

MAIGazine

The Newsletter of the AAO's Municipal Archives Interest Group

Issue 15

August 2019



Innovation and Risk-taking

What does innovation look like in archives? Read on to find out how municipal archivists are shedding new light on their collections.

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Message from the Chair

On behalf of the MAIG Executive, I am pleased to present the 15th edition of the *MAIGazine*. This issue highlights several creative educational and outreach initiatives undertaken by various archives throughout the Province. Thank you to our members for contributing articles and sharing your stories and experiences.

Over the past year, the MAIG Executive has worked on several new initiatives aimed to help strengthen our communication amongst municipal archivists. Through the creation of a dedicated Listserv, the revitalization of our AAO webpage and an increased presence on social media, we have already seen greater attendance at MAIG events and information sharing online. We encourage all municipal members to stay connected with MAIG by joining our Listserv and taking part in conversations to strengthen our network. More information on how to join and contribute to the Listserv is available on our website: www.aao-archivists.ca/maig.

The MAIG Executive is also excited about a new initiative that was approved at the 2019 AGM; a proposal to develop and distribute an industry survey, specifically focused on key performance and operational statistics of municipal archives. The goal of this project is to help gauge the status of Ontario Municipal Archives, as well as provide MAIG Members with data about other Ontario institutions. Members at the AGM felt that this project would help develop institution specific key performance indicators and budgets, by identifying market comparisons to present to local Town/City Councils. This project may also help identify outstanding needs or gaps within our municipal archive community which MAIG can target at a future date. Since the AGM, the MAIG Executive, with the help of a volunteer, have begun the preliminary stages of developing this tool. It is anticipated that this survey will be available next spring, with preliminary results ideally available in the 2020 Edition of the *MAIGazine*.

Plans for 2019-2020 Term:

- 21st Annual MAIG Open House - hosted by the Stratford-Perth Archives
- Development and distribution of a Municipal Archives Focused Survey
- 2020 Annual General Meeting

I am always happy to hear from my colleagues, so if you have any news, suggestions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact me - Gillian.Shaw@vaughan.ca.

~ Gillian

MAIG Executive, 2018-2021

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If you have any questions about MAIG or would like to get involved, please feel free to contact our executive.

Meet the MAIG Executive



Gillian Shaw is the Chair of MAIG, having begun her tenure on the Executive in 2015 as Vice Chair. She holds a Master of Information degree from the University of Toronto (2011) and is currently pursuing the Certified Records Manager (CRM) designation. Gillian has been the Archival Records Analyst at the City of Vaughan Archives for the past five years, and has experience in archives, museums, and records management for both the public and private sectors. Prior to working at the City of Vaughan Archives, Gillian worked at the City of Markham as a contract Archivist for the Markham Museum and provided records management support at the Ministry of Health. Gillian is currently on parental leave but is happy to hear from her colleagues. Should you have any news, suggestions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact her at gillian.shaw@vaughan.ca.



Megan Lockhart was elected to the MAIG Executive in 2018, sitting as Vice Chair for the 2018-2021 term. She holds a Fine Arts Diploma in Cultural Resource Management and a Professional Specialization Certificate in Collections Management from the University of Victoria (2017). Since March 2018, Megan has worked as the Archives Technician at the Oxford County Archives. Prior to her current position, she occupied various roles at the St. Marys Museum & Archives including Curatorial Assistant, Archives Assistant and Digitization Project Coordinator and has previous experience in the education field. Megan can be contacted at mlockhart@oxfordcounty.ca or by phone at 519-539-9800 ext. 3070.



Gina Dewaele has been the Secretary-Treasurer of MAIG since 2014, and will continue to be the Secretary-Treasurer for the 2017-2020 term. She holds a Masters of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Western Ontario (2002) and has been the Archivist Assistant at the Elgin County Archives since October 2002. In addition to her Secretary-Treasurer position with MAIG, she has been the Treasurer for the Southwestern Ontario Chapter since 2010, and has served on the ARCHEION Committee of the AAO. Gina can be contacted by email at gdewaele@elgin.ca or by phone at 519-631-1460 ext. 154.

