

THE LOST VILLAGES

Historical Society

Forbes Memorial Reading Room

This single, detached brick building with a Mansard style roof was originally built for George C. Forbes as a reading room (library) for the village of Newington in 1901. It is one of the Township of South Stormont's most historic buildings, constructed as a public building institution. The Forbes Memorial Reading Room was given as a gift to the community of Newington in the name of Mrs. Peter Forbes (Isabella), mother of George C. Forbes. A framed plaque inside the Forbes museum reads: "This Reading Room - It is hoped in its usefulness will honour the memory of Mrs. Peter Forbes who was a kind, self-sacrificing mother, like many in the community, among whom she lived many of her happiest years, formed many of her pleasantest acquaintances and sincerest friends. May our filial piety cherish the memory of all good mothers."

The Forbes Memorial Reading Room served the residents of Newington and vicinity as a library until 1990. In the mid-1940s, it served as a high school, housing the first two forms. However, due to financial constraints, the library was closed by the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, and the building and property were maintained by the Township of Osnabruck/Township of South Stormont from 1990 until 1999. For a short time, 1996-1998, the building was used by the Recreation Association of Newington, R.A.N.

In 2000, a meeting was held with residents of the community of Newington and a Forbes family member, Mr Alan Forbes. The residents in attendance wished to preserve the building and put forward two proposals to Council for the Township of South Stormont. The first was to see the building designated a historical building under the Ontario Heritage Act. The second was to move the building to the Lost Villages Museum site.

The Forbes Memorial Reading Room was moved to the Lost Villages Museum site, at Ault Park, in October, 2001. It now houses the Fran Laflamme Memorial Resource Centre, where archives from the six lost villages of Milles Roches, Moulinette, Wales, Farran's Point, Dickinson's Landing, and Aultsville and the three lost hamlets of Maple Grove, Santa Cruz and Woodlands are on display. As well, genealogy records from the area are available to the public for your research purposes.