

The Bishop's Mills Walking Tour was made possible by: the amazing memory and generous hospitality of Mildred Adams; the reflections of Ray Adams gathered over a lifetime; the photographs and research of Linda Desroches, Victor Desroches, and Mavis Elstone who also provided access to the Bishop's Mills Women's Institute's Tweedsmuir History; and the ink drawings of the General Store, Presbyterian Church, Temperance Hall and Connell Residence as well as a previous history by Tom Graham.

The Bishop's Mills Walking Tour is part of a series to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the Rideau Canal, The 150th Anniversary of Kemptville, and the 10th Anniversary of the creation of the new municipality of North Grenville. The tours were funded, in part, the government of Canada through the Grenville Community Futures Development Corporation. The series includes Walking Tours of:

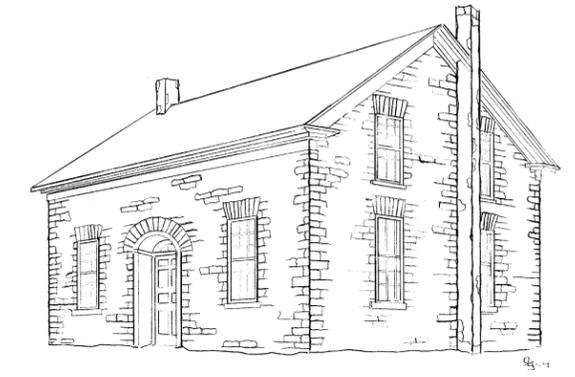
- Burritt's Rapids
- Heckston
- Kemptville-North
- Kemptville-South
- Kreepy Kemptville
- Oxford Mills
- Oxford Station
- Patterson's Corners/East Oxford
- Pelton's Corners

The Walking Tours were researched and designed by the Municipality of North Grenville, Planning and Building Department, Heritage Division. Further copies are available at:

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 Planning and Building Department
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Walking Tour of Bishop's Mills



13 Chauncey Bishop's House (see inside panel) 24 Mill Street

Bishop's Mills is situated in the southwest corner of the former municipality of Oxford on Rideau, on Lot 3 Concession 9. It was settled by Chauncey (1797-1876) and Ira (1803-1883) Bishop in 1840 on Middle Creek, part of the South Branch of the Rideau River. The Bishops built a sawmill, shingle mill and a grist mill that gave the hamlet its name. They opened a post office in 1853 and operated it for over 25 years. The first store opened in the mid 1860's, likely by Moses Waldon. Other businesses included a cheese factory, general store, blacksmith shops, churches, a school and doctors office. The village plan was officially registered in 1885 at Prescott by Dominion and Provincial Land Surveyor Francis Jones.





1 General Store

Moses Waldron opened the first store in Bishop's Mills. He was instrumental in bringing telegraph services to the hamlet. Upon his death in 1879 his wife married George Ferguson and, with his nephew Jack, ran the business. This extensive mercantile business stocked nails, glass, tools, dry goods, boots, shoes, hats and gloves as well as staples coffee, tea, sugar, salt and tobacco. The wagon that took cheese, butter and eggs to Oxford Station to be shipped by rail to Bedell and onto Montreal, would return with stock for the store. Bankers would come from Kemptville and conduct business from the back room. The building is now home to the Natural History Centre.

30 Main Street



2 School

Local lore has it that this was a school, unusual that the only window is in the rear wall of the building. Rough timber still remains on many surfaces.

Main Street



3 Presbyterian Church

St. Andrews was built as a Presbyterian Church in 1906 by Billy Johnson who also constructed St. Matthews in East Oxford. The stone was brought from Deeks Quarry in the northern part of the Township. The church is unusual in that the chancel is bracketed by the entrances. The bell in the bell tower is much larger than most in the area. The congregation voted in favour of church union and it became a United Church in 1925.

34 Main Street



4 Dr. Armstrong Residence

Dr. Armstrong lived in this home for many years. The family residence in the larger section and medical office in the smaller section. The building housed the telegraph office operated by Molly Mac. It has been clad in clapboard, 'insul brick' and now siding. While the location of the doors and windows may have changed over the years, the home retains many of its essential characteristics.

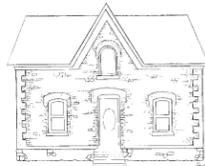
36 Main Street



5 Temperance Hall

The Temperance Hall was built in 1878 by the Independent Order of Good Templars and served as its meeting hall until the turn of the century. In 1926 ownership was conveyed for a Community Hall and has hosted dances, meetings, concerts and card parties ever since. The building is a temple-fronted institutional structure with segmental-arch headed windows and door. It is built of common red brick with contrasting marl-brick detailing. The Temperance Hall was designated under the Ontario Heritage Act in 2007.

