THE FRIENDS OF CRYSLER'S FARM BATTLEFIELD

Battlefield Dispatch

VOLUME: 7 ISSUE: 4 MARCH 2018

CRYSLERS MEMORIAL 2018

The war provided a patriotic impetus…

that defines the six provinces of British North America their political organization, nationalist sentiment and economic development. All of those provinces eventually joined confederation. This is our history and it should not be discarded arbitrarily just because these events took place before 1867.

[Major John Grodzinsky RMC Kingston for the National Post, 1 August 2011, from "the war of 1812 still matters"]

PHOTO: AMANDA FASKEN

KIM MCINNIS
Director, The Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield

November 11, 2017 dawned cold, and clear in the minus 10 degree range, sporting a significant windchill. The remains of a light snowfall crunched underfoot. The monument cast it's shadow in the early morning sun as mist shimmered above the river.

By 8:00am re-enactors were shivering into greatcoats, bare fingers gingerly handling gun metal. We huddled behind the wall of the Memorial Building. Feet stomping in the cold.

This November 11th brought up the tail of a year long list of commemoration and celebratory events across the nation marking the 150th anniversary of the confederation of provinces forming the country we now call Canada. We call home.

Despite the first true cold weather of the fall, in all some 50 people converged to mark the day. The ranks filled with locally based re-enactors mingling with those from Kingston, Quebec and our friends to the south in the States. Members of the SD&G Highlanders and their affiliated Associations gathered. The three levels of local political representation turned out alongside their public. All had dutifully rolled out of warm beds to participate in and attend this special event to mark the 150th year of Confederation and the 204th anniversary of the battle.

Canadian Regiment of Fencible Infantry Sergeant David Smith and a piper courtesy of the SD&G Highlanders followed by a contingent of re-enactors from both sides of the river made way, leading the party to the memorial. The ceremony was emceed by FCFB Past President Robert Irvine. Speeches were delivered by MP Guy Lauzon as well as MPP Jim McDonell.

SD&G Honorary Lieutenant Colonel John Denner graciously stepped in for the ailing co-founder and fixture of the event Honourary-Colonel, Vice Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Brownell.

FCFB member Carol Thompson Goddard UE spoke on behalf of the descendents of those who fought. Their ancestors who formed the foundation of

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the area.

Poignant words on the sacrifices of the time were spoken by 15th Regiment US Infantry General Craig Russell representing US Forces and Forsythe's Rifles in attendance; General Russell underscored the cross border nurturing of friendship which has developed post conflict. Canadian Voltigeurs Major Mark Sebastien and CRFI Sergeant David Smith delivered stirring and poignant words on the history, involvement and sacrifices of each of the Units of which they represent.

The War of 1812 Prayer oft delivered on the site was done so in person by the author himself this year Reverend Daniel Hayward.

Being allotted the "Final Words" of the ceremony yours truly underscored the fact that the FCFB DO NOT glorify war. Our goal is to commemorate and educate. Pointed out was the dedication of the re-enactors to detail and historical accuracy and most importantly to the memory of those they represent. Commemoration does not end on this day, but continues in the convergence and recreation of the battle in July, where once again the strategies and events of the battle are analyzed and rehashed. The ghosts are honoured. Their suffering remembered.

From the historical refugee surge of the UEL, followed by the sacrifices of 1812 through 1814, the British colony, often ignored by those it served until its manpower was needed, has grown up quite nicely. Yes we have not done so unblemished – history is what it is. It cannot be erased. What was once the prejudices and hostilities of any given era cannot be undone. What can be done is to learn from those errors. Educate in the name of prevention. All the while moving forward to a better end. Remember. To quote once more Major John Grodzinsky:

"By looking back at the struggles we faced as a people, we may possibly learn something to help guide us as we look to the future of our great Confederation."

SGT. DAVID L. SMITH OF THE CANADIAN REGIMENT OF FENCIBLE INFANTRY WAS ALSO ASKED TO SAY A FEW WORDS.

GENERAL CRAIG RUSSELL OF THE 15TH REGIMENT US INFANTRY ADDRESSES THE SERVICE.

PHOTOS BY HELEN MOTT

DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS OF THE FRIEND'S OF THE CRYSLERS FARM BATTLEFIELD.

President's Message

DAVE CONNERS
President, The Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield

2017 is an odd numbered year and for us at the Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield (FCFB) that means that it was an off year in terms of reenactments. We didn't hold a reenactment this past summer, but are planning one for 2018. The fact that we didn't have a reenactment didn't mean that we sat around doing nothing, we took this time as an opportunity to do some of the other stuff related to our mandate of public awareness and education.

Early in the year a lot of time and research was invested into compiling a portfolio/ entry for The Ontario Historical Society's Scadding Award of Excellence. The hard work paid off, and the Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield won the award that recognizes contributions to the field of history. A couple of our members were able to make the trip to Toronto and receive the award first hand from the Ontario Historical Society. The award was a great way to start off the year, and getting the award was an excellent boost for our credibility as a first rate historical group.

