



# Rideau Lakes

**TOWNSHIP OF RIDEAU LAKES**  
**Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee**  
**Minutes**

**Thursday, March 19, 2026, 9:30 a.m.**  
**Municipal Office, Chantry**

Members Present: Howard French, George German, Chair, David Gwynne, Allison Smith, Ted Stewart, Sue Warren, Councillor Paula Banks, Sabina Barrett

Members Absent: Diane Haskins

Staff Present: Marie White, Economic Development and Cultural Heritage Coordinator

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## **Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

## **Roll Call**

Regrets from Diane Haskins. Allison Smith, Sue Warren and Paula Banks joined the meeting remotely.

Public members in attendance who signed in: Ken Watson and Dale Jones.

## **Additions/Amendments to the Agenda**

The Chair called for any additions or amendments to the agenda. One was heard.

- New Business, item 9.3. Resignation of Chairperson George German from the MHAC Committee

## **Adoption of the Agenda**

### **RECOMMENDATION MHAC 2026-03**

Moved by Sabina Barrett  
Seconded by Sue Warren

Be it resolved that the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) adopt the agenda as amended.

Carried

## **Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

The Chair called for disclosure of any pecuniary interests. None were declared.

## **Rideau 200 - Discussion with special guest Ken Watson**

Ken Watson addressed the committee regarding plans for the 200th Anniversary, celebrating the construction of the Rideau Canal from 1826-1832.

A framework for the 200th celebrations are in discussion at the Parks Canada 200th Working Group meetings. Contacts at Parks Canada include John Festerini and Susan Millar. This year, Ottawa will be celebrating Bytown, established in 1826.

As a representative of Friends of the Rideau, Ken Watson met with Parks Canada staff Mark Brus and John Festerini to discuss plans as they work towards a celebration in 2032. Two types of projects are being considered:

- Event Projects
- Legacy Projects

Friends of the Rideau is interested in a Legacy Project to reintroduce the Rideau Canal Passport as administered in 1982, 2007 and 2017. Through this program, visitors learn a bit about each lock station, have the passport stamped or signed at a series of locations to be eligible for a prize, such as a season's pass or a weekend in an O'Tentik. It was noted that the majority of lock visits are in Ottawa (80%) and all the other lock stations combined share the remaining visitation (20%). A Legacy Project would ensure presentation materials at each of the 24 lock stations. Legacy projects (i.e. Presentation Materials, Village Tours and Driving Tours) have a longer life span than events.

## **Ted Stewart arrived at 9:39 a.m.**

Ideas:

1. Celebrations may include links to interior communities, including:

- Elgin - Through the Halladay Quarry, and the story of how the locks on the Rideau Canal were built using stone from Elgin. (The forested area on the property owned by Leeds Transit, next to bus yard is a site where the stones can be seen today.)

- Plum Hollow, Delta, and Morton - Through the early proposal of the Irish Creek Route; a precursor or idea shot down in 1823.

2. Highlight heritage routes with physical signage and supporting printed materials such as a guide or map.

3. Review the Rideau Corridor Landscape Strategy. As an obligation of the UNESCO, it included consultation with partner municipalities (13), Indigenous Representatives, the National Capital Commission (NCC) and Parks Canada.

4. Highlight Rideau Milestones (listed online) and adaptive engineering. For example:

- 1827 - Internal surveys of Chaffeys and Jones Falls; illustrating communities in an early frontier state (not a wilderness as sometimes described - it was a frontier with a pre-knowledge base).
- 1828 - Change of lock size at Jones Falls; from 6 locks with turning base to current (Note: Ottawa was going to have 8 with turning base).
- 1829 to 1830 - Newboro and The Narrows; brought tools - thought the isthmus was gravel. Surveyor found that 2 feet below gravel was really hard bedrock.
- Originally, the system was planned to be open between Chaffeys and Poonamalie, added 2 locks
- 1830 to 31 - Nearing completion, crews were battling malaria - see letter from John Redpath

5. Compare period maps to present day.

Resources:

- People: Don McKay - Jones Falls Blacksmith Presentations
- Materials: Collected by Ken Watson over 30 Years
- Reports: Underwater archeology group GIS report from 2022. Jonathan Moore runs the archeology water branch, (his parents on whitefish lake).
- Period maps: Digitized with Archives Canada. Ken Watson has entire digital set and is happy to share.

## **Business Arising**

### **Review: MHAC Composition of Committee**

As requested, Staff provided a review of the composition of the MHAC committee in preparation for the new term. It was confirmed that the committee is comprised of one council member and 8 to 10 non-council members at large. There is no longer a requirement for representation by ward. Members requested that this item be placed on the next agenda for further discussion.

Financial Update - 2026 MHAC Budget as Approved: Marie White (For Discussion)

The approved 2026 MHAC Budget was included in the Agenda package for information.

Staff Report: MHAC Action Listing

A detailed Action Listing on MHAC projects and their status was included in the Agenda Package.

**Minutes**

Minutes of the MHAC Meeting held January 14, 2026 were distributed to Committee as part of the Agenda package. The Chair asked for any errors or omissions. None were noted.

**RECOMMENDATION MHAC 2026-04**

Moved by Howard French  
Seconded by Allison Smith

Be it resolved that the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee approves and adopts the Minutes of the MHAC Meeting held on January 14, 2026.

