facebook page indicate which days have events and which do not.

Ottawa.ca/cumberlandmuseum

www.facebook.com/cumberlandmuseum

Stop the Press! After more than 40 years, the Whitlock two-revolution cylinder press is once again running. Now the museum has the capability of printing large format jobs, including posters and, starting in 2025, an annual newspaper. The possibilities for printing with this press are truly exciting.



Other changes include –

- Visitors now enter through the waiting room, same as they would if arriving at a village train station during the period of the museum. There they are greeted by the station

master, who happily gives them a return ticket.

- Upon entering the museum proper, visitors will see the new gazebo installed on the front green. They can also partake in games, or on event days, a community picnic.
- Scheduled activities, including School Day Experience, a 30-minute program where visitors take on the role of students in our schoolhouse.
- Expanded programming around the heritage breed farm animals, including a close-up experience and a tour as we feed the animals in the afternoon.



- Watson's Garage has been updated, with more room for working on vehicles and engines. So far, the 1930s truck and 1920s Durant have both been toured around the museum.



By Andrew Boisvenue

- Ottawa Valley Live Steamers and Model Engineers are back with their miniature trains for Discovery Days on the last Sunday of each month. Each month is a different theme.

- Thanks to a partnership with City of Ottawa's procurement team and with funding from the Older Adult Plan, a new accessible wagon has arrived at the museum. The wagon is lower to the ground and allows for wheelchairs and walkers to be safely locked in place for a tractor driven tour around the site. The wagon is designed in the style of 1930s electric street cars. Wagon rides are available on regular days at 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.



If you visited during the summer, you may have noticed that some of the buildings were closed. This was because Mud Creek Productions was on site filming for a horror genre television show. While not set specifically during the museum's period, they did use quite a few buildings, including the Print Shop, Watson's Garage, Blacksmith Shop, the sawmill, Foubert House, Duford House, Fire Hall, Knox United Church, Vars Train Station, and a variety of outdoor shots. So if you are a fan of horror television shows, keep an eye out, you may see the museum making some appearances.

Now that the summer has come to an end, the museum's regular season is winding down. Regular visitation hours end on Thanksgiving weekend.

Haunted Walk continues on Fridays in October and November, including the full week before Halloween. Halloween Hijinks is October 26 and 27.



Vintage Village of Lights begins on Friday, November 29.



It is with a heavy heart that we mourn the passing of Russ Thomas. Russ was a volunteer at CHVM for two decades, helping in a variety of ways. Most recently, Russ was a part of the Departmental Consultative Group for the museum. Russ also helped build a variety of items on site, gardening, and helping deliver programs.



One of the items that Russ helped build was the bellows used for years in the blacksmith shop. Now that the shop has moved to a hand-crank blower, the bellows will be on display in Loyal Orange Lodge. An amalgamation of community groups held a fundraiser at CHVM in memory of Russ in September with funds going to ALS research.

IN MEMORIAM – 2024

It is with great sadness that the Cumberland Township Historical Society notes the passing in 2024 of many people who have contributed to our Society.

Emmet Carr, March 2, 2024. Emmet provided much information to our Local History Room, as well as authoring articles and contributing research to The Caboose.

Susan Flemming, April 11, 2024. Besides being a long-time member Susan was deeply involved with the Vintage Stock Theatre and the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum where many of her fascinating historical plays were presented. She was a journalist and editor of the Cumberland Township *Communiqué* for a decade and a contributor to CTHS publications.

Verna Rickerd Kinsella, May 19, 2024. Verna was a long-time member of the Society as well as a frequent contributor to The Caboose. Verna loved to participate in our presence at the annual Navan Fair up until the last few years. She was a virtual treasure trove for all things Vars-related. Not only did Verna live her entire life on the same piece of property but it is a piece of land that has been in her family dating back to the original land grant from the Crown. Not many folks can say that. Also not surprising then that she was intimately aware of the history of the area.

Mary Mahoney Gibbons, May 20, 2024. Mary was a long-time member of the Society and recipient of The Caboose.

Elaine Russell Findlay, June 16, 2024. Wife of Don Findlay and a CTHS member, Elaine was an avid historian who contributed articles to The Caboose, gave addresses at CTHS meetings, and was active in Cumberland Women's Institute and St. Andrew's United Church, Cumberland.