Our other goal was to get out into the community and improve community awareness both of the 1813 battle and of our group and what we do. We identified a number of events where we thought we could have an impact and then attended those with our travelling information booth. There are a couple of articles in this newsletter that go into more detail about out public awareness program, so make sure you read them.

This year we will be busy planning another reenactment for July, so please try and make it out. We are always looking at ways to improve the visitors experience, and to fulfill our mandate to promote awareness and understanding of the battle and the grounds.

P.S. We would again like to thank John for his wonderful donation to the FCFB of a display of found musketballs from the battlefield area. These have greatly enhanced our public display.

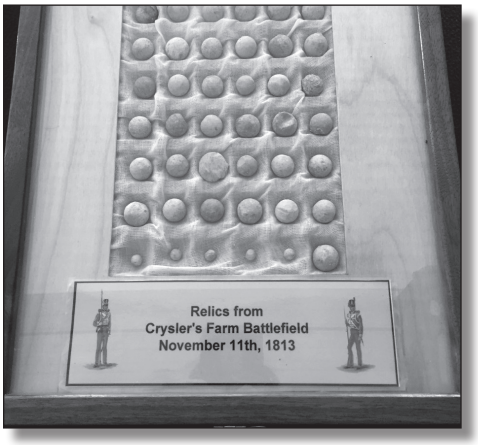
" A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."

- Marcus Garvey

Robin Morris Memorial Dinner-Seminar Day

CAROL GODDARD, UE

The Robin Morris Memorial Dinner, AGM and Seminars were held at St. Clare's Anglican Church on April 1st 2017. The day was well attended and the silent auction a resounding success. It was with extreme pleasure and gratitude that the Friends accepted the donation of a shadow book display of American Musket Balls from the Battle of Crysler's Farm from John and Marg Carruthers of Morrisburg.



There were two speakers for the seminar portion of the day, Patrick Burger who spoke on the Battle of Chateauguay and John Austin provided information on American spies and traitors along the St. Lawrence. The AGM was held with the Executive Committee voted in and reports presented to those in attendance. It was decided that in 2018 a dinner only would be planned as there will be a re-enactment to plan that year. It is anticipated that the Seminar, AGM and Dinner will return in 2019. The key note speaker for the dinner was Col William Shearing who spoke on local points of interest from the War of 1812, providing an informative and entertaining view of our history.

The Robin Morris Memorial Dinner will be held at the Iroquois Legion on April 28 with the AGM being held at 5:30, Dinner (Roast Turkey - $25.00 per person) at 6:30 and John Austin speaking at 7:30 with the silent auction closing at 8pm. Tickets are available from a member of the Friends of the Crysler Farm Battlefield group or by contacting Carol Goddard atcarol.goddard@sympatico.ca. If you wish to make a donation for the silent auction please contact Carol Goddard.

JOHN AND MARG CARRUTHERS DONATING A DISPLAY OF MUSKET BALLS FROM THE BATTLE OF CRYSLERS FARM.

FCFB Goes On the Road

KIM MCINNIS
Director, The Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield

After hosting two re-enactments back to back in 2015 and in 2016 the Friends were looking forward to the opportunity of having the summer off. HA! Having all of this spare time on our hands, as we do, it was decided that here was an opportunity to practice some public relations and promotions while throwing some education into the mix. President Dave Conners, Jerry Thompson, and hubby Lester made up the road crew. Weekends were spent packing up, unpacking and swapping off materials depending on who was setting up and taking down. My respect for market folks was heightened. (Why do they do this every weekend?!)

In actuality our season of being on the road started in February at the Cornwall Square annual Heritage Day (Heritage - Patrimoine Cornwall). As a result, our display netted us some coverage in the Seaway Valley News. Of course this was partly due to Vice President Jim Mullin being on hand in Glengarry Fencible kit - everyone loves a man in uniform regardless of the era or uniform.

Our summer itinerary took us to Merrickville Blockhouse Days in June, the Maxville Highland Games and Prescott Loyalist Days at Fort Wellington in August and wrapped up with September's Battle of Glengarry in Dunvegan. During a summer of record rainfall we by and large managed to miss all of the rained out weekends. With the exception of Dunvegan there were days of costumed participants running around checking phones and weather apps. At Merrickville tornado warnings were the order of the day on Sunday, which happily never manifested. All of the angry clouds by passed us, though gusts of wind threatened to blow displays into the canal. This occurrence also happened at Fort Wellington where the supplied canopies, many of which were not pegged down, routinely attempted to take off in gusts of wind over the Leo Boivin Centre, taking displays with them. Despite it being mostly a cool summer each event became an endurance test of humidex readings being capped off at the end of September in Dunvegan with record 40c heat. Sunday's re-enactment amounted to one volley and a quick march off of the field, while the cannon crew continued to blasted away.