Carried

**New Business**

200th Anniversary Event Proposals: Marie White (For Discussion)

Anniversary event proposals were included in the Agenda package as information. If grant applications are successful, matching funds will be needed. Alternatively, if the grant applications are not successful, the Rideau Lakes Nautical Heritage Group (a subsidiary of the Portland on the Rideau Historical Society) is interested in support for the event so that event expenses such as Information Panels and Porta Potties may be covered.

Staff suggested that should the Experience Ontario Grants be approved, funds could be redirected from within the 2026 MHAC Budget to match the grant, by placing some budgeted items on hold. For example, long term projects such as research, lawyer's fees and cemetery monument repairs could be deferred to next year in favour of supporting the proposed 200th Anniversary events in 2026.

Members highlighted that in the proposed event documents, the impact section lists that the Rideau Canal as Ontario's only World Heritage Site, however, there is a second site shared with Manitoba; Pimach Iowinaki World Heritage Site. Further, in the section for Demonstrated Experience, events to consider include the International Plowing Match in 2007 and Rideau Lakes participation in the more recent IPM in Kemptville. For the section on Event Details, an opportunity to include a fishing demo, a shore lunch, a fish fry, or an indigenous cooking demo would be complementary activities. It was noted that specific details include film viewing, and people are welcome to show the films using a laptop at the Portland and Newboro events. To the extent that there are resources, the Township should try and do something for each year spanning 2026 to 2032.

Ontario Association of Cemetery and Funeral Professionals (OACFP) Membership:  
Dale Jones of Halladay Burial Place (For Discussion)

MHAC guest Dale Jones presented information about OACFP to members of the committee. There is value in the training and online resources available for small rural cemeteries. Staff added that OACFP agreed to a group membership rate of approximately \$180 per year plus \$1.55 per burial (to be reported at end of year). In a group membership scenario, the Primary member would be Rideau Lakes (including all municipally owned cemeteries), and Affiliate Members (such as Halladay Burial Place and other identified non-municipal cemeteries). For affiliate members, a location, and contact person are required. Affiliate members may each have several member profiles (for their board members, for example).

With membership, all cemeteries will have access to member rates for conference and zoom sessions. The 2026 conference will take place in Ottawa. Several recorded sessions are online including topics such as green burials, pet burials, pricing, and digitization.

OACFP will host an introductory zoom session at no cost.

**RECOMMENDATION MHAC 2026-05**

Moved by Councillor Paula Banks

Seconded by David Gwynne

Be it resolved that the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) authorizes staff to proceed with a membership to the Ontario Association of Cemetery and Funeral Professionals (OACFP) in 2026 for an amount of up to \$250 within the approved 2026 budget to support cemeteries in Rideau Lakes.

Carried

Resignation of Chairperson George German from the MHAC Committee

Chairperson George German submitted a verbal resignation from MHAC. Committee members and staff expressed their appreciation for the years of dedication and leadership. The sentiment was that George will be greatly missed.

**RECOMMENDATION MHAC 2026-06**

Moved by Sabina Barrett

Seconded by Ted Stewart

Be it resolved that the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) regretfully accepts the resignation by Chairperson George German from the committee.

Carried

## **Correspondence/Events**

### **Alto Interactive Map: Councillor Paula Banks (For Discussion)**

Councillor Paula Banks informed the committee that heritage points of interest can be added to the interactive map. For example:

- Historic Barns
- Heritage Properties
- Working Farms
- Cemeteries

Individuals on the committee expressed interest in populating the map.

### **Film Presentations: Allison Smith (For Information)**

#### **Four short historical documentary films on PBS (Watertown)**

Mon March 23 at 7:00 to 7:30pm

Vacations in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Portland

The Rideau Canal: The Big Breakthrough

Mon March 30 at 7:00 to 7:30pm

Yours Truly Clifford Pennock

Beverly Riots and a Death in Phillippsville

#### **Film Presentation and Talk for the Historical Society of Ottawa**

Sat March 28 at 1:30pm

Main Branch of the Public Library (downtown on Metcalfe Street)

Title of this short 15-minute film is "Two Wars, Three Watersheds, a Slew of Surveys and a Canal"

Talk by Filmmaker Allison Margot Smith

This is a free event

## **Reports from Committee Members**

Councillor Paula Banks

- Trains and the history of rail could be considered as a topic for the next documentary film

Sabina Barrett

- Collecting information from local people in Lombardy to develop a heritage walking tour
- Google and AI will transcribe oral histories
- Dry Stone Wall workshop will be hosted at the McKinney House in October 2026

Howard French

- Presentation in Newboro on February 23, 2026 about local cheese making
- Resources and materials have been uncovered that are valuable to the history of cheese making
- A story about the Ice Storm of 1998 is in development, photos collected
- Expressed need for archives

David Gwynne

- Photo project coming to a close

Allison Smith

- Film presentations and upcoming PBS Broadcast
- Transcriptions of Documentary Films have been received from PBS
- Historical Society of Ottawa will soon announce the recipient of the Francois Bregha Storyteller Award

Ted Stewart

- Merrickville Historical Society has artifacts and information for the Newboro and Area Heritage Society (NAHS)
- The Newboro Blockhouse will be open on selected Sundays in the summer; May 24; July 5 and Sept 6
- Indigenous history talks will take place on May 24 at the new library hall with the Three Sisters

Sue Warren

- CLAHS stew dinner will take place on Saturday at Chaffeys Lock Hall, featuring Fred Phelan's talk on the history Chaffeys Village
- EAHS is cataloguing their collection which includes school records from the 1870s
- Rideau Lakes History Centre (Archives) open on occasion weather permitting

**Questions from the Public**

None.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

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George German, Chair

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Marie White, Secretary