Minutes from the 2018 Open House

**Minutes
Municipal Archives Interest Group
Open House Meeting
September 21st, 2018
Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County
(Belleville, Ontario)**

Executive Present:

- Gillian Shaw, Chair
- Megan Lockhart, Vice-Chair

Executive Regrets:

- Gina Dewaele, Secretary-Treasurer

Members Present:

- Amanda Hill, Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County
- Katie Kennedy, Northumberland County Archives
- Victoria McAuley, MI Student – University of Toronto
- Iona McCraith, Archives Association of Ontario
- Abigail Miller, Northumberland County Archives
- Kyle Neill, Region of Peel Archives
- Samantha Thompson, Region of Peel Archives

1. Welcoming Remarks and Agenda Approval

Gillian Shaw called the meeting to order at 2:55pm and thanked everyone for attending.

Motion to approve the Agenda: Amanda Hill

Seconded by: Kyle Neill

Carried.

2. 2017 Open House Minutes

The group moved to approve the Minutes as presented.

Motion to approve: Abigail Miller

Seconded by: Gillian Shaw

3. Report of the Chair

Gillian advised the members present about changes which had been made to the Executive at the Annual General Meeting which took place in May of 2018. She advised that Brenda Hicock had stepped down as Chair and that she was elected as the new MAIG Chair. She also introduced Megan as the new MAIG Vice-Chair. Gillian discussed the most recent issue of the *MAIGazine* which was published in September and thanked members for submitting their articles. She also discussed some new MAIG initiatives including the MAIG list-serv and member directory, which the Executive

hoped would help promote collaboration and strengthen the existing municipal archives community.

4. Open House Discussion

Future locations for MAIG's Annual Open House were discussed and the following agreed upon:

- 2019 - Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre
- 2020 - City of Vaughan Archives
- 2021 - Region of Peel Archives (dependent on facility completion)

5. Other Business

a. Archives of Ontario Deaccessioning Project – Emily Chicorli

Emily discussed the Archives of Ontario's (AO) deaccessioning project "Archives on the Road" and shared positive experiences as well as some challenges that had arisen with the repatriation process. Particularly, the AO has experienced some challenges with institutions wanting transfer documents, as well as finding some collection in a poor preservation state. She discussed the AO's wish to survey current AAO members to see what their needs were when it came to the repatriation process and whether or not institutions would still be interested in having records returned if they required significant conservation treatment. The group provided their thoughts and individual policies regarding the state of transferred records and agreed with Emily that it would be beneficial to conduct a survey of the membership to gather additional feedback. Emily advised that she would work on creating a survey and send this out to the membership via the AAO List-Serv for comment.

b. AAO Provincial Acquisition Strategy Update – Iona McCraith

Iona advised that the Archives Association of Ontario (AAO) was assembling a working group with the intention of developing a province wide strategy to gather information on the types of archival materials institutions and individuals are collecting across the province. She stated that this working group was gathering data through a survey asking twenty-five archival institutions across Ontario to respond to questions about their recent acquisition activities and their related mandates. Iona discussed the benefits of the Provincial Acquisition Strategy with present members and asked if they utilized the Ontario Archival Accessions Register at their respective institutions. Members provided feedback on the reasons why they found the register useful, in addition to the factors that hindered their contribution to the register. Iona made mention of the AAO Board's Member/Chapter Liaison whose purpose is to improve and facilitate communication between the Board of Directors and AAO members.

6. Roundtable

- **Gillian Shaw:** Gillian advised the group that several staffing changes had occurred at the City of Vaughan Archives and that a new Supervisor with a strong records management and EDRMS background had been hired. As a result, Archives staff were now becoming more involved in the City's Records Management process and were looking at the possibility of implementing an EDRMS system for the Corporation. She also advised that the Archives was currently working with the Office of the City Clerk for the upcoming Municipal Election, as well as for the planning of the City's annual Remembrance Day Exhibit and Poppy Wall Opening Ceremony, taking place on November 1st.