38 Main Street



6 Presbyterian Manse

Built as the Presbyterian Manse c 1880, it served as such until Church Union in 1925. The minister was responsible for both the Bishop's Mills Church and St Matthews in Patterson's Corners/East Oxford. Built of triple brick walls of common-bonded brick with contrasting marl-brick detailing over the windows with imbedded quoins, atop a stone foundation. The house had been clad in siding, but is in the process of being lovingly restored by its present owners.

405 County Road 18

7 Cemetery

The deed for the cemetery was given by Thomas and Jane Alexander on August 11, 1856 as a 'free' burying ground. It was referred to locally as the Alexander Cemetery for many years. In addition to the original one acre, land was purchased in 1937 and 1955. Mr. Fancet, a resident of Alberta, visited Bishop's Mills in the 1930s and was instrumental in rehabilitating the cemetery which had become neglected. Chauncey and Ira Bishop are buried here and markers note many early settlers—Buker, Dool, Connell, Earl, Ferguson, Greer, Keegan, McLellan, Robinson, Waldron and Weir.

County Road 18 1 mile east



8 Connell Residence

This house sits on land granted from the crown in 1803 to Thomas Doyle. The house was built c 1890, by William Connell, a store keeper and magistrate. The house served as an inn and mail stage coach stopover for those travelling from Prescott.

37 Main Street



9 Methodist Church

The peaked roofed portion of this structure which faces Kemptville Road was built as the Methodist Church and was located north of the school house that sits at 8 Mill Street. Upon church union in 1925 the congregation chose the Presbyterian Church. The congregation chose to sell the structure for a barn rather than a dance hall. The 'Bishops' window frames from the church were installed in the addition that stretches to St. Lawrence Street. The church building is now a private residence.

1 St. Lawrence Street

10 School Site

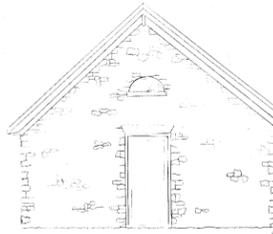
Now the site of the United Pentecostal Church, this building was once the last Bishop's Mills grade school, constructed c 1950. Two prior schools once sat at the same site, but fell victim to the two major fires that struck the hamlet.

10 St. Lawrence Street

11 McLellan House

Built c 1890, this house was built in phases. The forward section, with the unique molding around the main entrance was built first. Later the recessed section with the unusual triangular topped window in the peak. Sisters Lucy and Annie McLellan lived here for many years with their sister Minnie, a teacher. One night, the drapes all drawn on the main floor, a neighbour girl reported to her mother that the table was set with the family finery. The occasion, as it turned out, was Minnie's secret wedding to Mr. Throop. The revelation resulted in a hamlet wide shivaree for the young couple. The bells of the school house and churches rang out and the children banged metal pots in the streets.

23 Main Street



11 School House

This school house was built c 1869 and served this growing community for many years. It was sold to the Loyal Orange Lodge and then in 1974 to a private owner. For many years the Methodist Church held its socials on the lawn between this building and the road. It is constructed of local field stone covered in stucco and is unique with the elliptical ornamentation above what was once a single central door. The vousoirs over the door was removed, replaced by the substantial lintel.

8 Mill Street



12 The Mills

Chauncey and Ira Bishop operated a saw mill on this site. It was powered by a breast wheel to make maximum use of the power available and was sufficiently large to mill planks 18 feet long that moved past the large circular blade on a carriage. Shingles were cut during low flow periods. The mills fell into disuse and were torn down and the foundations pulverized in 1913 to make gravel to use in road construction. They also operated a grist mill and eventually a separate shingle mill in the hamlet.

Mill Street

13 Bishop House (see cover)

Chauncey Bishop constructed this stone house. It is the only Bishop home to survive. It's placement on the property may look unusual today, but a road once ran in front of the house. The post office was located at the rear of the house from 1853 to 1878, when the property passed out of the Bishop family. There is a hearth in the basement, perhaps a baker's oven, with a fireplace directly above on the first floor.

24 Mill Street



14 Methodist Parsonage

This house was built c 1870 and served as the parsonage for the Church until 1940. The house is timber frame and was clad in clapboard. The house was purchased by the church from Wm. Patton.

23 Mill Street

15 Cheese Factory

The cheese factory was located on the east side of the road, near the mill. Tragically the boiler was once allowed to boil dry. The resulting explosion was heard for miles around and killed the cheese maker, the cheese inspector and a young boy visiting from Kenora visiting relatives in the hamlet.

Mill Street



16 Buker House

Taylor Buker, a lumberman/farmer, built this home c 1878 on land formerly owned by Elias Bishop. It was modelled after the home of Hiram Buker featured in the History of Leeds and Grenville. The roofline once sported a single central dormer on the forward and recessed portions. The original chimneys have been removed. The building is constructed of common-bond brick with contrasting marl-brick detailing around the doors and windows and the engaged quoins as well as the paired brackets at the eaves.

9 Mill Street