

Scrap books donated to Leeds & Thousand Islands archives

By CATHERINE ORTH

On the afternoon of August 10th, in a quiet ceremony at Leeds and the Thousand Islands Archives, in Escott, former teacher and scrap book chronicler, Margaret Mathers, of the Retired Women Teachers of Ontario (RWTO) Gananoque Branch was honoured. Though unable to attend, due to health, the fruits of Ms. Mathers' labours: historical scrap-books, that she herself worked on from 1990, shortly after her retire-

ment, until the present, were donated to The Archives of Leeds and The Thousand Islands. Included in the donation were one or two older scrap books which had been lovingly preserved, dating from as far back as 1953. In all six scrap books were donated. After 26 years, Ms. Mathers recently retired from this labour of love. It was decided that the archives was the correct place, as a lasting home for the scrap books, and the local history they recorded. Among the many things in the scrap books: photos, letters, water colours, one can find beautifully hand sketched drawings of one room school house SS#4 Lyndhurst Public School and the larger two story school, SS#8 Seeley's Bay.

Retired Lansdowne teacher Donna Dempsey said, "We think it's better to have this information in the archives rather

than in someone's basement. It's public information and its information about retired women teachers from the Westport area all the way down through to Gananoque and all points in between."

Mary Ellen Moulton of RWTO said, "Margaret's organizational skills and meticulously neat hand writing make the scrap books interesting, informative and beautifully completed."

Ms. Mathers, grew up in Phillippsville Ontario. She attended Lockwood School located between Phillippsville and Elgin.

She tells her story in one of the scrap books:

"I began my teaching career in 1952 at New Dublin School, in Elizabeth Township with 25 students, Grades 1 to 8, for a salary of \$2000.00 a year.

Teachers were desperately needed, so I taught right out of grade 12, with only a six week



(Back row, L-R): Carol Shaw RWTO, Art Shaw LTI Archives, Marion McKay RWTO, Deb Shultz RWTO. (Front row, L-R): Mary Ellen Moulton RWTO, Donnie Dorey LTI Archives, Joan Gamble RWTO, Donna Dempsey RWTO. Photo: Catherine Orth

summer course in Toronto. Then in 1954/55, I attended Ottawa Teacher's College for one year. After graduating I taught in the old Lombardy school.

I finished my teaching career in 1989 at Beverly School, Delta where I had taught my last 14 years."

The Retired Women Teachers of Ontario was formed in 1999 and was created to keep retired teachers informed of pension changes and available benefits. It also provides fellowship among members. It keeps connections alive and provided a social forum

with formal dinners, held twice a year. All retired women teachers in the area are welcome to join the RWTO, Gananoque Branch.

More information can be found on their Facebook page: Retired Women of Ontario, Gananoque Branch.



Margaret Mathers

Rideau Lakes hosts Doors Open weekend

By SALLY SMID

Rideau Lakes Doors Open provided an opportunity to learn more about a variety of sites on Aug. 19 -20 and was free of charge. Sites included the Old Stone Mill in Delta. The newest display features The Iron Works which focuses on an ongoing restoration project in nearby Lyndhurst. Interpreter Allisa Dullemond reported that the waters surrounding the mill reached almost record levels this year which made it hard to hear at times over the roaring waters of the Mill's raceway. Guests could also explore the Blacksmith's Shop in the Mill Drive Shed. Delta's Old Town Hall has housed a courthouse, jail and community theatre and is now the home of Bastard Bakery each Saturday. Also open on Delta's main street was the William Bell House, built for the Irish-born merchant. The historical Georgian home has undergone extensive renovation and includes beautiful gardens, tin shingles, three-meter ceilings, original ornate woodwork and some converted gas lighting. It also features reproduction wallpaper, runners by heirloom weavers and many pieces of period furniture. "Many folks who regularly pass by have commented that they would love to see what is inside our home and this provided that chance," commented owner Sharon Okum who cherishes her heritage

home. She was happy to network with others connected with heritage restoration during the event which drew over 200 guests.

It was also a chance to learn more about local boat-building history at the Wykes Boat Works in Harlem. This award-winning boat works is part of an early 19th-century local tradition of boat building. In the 1950s, Frank Wykes began making pine plank, flat-bottomed fishing boats. The third generation family business is still crafting new boats and restoring antique wooden vessels, often displayed at shows throughout North America.

As part of Canada 150 celebrations there was no charge for travelling through the Rideau Canal. The Davis, Jones

Falls, Narrows, and Chaffey's Lockstations were open, as well as the Chaffey's Lockmaster Museum, the "only defensible lockmaster's house still open to the public".

Interpretive displays helped tell the story of early life on the Rideau. Participants also explored the historic Opinicon Resort at Chaffey's Lock which was recently rescued. This iconic resort has been upgraded but still maintains its vintage charm. Tours of the buildings and stories behind this renowned resort were also included.

The Elgin Red Brick School provided a living history experience for visitors. It also houses the archives of Rideau Lakes' schools. It operated from 1887 until 1963 and has been restored by the

Elgin and Area Heritage Society. At the Elgin Community Hall, Rideau Lakes Horticultural Society presented the Flowers & Edibles Show, a display of "indigenous use of native plants".

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Sharon Okum and Delta Mill Interpreter Jared Hayes stand on the steps of the William Bell House in Delta. Photo: Sally Smid

DELTA HARVEST FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

There are lots of events happening throughout the entire village. Come out and support our local organizations and make DELTA your Fall destination.

Old Town Hall / 8 Lower Beverley Lake Park Road

- **Harvest Breakfast:** 8 am to 11 am • Bread Baking contest – 4 categories. Entries must include Old Stone Mill Flour that can be purchased at the Old Stone Mill Gift Shop. Judging starts at 11:00 am Rules www.deltamill.org
- Rideau Lakes Library *Green Screen Technology Photo Opportunity:* 10 am - 1 pm
- **Community Harvest Dinner** by Wendy's Market Local Foods Chef Beacock: 4:30 - 6 pm. Advanced tickets only, \$30/person. Take-outs available. Contact Sharon at 613-928-2228 or email treasurer.deltamillsociety@gmail.com.

Old Stone Mill / 46 King Street

- **Friends of the Mill Table.** Donations of baked goods or preserves to sell wanted. Drop off between 8 & 9 am appreciated.
- **Vendors on the Street:** 9 am - 4 pm
- Blacksmith on site: 10 am
- Milling Demonstrations by Miller Chris Wooding: 1 pm
- **Fiddlers Plus** - performing from 12 to 1 and 2 to 3 p.m.

Delta Fair Grounds / 110 Mill Creek Drive
\$2 entry at gate, children 12 & under free

- **Vendor/Craft Sale** in the Main Exhibit Hall. 9 am - 4 pm. Table rental \$10. Enquiries: email deltafair@ripnet.com or call 613-928-2800.
- **Car Show & Shine** with Entertainment by Texas Tuxedo: 10 am - 2 pm
- Horse & Wagon Rides by Marvin & Kathy Antoine. 10 am - 2 pm
- Canteen Open - Hall is licensed throughout the day.
- **Harvest Dance:** 8 pm

Fire Hall Museum / 121 Mill Creek Drive

- Tour of the Fire Station and Delta's first Fire Truck: 9 am - 4 pm

St. Paul's Anglican Church

- Yard Sale • Tacos & Chili Lunch: 9 - 11 am

Lower Beverley Lake Park / 146 Lower Beverley Lake Park Rd

- 25% discount on all weekend campsites

sponsored by the Delta Mill Society. For information, visit www.deltamill.org, email info@deltamill.org or call 613-928-2594