- **Emily Chicorli:** Emily discussed some recent projects at the AO and how she and her team were actively identifying gaps in government and private records. She also advised the group of a pilot project that was underway to allow for proactive engagement between archives and the private sector, with the team reaching out to businesses, organizations and communities that they feel have been neglected.
- **Abigail Miller and Katie Kennedy:** Abigail and Katie discussed Northumberland County's expansion project and that they were currently in the planning stages of having a new facility built (5000 sq ft.). The ladies also advised that they were currently working on having a new website created, increasing their outreach efforts and were hoping that their NHDS digitization grant application would be accepted later this month.
- **Victoria McAuley:** Victoria introduced herself as a current Master of Information Student at the University of Toronto's iSchool. She will be graduating in December and is interested in getting more involved with Municipal Archives.
- **Megan Lockhart:** Megan discussed Oxford County's social media outreach strategy and several initiatives that have been started to increase interest in the archives. She discussed the Oxford County Archives' forthcoming publication "Honouring Oxford", and its upcoming book launch on November 8th, as well as several initiatives that had been started by the archives including the creation of an interactive war memorial map, secondary school programming and a recent retirement home outreach program.
- **Samantha Thompson and Kyle Neill:** Samantha and Kyle advised that they were currently completing a detailed holdings inventory in order to prepare for the implementation of a forthcoming database. As a result of this large initiative, less time was being devoted for accessioning and staff were primarily concentrating on research requests and the holdings inventory. Kyle and Samantha also advised that a part time person had been hired in the archives to assist with ongoing digitization.
- **Amanda Hill:** Amanda discussed the upcoming 2019 AAO Annual Conference and that it would be taking place in Belleville from May 8-10th. She encouraged members to submit papers on the conference theme: "Unlocking the Vaults: Access, Outreach & Engagement."
- **Iona McCraith:** Iona touched upon the AAO's new "Digital Access and Preservation Committee" and discussed this group's role in advising the AAO Board and membership at large on matters relating to digital archives management. She encouraged members to visit the AAO's website for more information on this group.

7. Adjournment

Gillian called for a motion to adjourn at 4:06pm. Kyle Neill seconded the motion with no objections.

Minutes from the 2019 AGM

**Minutes
Municipal Archives Interest Group
Annual General Meeting
May 8, 2019
Loyalist College – Link Lounge
(Belleville, Ontario)**

Executive Present:

- Gillian Shaw, Chair (via video conference)
- Megan Lockhart, Vice-Chair
- Gina Dewaele, Secretary-Treasurer

Present:

- Matthew Fells, Simcoe County Archives
- Amanda Hill, Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County
- Kim Kerr, Lennox and Addington Archives
- Joshua Klar, Norfolk County Archives and Eva Brook Donly Museum
- Lisa Lawlis, Lennox & Addington Archives
- Jim Leonard, Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives
- Lynn Lunsted, Flamborough Archives and Heritage Society
- Susan Peters, Dundas County Archives
- Krista Richardson, County of Prince Edward Archives
- Samantha Thompson, Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives

1. Call to Order

Megan called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm and welcomed everyone.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda for the afternoon was presented.
Motion to approve the Agenda: Matthew Fells
Seconded by: Jim Leonard
Carried.

3. Approval of the 2018 AGM Minutes

There were no omissions in the 2018 AGM Minutes.
Motion to approve the Minutes: Amanda Hill
Seconded by: Matthew Fells
Carried.

4. Report of the Chair

Megan read out Gillian's report to members present. No comments were made.

5. 2018-2019 Financial Report

Gina described the report to members. No comments were made. The 2018-2019 Financial Report and the 2019-2020 Budget were also presented:

Financial Report 2018-2019

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| REVENUE | |
| Amount previously in bank | \$640.28 |
| Grant from AAO | \$233.72 |
| TOTAL | \$874.00 |
| | |
| EXPENSES | |
| 2018-2019 Meetings | \$0.00 (in kind) |
| 2018 Open House | \$228.23 (catering) |
| Advertising | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL | \$228.23 |
| | |
| FINAL BANK BALANCE | \$645.77 |

Budget 2019-2020

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| REVENUE | |
| Amount previously in bank | \$645.77 |
| Grant from AAO | \$250.00 |
| TOTAL | \$895.77 |
| | |
| EXPENSES | |
| 2019-2020 Meetings | \$0.00 (in kind) |
| 2019 Open House | \$350.00 (catering) |
| Advertising | <u>\$0.00</u> |
| TOTAL | \$350.00 |
| | |
| FINAL BANK BALANCE | \$545.77 |

Motion to approve the 2018-2019 Financial Report and 2019-2020 Budget: Matthew Fells

Seconded by: Josh Klar

Carried.