Paul MacMillan, July 24, 2024. Paul was a long-time member of the Society and was active in several Ottawa and area United churches, including St. Andrew's United Church, Cumberland, as a professional organist.

Gwendolyn Tapscott Bradley, July 28, 2024. Wife of long-time and former CTHS executive member Ross Bradley, Gwen was his rock and steadfast supporter of all his community work. She kept it rolling at home, her quiet support making his volunteerism better. Gwen tolerated many cases of books (The Domes of Navan) stored in their home for the CTHS.

Ena McCormick Hayes, September 3, 2024. Wife of long-time CTHS member and keen member of the Ottawa Valley Live Steam Club, Doug Hayes.

**Our deepest sympathy to their families and all who mourn their passing.
May they rest in peace.**

With our apologies for anyone connected to the CTHS we may have missed.

Railroads in Cumberland Township

by Bill Woodruff

August 21, 2024 marked the 60th anniversary of one of the worst rail accidents in the Ottawa area. Eight people were killed and many more injured, some severely, in the Leonard train accident of 1964, pictured below and at right.



Ottawa resident Colin Churcher has a website called Colin Churcher's Railway Pages: <https://churcher.crcml.org>. He has compiled a comprehensive history of the rail lines, current and long-since vanished into history, of Ottawa and surrounding areas. Three railways ran through Cumberland Township and two others operated in adjacent townships. The rail lines that no longer exist are indicated by (X).

- 1) The **CNOR** (Canadian Northern) operated through Orléans, Cumberland & Rockland (X)
- 2) The **CPR M & O** line (Canadian Pacific) with the local portion known as the **Montreal & Ottawa Subdivision**. It crossed the Township through Navan, Leonard & Hammond, and is the line upon which the Leonard accident occurred. (X)
- 3) The **CNR** line (Canadian National) is still in existence as today's Via Rail, the local portion known as the **Alexandria Subdivision** between Ottawa and Montreal. This line was at one time part of the Canadian Atlantic Railway (**CAR**) and later was part of the Grand Trunk Railway (**GTR**) running through Vars, Limoges, Casselman & Moose Creek, and eastward to Montreal.
- 4) The **GTR** (Grand Trunk) which ran through South Indian (now Limoges) to Rockland (X)
- 5) The **NYC** (New York Central) which ran Ottawa to Cornwall through Embrun & Russell (X)

Many collisions and derailments have occurred on local railways over the years, destroying and changing lives forever with the loss of fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers. In analyzing Colin Churcher's extensive records I have compiled a summary of the most serious accidents in our local area. The horrific total for the period 1887 to 1998 is 36 serious collisions and derailments with 28 deaths.

A spectacular derailment

In the early morning fog of August 1, 1927, a Montreal-bound passenger train struck the last cars of an Ottawa-bound freight train which was pulling off on a siding at the Vars station to allow the passenger train to pass by.



Six of the freight cars were still on the main line as the passenger train approached. Thankfully the oncoming engineer saw the freight cars and applied his brakes to slow the impact. Amazingly there were no injuries.

Cumberland Morin Descendants Gather with Others in Annapolis Royal for the 2024 Acadian World Congress

By Gérard Boyer

I hope you recognize Tom and Claire McNeely from Cumberland in the photo. And I hope you recognize me too. This shot was taken in Annapolis Royal on August 17th of this year. John and Lynne Crook (from Cumberland) were also supposed to be in the photo, but they had to cancel their attendance because they were hosting members of their own family in Cumberland at that time.

I was lucky to have with me three of my siblings, who all spent a good part of their childhood in Cumberland: Anne-Marie, Marguerite and Claire (all Boyers). I was also fortunate to have my own four children, Carolyn, Tracy, Liane and Tom in attendance, and three of my grandchildren, one from Halifax and the other two from Thunder Bay, attending also.



