

Exciting discoveries could be displayed at reg. office

By Eileen Argyris

A core group of historically-minded individuals is resolved to form a board of directors to administer the former land registry office in Colborne.

The old building, built around 1850 and situated on the corner of King and Victory Streets, formerly housed land transfer records and deeds from all of eastern Northumberland County.

It was closed by the former NDP provincial government in 1992.

Since that time it has come into the ownership of the village of Colborne, which obtained the building for the nominal sum of \$2 from the current provincial government, last year.

One of the conditions of the transfer of ownership, however, was that the village never use the historic building as a commercial site.

ART GALLERY AND MINI-MUSEUM

A recent proposal by local artist Wilhelmina

Kennedy to create an artists' co-op to manage a revolving display of local art work, that will also be offered for sale, has been approved in principle by Colborne council.

Along with that use, the Colborne LACAC (Local Architectural Conservancy Advisory Committee) would like to establish an historical or heritage centre to display historical artifacts relating to the history of the area.

LACAC member Dave McGlennon hosted a meeting Sunday in the old registry office, to garner the support of interested citizens.

Nine persons attended.

Mr. McGlennon told the group that LACAC already has, or knows of, a number of artifacts that would be an asset to a local mini-museum.

Mr. McGlennon himself has been given glass and celluloid slides of turn-of-the-century Colborne which are very fragile and very precious, that could be displayed and cared for.

Mr. McGlennon pointed

out that, people who have memorabilia such as historical documents, photos, clothing or furniture, frequently don't know what to do with it.

"If we don't have a place to put it, it will just disappear," he warned.

Sometimes, that priceless information is stored in the memory of a senior citizen.

"We have to collect Colborne's heritage, before we lose it, or forget it," Mr. McGlennon urged.

FOUNDER'S CHAIR FOUND

LACAC chairperson Greg McMahon told the meeting that a family in Oshawa has informed him that they have the postmaster's chair that was used by village founder, Joseph Abbott Keeler, Colborne's first postmaster.

Roseanne Quinn mentioned that Mr. Keeler's desk can be found at Barnum House museum in Grafton.

Harold Harnden, former Colborne jewellery store owner, said that he still had eye-testing equipment and an 1894 diploma belonging to Mr. Mayhew, jeweller and first owner of Mr. Harnden's former store. Mr. Mayhew also apparently functioned as the village optometrist.

SHOVEL FROM MURRAY CANAL

Ms. Quinn also pointed out that the ceremonial shovel used by Octavia Keeler (wife of Joseph Keeler, MP) to turn the first soil at the Murray Canal, is now housed at Proctor House in Brighton,



Organizing history — Dave McGlennon and Roseanne Quinn led discussion of an historical centre they hope to establish in the former land registry office at King and Victory Sts.

Photo by Eileen Argyris

and might perhaps be exhibited here.

She also displayed an issue of the *Colborne Express* dated January, 1868. The paper, a forerunner of the *Colborne Chronicle*, began publication in 1866.

Mr. McMahon said he had hoped to see a representative of the LACAC sit on a board of directors that would administer the registry office in its new incarnation as art gallery and historical centre. An additional use as a tourism information centre has also been suggested.

Mr. McMahon said he'd like to see a cross-section of the local public sit on such a board; business people, service club and church members, local

politicians.

A number of those present volunteered either to sit on such a board, or to help with the work of organizing and running the historical centre.

Roseanne Quinn, who worked cataloging exhibits at Barnum House at one time, stressed that it was important for the board to "be specific" in the donations it seeks.

ARTIFACTS COULD BE LOANED

She said it would be important to identify the era and type of artifacts that were being sought for display, and also very important to obtain as much information as possible about each item as quickly as they come in, so that no chance for

learning about the past, is missed.

Ms. Quinn stressed that people could "lend" artifacts to the centre for exhibition for a specific time, and then receive them back again. In this way, the displays could be kept fresh, inviting return visits.

At the same time, she added that the board will have to be selective and not "get overwhelmed" with donations, "otherwise you end up with a storage facility," she said.

Mr. McGlennon suggested that the people who attended this primary meeting "brainstorm" on the idea for a month.

The date for the next meeting has been set for Sunday, Feb. 9; place to be announced.

Wedding bells ring at Maple Court

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A very pretty wedding was solemnized in Cobourg Wednesday, Jan. 28, when Ida Robertson and Gordon Cooledge exchanged vows.

The bride looked lovely in a double-breasted navy suit with white accessories. Her corsage was of red roses, baby's breath and

lily of the valley.

Following the wedding, cake and coffee were served in the common room at Maple Court, Colborne, where congratulations and cards were received.

The happy couple will reside in Trenton.