6. 2019 Open House

The location of the 2019 MAIG Open House was discussed, and it was announced that the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre had previously volunteered to host in 2019. Megan encouraged MAIG members present to consider hosting in future years as it is a great opportunity

to meet other municipal archivists and showcase your institution. The following other institutions have also offered their facilities for future years:

- 2020: City of Vaughan Archives
- 2021: Oxford County Archives

7. Other Business

- a) MAIG Listserv: Gillian explained that a MAIG Listserv had been created this past year. She noted that the instructions on how to subscribe/post are located on the AAO website.
- b) MAIGazine: Possible themes for the 2019 edition of the MAIG newsletter were discussed. Megan's suggested theme of Innovation and Risk Taking was well-received.
- c) Municipal Archives Survey: The Executive proposed that a Municipal Archives Survey should be conducted in order to survey the municipal archive community. This proposed project was well received and a large number of suggestions for possible questions were discussed.

8. Roundtable:

- **Gillian Shaw, City of Vaughan Archives:** Gillian advised that she was on parental leave and that Courtney Scott had taken over her role during her leave. Since last year, the City's Archives and Records Management Services (ARMS) Department has taken on a records management focus, working to update the City's Versatile system and further educate staff on the 'new' Records Retention By-Law (instituted in 2017). This past fall, ARMS staff were heavily involved in the 2018 Municipal Election, and most recently assisted with a By-Election. The Archives also began a new partnership with the local newspaper "Vaughan Today", to help promote the archival collection, and is working with Vaughan Public Libraries to develop presentations and talks for community groups. Currently, archival staff are working on standardizing existing finding aids, developing new outreach programs through social media and combing through recent community accessions.
- **Megan Lockhart, Oxford County Archives:** Megan advised that the County was currently focusing on processing backlog, particularly a large number of repatriated township records from the Archives of Ontario. The Archives recently completed a website revamp, including new outreach program information for schools. Moving forward the County is hoping to include more interactive virtual exhibits online and potentially develop printable sheets for educators to use in the classroom. The Oxford County Archives is currently working on revising school outreach programming for the secondary level and developing new programming for the elementary level. Since the last AGM, the Archives has become active on Instagram and Facebook. The County also hosted a Community Scanning Week, where community members could bring in photographs to be scanned and receive a copy for free as long as a digital copy was donated to the archives.
- **Gina Dewaele, Elgin County Archives:** Gina advised that a Young Canada Works student was continuing the scanning of negatives of several newspapers that existed in the west part of Elgin County, and that a Canada Summer Jobs student would also be working on a similar project. It is anticipated that the students' work will make an additional 10,000 photographs and captions accessible to researchers via the Archives' online database. A recent shelving expansion was completed in the former exhibit area of the Elgin County Museum, comprising of 12 bays which

can accommodate just over 1000 bankers boxes (about 1000 cubic feet of records). The Archives also has a new Archives Intern who has helped with accessioning backlog and assisting with digitizing photographs. The Archivist Assistant, Amber Mandich, recently left for maternity leave and her replacement Marie Frise will be working on processing collections, assisting with research inquiries and will be taking over existing workshops.

This year the Elgin County Archives will be undertaking a project to providing narration for a 1948 16mm silent film depicting an Alma College May Day ceremony and graduation. It is hoped that a PhD candidate who specializes in film studies will be assisting with this project. The local OGS branch will be providing funding for a digitization project of some of the County's earliest newspapers. Staff will also be working on two very large accessions: the Don Cosens Collection (approx. 100 boxes of photographs and local history publications) and the Stollery Collection (approx. 100 boxes of negatives from a St. Thomas studio) To date the County has over 7 million views on Flickr, 2600 followers on Facebook, 1600 followers on Twitter, and 827 followers on Instagram.

- **Amanda Hill, Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County:** The archives was invited to put on an exhibit in the John M. Parrott Art Gallery in January of 2019. This exhibit featured eighteen archival images with captions, some true and some false. The exhibit was interactive and visitors were invited to enter a prize draw for the image they liked and determining which captions they believed were true. Amanda has been very busy with planning for the 2019 AAO Conference as her facility will be hosting this year.
- **Joshua Klar, Norfolk County Archives & Eva Brook Donly Museum:** The Norfolk County Archives is a new municipal archives which took over the Eva Brook Archives in January of 2018. Josh was hired as the Archivist in May of 2018 and works with a part-time Curator, Kelly Dixon, as well as volunteers who were previously with the local historical society. Josh advised that he is currently working on finding ways to expand the archives' storage and that the archives received funding from the County which will be put toward a new high-density storage system. The Archives is currently working on a large project involving the conservation of a collection of glass-plate negatives as well as establishing a By-law for the new archives in the Heritage & Culture Department.
- **Jim Leonard and Samantha Thompson, Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA):** Jim and Samantha advised their institution is currently working on completing a massive physical inventory, a project undertaken by the archives' Senior Archivist. Staff are currently in the process of migrating to a new management system which will be replacing their current Microsoft Access software database, working on backlog, moving APOLROD (Association for the Preservation of Ontario Land Registry Office Documents) records and rehousing a collection of negatives into acid-free enclosures. A HVAC project is also underway for their facility as well as a new outreach initiative involving an archival education kit.