Besides that there were four second cousins, three of them McWhirters (Jack had married Muriel Morin from Cumberland) who had lived a few years in Cumberland and one Fleming (Sparky had married Eve Morin from Cumberland). And then there was a Paul Bouchard from B.C. who is a descendant of Nelson Morin (who married Bridget Carr in Sarsfield in 1899 and later settled out West), a Vinal Morin from Connecticut, a Gregory Wood from Maryland, a Bernard Morin from New Brunswick and a Teri Starr from London, England, who are all related from further back.

We are all descendants of Pierre Morin dit Boucher and Marie Martin, who were married in Port Royal, Acadia (today's Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia) somewhere around 1661. For those of us who believe in an after-life, I wonder what they

think of their descendant, Anne-Marie Boyer, being the mayor of Annapolis Royal!!!

But not only did we all celebrate our Morin ancestor, we also celebrated the Martin ancestor who fathered Pierre Morin dit Boucher's wife, Marie Martin. On Friday, August 16th, we celebrated the arrival of Pierre Martin, his wife Catherine Vignault and their young son, Matthieu Martin, who settled in Port-Royal, Acadia, in 1636. On that day we tramped through a few meadows to see the remains of Acadian homes burned out in 1755 as part of the mass deportations of Acadians. Our family line had left Acadia for Québec before that time, so our heritage does not include any recollections of the Acadian deportations.

On the evening of the 16th, we danced to the sounds of an Acadian band

from Baie Ste-Marie, Nova Scotia. And I was particularly proud of my one grand-daughter who sang an Edith Butler song in French and of another grand-daughter who played a few fiddle tunes with the band. The Morins of Cumberland loved to dance.

And then we finished the evening of the 17th with a made-up Euchre tournament at my sister's house in Annapolis Royal. A great time was had by all. Tom McNeely reminded us that this was our fourth Morin reunion since the first one in Annapolis Royal in 2010. Since then we have gathered in Bourgueil and Normandy, France, and in the Scottish Highlands (Camerons, McWhirters, Summers and McRaes who married into the Morin family) to relive history and to play Euchre.

The Governor General comes to Vars *(Well, that could have been the headline!)*

By Ivan Tanner

Verna Rickerd Kinsella had written out in long hand a walking tour of Vars, including the following story. I aim to transcribe her tour notes and add photos—old and new—and publish the pieces in The Caboose over one or two editions depending on size. Also, the Society would like offer guided walking tours of the Village, using Verna's notes.

April 12, 1946

The children of Vars were the first to greet the new Governor General. He saw Vars before he saw Ottawa. This experience took place in 1946. He was a famous British General who had been appointed vice-regal representative to Canada. His special train was enroute to Ottawa and was not due there until noon. This man was known as Viscount Alexander of Tunis. His train arrived in Vars at 7:30 and was held on the siding here. A group of children on their way to school noticed this special train with an extra special private car on it. They went up close to see if they could find out who was there. Suddenly the door of the rail car opened and the Governor General appeared and greeted them. He asked one young girl her name and she replied "Isabel Hayes." He invited her aboard the car and chatted with her for a few minutes. He then turned and asked Shane, his son, to take her and show her their dogs. Rose was his daughter's name. The family were all very friendly. He had another son who was very shy.

When word got around the village many of the townsfolk came out to see them. A young man came along in an old Model T Ford and the boys wanted to go for a drive - they were allowed so the young man took them for a short ride around the Village. Now, when I think back, I guess they (security) figured they wouldn't go far because our roads were very bumpy. Security sure wasn't tight. The dogs (two large sheep dogs) got some exercise when the boys took them off the train and walked them around.

By Verna Kinsella



The Viscount and Viscountess Alexander of Tunis and their children Shane, Brian and Rose, all at left, and six Vars schoolgirls on the right. Verna Rickerd is the tall girl with the black hat, fourth from right.



Vars Train Station drawn by Mary Kinsella, sister-in-law of Barry and Verna Kinsella, 1976.

Vars Train Station

As part of a small team of determined history buffs, Verna and her husband Barry Kinsella (1935-1997) were instrumental in having the Vars CNR train station, shown at left, moved to the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum in the 1990s. Verna had strong family ties to the Vars railway which divided the Rickerd family farm in two in the 1880s. As a youngster Verna had the rare experience of driving a steam engine when one of her uncles stopped the train right behind their house so she could climb up and drive it for a short distance.