Canadian climate endurance aside it was a fulfilling summer of chatting with folks and sharing information. As a nation we are in some respects sorely lacking in tutelage in our own history. What I have learned from these events is that there seems though to be a good many folks out there who are anxious to catch up. Also the younger folks seem to be picking up where us as baby boomers have dropped the ball. Part of our display which captured a good deal of interest is the glass case of musket balls fished out of the St. Lawrence graciously donated last spring by John Carruthers. (Part of our emergency preparedness plan outside of saving our own skins was who was in charge of saving the musket balls.) Interest jumped as soon as people found out what the grey little lumps were. Tangible history always outplays eye glazing recitation of dates and stats.

As most folks reading this are aware there are out there countless well read and informed on their subjects "amateur" historians who are volunteering their time to ensure that our history either local or national is preserved in some form or another. One gentleman took with him a handful of pamphlets. He shuttles folks from the airport in Ottawa and uses the opportunity to fill them in on local history. Genealogy plays a large part in how people connect with history and many battlefield descendents were more than a little excited to share their family history - even had some Crysler descendents folks stop and chat, and were excited to have some info to share at a dinner party that evening.

During our engagements all in all it is fair to say we learned as much or more as we imparted.

Heritage Fairs

AMANDA FASKEN, UE
Director, The Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield

The FCFB partnered with the Canadian Fencible reenactment group as well as the Fairfield-Gutzeit 1812 Discovery Centre to present the War of 1812 at two Heritage Fairs. The first was at the Canadian Museum of History, the second at Queen's University. The goal is to bring the musuem to the students and expose them to the world of living history. We were well received by the students and teachers. Everyone loved putting the red coat on. We will be attending this year's Ottawa Heritage Fair again at the War Musuem and Kingston's Heritage Fair at Queen's University.

1812 Education Day

SARAH EDWARDS
EDUCATION AND DOMESTIC PROGRAMS, UPPER CANADA VILLAGE

On Friday May 19 Upper Canada Village held its 4th annual War of 1812 Education Day featuring village staff, volunteers from the Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield, and members of the historical community. Focused around the Battle of Crysler's Farm, the activities and presentations discussed the experiences of soldiers, First Nations allies, and civilians in Upper Canada during the war. The students tried their hand at putting up a tent and writing a letter with pen and ink, enlisted and received their official papers, and particularly enjoyed participating in a costumed musket drill and learning how to load and fire a cannon.

THE FRIENDS OF CRYSLER'S FARM BATTLEFIELD

ROBIN MORRIS MEMORIAL DINNER & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY APRIL 28TH, 2018

IROQUOIS LEGION, 24 DUNDAS STREET, IROQUOIS ON.

$25.00

DOORS OPEN/DRINKS: 5:00 P.M.
THE FRIENDS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 5:30 P.M.
DINNER (ROAST TURKEY & DESSERT): 6:30 P.M.
GUEST SPEAKER: AUTHOR JOHN AUSTIN: 7:30 P.M.
SILENT AUCTION: 8:00 P.M.

CRYSLER'S 1813

Call to action

JOIN THE 'FRIENDS' TODAY

MUSTER SOME NATIONAL PRIDE!

Join the FCFB today and become a member!

For a $25 (Canadian Funds) annual membership fee payable to The Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield; you can keep abreast of all of the news and events surrounding the FCFB. If you do not wish to become a member, please consider making a donation towards preserving this important event in Canada's history. (Donations over $10 are eligible for a tax receipt.)

Have a question?
1812alivedc@gmail.com

Whether you are a new member, plan to renew, or are a donor, please remember to include your full name, mailing address, e-mail, a phone number with your remittance. (Your contact information is for FCFB use only.)

MAIL TO:
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South Mountain, ON
K0E 1W0

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

_____

_____

_____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

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Past President: Bob Irvine
Treasurer: Kim McInnis

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Lester McInnis
Cam Stevenson
Amanda Fasken
Phil Bury
Ex Officio: Sarah Edwards

WHO WE ARE

The Friends of Crysler's Farm Battlefield is a Not-For-Profit organization committed to the preservation and promotion of the military heritage of this battlefield site. Our goal is to aid in the maintenance and upgrading of the Battlefield Visitors Centre, the Memorial site and the surrounding grounds. We are also active in supporting such efforts as hosting living history events each year. In addition to keep members abreast of activities and events at and around the site, our organization has developed a website as an adjunct to this biannual newsletter.

www.cryslersfarm.com

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THE BATTLEFIELD DISPATCH

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR 2018!

Changes to events can be found on our website and Facebook

April 28th:
Robin Morris Memorial Dinner & AGM

July 14th & 15th:
Crysler's Farm Battle Re-enactment Weekend 2018

November 11th:
Memorial Ceremony
Battlefield Memorial, 9:00 a.m.

Find us on: facebook

www.facebook.com/CryslersFarm