- **Matthew Fells, Simcoe County Archives:** Matthew advised that his institution is responsible for the records management for eighteen municipalities and that they currently have a large backlog of 46 percent. Matthew described the archives' extensive processing program, requiring municipalities to fill out a large spreadsheet. Moving forward, Simcoe County will be implementing an EDRMS (Electronic Document and Records Management System) and Council recently approved a full-time archivist program. A \$500,000 grant was also received to improve infrastructure, allowing the County to have up to 6 full-time staff members, including a new microfilm technician. Additionally, the Simcoe County Archives recently stopped charging research fees.
- **Lisa Lawlis, County of Lennox and Addington Archives:** Lisa advised that the County Archives had recently launched an online database and that they were working to get a collections inventory underway. The Archives has also begun encouraging research by appointment. She also explained that the Archives was now under the Economic Development umbrella and that Kim Kerr and herself were full-time and permanent employees.
- **Krista Richarson, County of Prince Edward Archives:** Krista advised that a staff member won a book scanner at a recent conference and that the device was being used for a digitization project of rare books for public access online. The scanner also helped to digitize a historical Tremaine Map of the County, with copies of specific areas being made available for public purchase. Krista also discussed a recent outreach program involving partnerships with local high schools, allowing Grade 9 students to work with archival records to produce video clips on various topics.
- **Lynn Lunsted, Flamborough Archives and Heritage Society:** Lynn explained that her Archives represents a municipality that doesn't exist anymore and that the Flamborough Archives has been relocated back into the municipal building. The Archives remains quite busy as Hamilton Public Library refers people and donations to the archives regularly, and local schools have also begun sending students over to conduct archival research. Lynn advised that the Archives has inherited 30 years of negatives from a local newspaper that folded, and that the negatives were previously stored rolled. Currently the archives receives no municipal funding, with all funding coming from donations and research fees. Recently, a lot of researchers have been looking for information on and photographs of historical businesses.
- **Susan Peters, Dundas County Archives:** Susan advised that the Dundas County Archives was dedicated in November of 2018. The establishment of the Archives was a joint project developed by a committee of individuals from both North and South Dundas. Susan explained that she is the only staff member, and that she is part-time. She is currently searching for a collections database system/software to use. Susan stated that if the Municipal Archives Survey project is completed in the near future, she can take the results to Council to garner more support for the archives.

9. Adjournment

Megan called for a motion to adjourn, seconded by Matthew Fells with no objections.

Meeting adjourned at 3:21 PM.

The Tales We Tell

Amanda Hill - Archivist, Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County

In November 2018, Susan Holland, the curator of the John M. Parrott Art Gallery in Belleville, was informed that one of the proposed exhibitors for January to February 2019 had pulled out. Susan reached out to the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County to see if there was any way that we could collaborate to help fill the empty gallery space in the new year. We had previously been talking in vague terms about producing a joint exhibit, but now there was a short deadline and we had to come up with something fast.

The Community Archives is not short of interesting images to share, and with ‘fake news’ being one of the predominant themes of the day, we came up with the idea of an exhibit which was partly true and partly false. The idea was that we would get archival images professionally enlarged and printed, and present them alongside captions, some of which were factual, while the remainder were pure fabrications. The exhibit would also be interactive, with visitors invited to enter a prize draw to win an image they liked (we did not want to be left with the images at the end of the event!). They had to tell us the numbers of the stories they thought were true, then choose the image they wanted to win.

With only six weeks before the exhibit was due to open, there was not a lot of time to come up with a number of suitable images for the gallery. The photos needed to be interesting enough that people would want to win them at the end of the event. We selected eighteen photographs and drawings from our various collections. Fortunately we have



The digital invitation features a dark blue header with the title "The Tales We Tell..." in white. Below the header, the dates "January 3rd - February 14th, 2019" are displayed. To the right is an oval image of a woman in a purple dress. The main body is light blue and contains the text: "Fact or fiction, true or false? Stories inspired by images held in the Community Archives." Below this is a small image of a destroyed building. To the right of the image is the text: "Can you tell truth from fantasy?" and the Community Archives logo. A dark blue box on the right contains the event details: "Please join us for the opening of our exhibit: January 3rd, 2019 6.00-7.30pm At the John M. Parrott Art Gallery Belleville Public Library 254 Pinnacle Street, Belleville 613-968-6731 ext.2040".

The digital invitation for the exhibit: "The Tales We Tell" developed by the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County in the winter of 2019. The exhibit was held at the John M. Parrott Art Gallery.

been busy digitizing most of our photographic collections, which meant that we already had high-quality digital reproductions available.

The gallery curator recommended a local photographer and printer, Mike Gaudaur of Quinte Studios, who did an amazing and timely job of cleaning up the photographs, printing and mounting them. Two of the Community Archives volunteers were enlisted to help come up with stories for the captions. We ended up with 12 fabrications and six true stories. Invitations were designed, printed, and sent in early December. Mike Gaudaur also printed the captions and everything was ready for putting up in the gallery before Christmas.

Around 200 people came to the opening reception for the event: one of the most popular that the gallery staff could remember. The exhibit was open from January 3 to February 14 and more than 100 entries into the prize draw were received in that period. The entry forms had space on the back for comments and people reported that the exhibit was fun, interactive, thought-provoking and entertaining.

The most popular image with visitors was image number 12, showing a puppy sitting on the hood of an ambulance, taken from the Grace B. Waters photograph album. The accompanying text read:

12. This photograph was taken by Nursing Sister Grace Waters during the First World War when she was serving in the 1st Canadian General Hospital at Étaples. The puppy had been rescued by Canadian soldier Arthur Jackson, when she wandered onto the battlefield. He named her Byng after the popular Canadian general Sir Julian Byng. When Arthur was



Image number 12 featured in the exhibit "The Tales We Tell". A puppy is sitting on the hood of an ambulance, from the Grace B. Waters photograph album - part of the collection at the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County.

injured by shrapnel, Byng travelled with him in this Buick ambulance to the hospital. There she was cared for by Grace and the other members of the nursing staff, and Arthur left the dog with them. (This was one of the fake news stories).

After the exhibit was over, we drew a winning prize draw entry for each of the images and invited the winners into the Community Archives to accept their prize. For most people, it was the first time they had come into the archives. We photographed each of the winners as they collected their photographs.

One of the 18 prize draw winners told us that she and her friends had spent two hours in the gallery, trying to work out which of the stories were true, and which were false. They spent so long there, in fact, that she ended up with a parking ticket!



The winners of the prize draw!

The History We Wrote - Archival Outreach at the Lennox and Addington County Museum & Archives

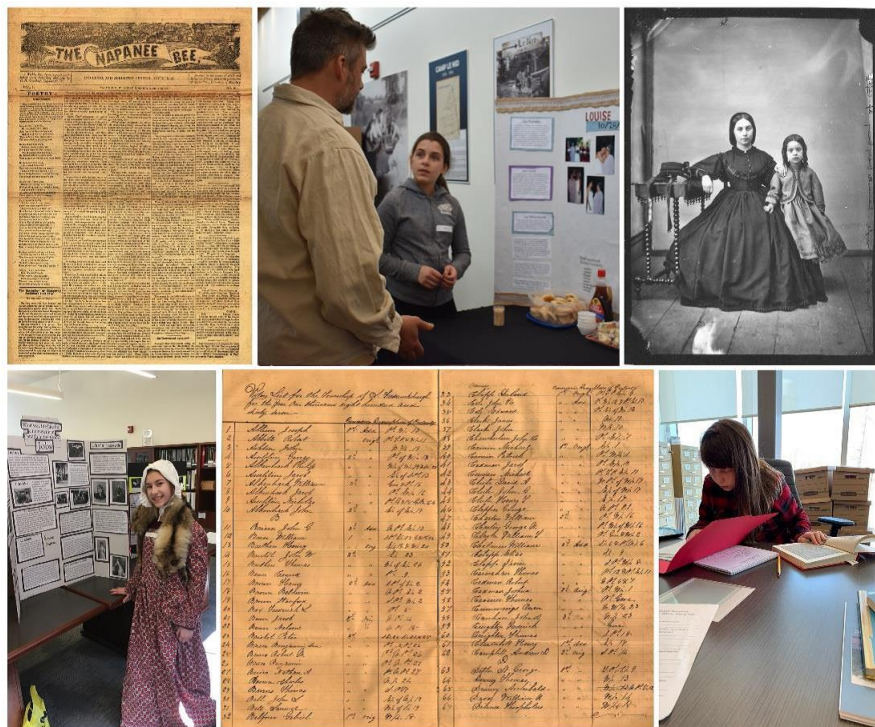
Lisa Lawlis – Archivist & Amber Meyer Dunn - Program Coordinator, Lennox and Addington County Museum & Archives

At the beginning of 2019 we decided that our goal for this year's Archive Awareness Week was to inspire students to use records at the Lennox and Addington County Museum and Archives (LACMA) in new and engaging ways. The creation of archival outreach programs by our Program Coordinator, Amber Meyer Dunn, and the team at LACMA, have given students exciting opportunities to engage with history by providing increased access to records in our collection. Amber developed the innovative *The History We Wrote* program which welcomed almost 100 students to LACMA to connect with archival records and learn how to use primary records for historical research.

Amber's goal for the development of *The History We Wrote* program was to inspire students to see beyond the words in their history textbooks and to be able to link their own past to what they were learning in school. History is so much more than dates and names, it gives us clues to how we got here today and what our families went through to get us here.

Working within the curriculum, we decided to challenge students to research life in the early 19th century and find a link to their own story or one that they were interested in. Terri Dupuis (grade 7 teacher at Southview Public School), Matt Hallford (grade 7 teacher at Southview Public School) and Emily Stinson (grade 6/7 teacher at The Prince Charles School) supported the program from the beginning and were excited to be the first classes involved in the new outreach initiative. They assisted with research and helped to inspire their students to think outside the textbook. We wanted students to ask questions, talk to their family and friends, look at family pictures, and make connections between what they were learning in school to how their family, or chosen historical family, would have lived.

From meeting students in their classroom in March, through their research time at the Museum and Archives, the inquisitive thought processes these students had was truly inspiring. They were so focused and excited to learn about history and finding little clues to their own story. It was so much more than a lesson about a stranger's past that they feel disconnected from. Our goal was to keep students asking questions and making connections to bring history to life. Each one of their stories is important and if they do not ask questions and create the links, then their stories will be lost in the pages of history.



Pictured above are examples of digitized records that students used for research, students conducting research during the program and some of the presentations at LACMA on April 3rd as part of our Archives Awareness Week program.

On April 3 we celebrated Archives Awareness Week with the arrival of almost 100 students to LAMCA to display their presentations and talk about their research. There were projects varying from local businesses where family members worked, recipes that were passed down through generations, notable family members, treatment of mental health in the 1800's, to the role of women and so much more. Parents, grandparents, Limestone District Schoolboard staff, and members of the public perused the student's projects and enjoyed seeing the passion in the student's eyes and stories. The students were so proud of their projects which highlighted their families, historical figures, and events. The staff at LACMA could not be more impressed by all of their hard work. We will be making this an annual event celebrating Archives Awareness Week and continuing to make learning history fun and personal.

The History We Wrote program allowed us to provide access to archival records to a new user group of grade 7 and 8 students. Using new software (for example, Microsoft Image Composite Editor) Archivist Lisa Lawlis, created large scale reproductions of archival records for students to interact with to learn how to use primary records for research. The partnership between the Program Coordinator and the Archivist provided an opportunity to process and digitize records related to the student's curriculum and local history interests. We now have a package of resources to use for next year's *The History We Wrote* program and future outreach activities.

One surprise from *The History We Wrote* program was the return of numerous students to the Archives outside of class time to ask questions about records from the collection that related to their research. Some students brought their parents and showed them how to research their own genealogy! *The History We Wrote* program helped us achieve our goal of inspiring students to use resources and archival records to explore history. We look forward to bringing this program back for many years to come!



Pictured here are Program Coordinator Amber Meyer Dunn (left), and Archivist Lisa Lawlis (right), holding two examples from "The History We Wrote" educational program created in 2019 by the Lennox and Addington County Museum and Archives.

Memories from the Vault

Megan Lockhart - Archives Technician, Oxford County Archives

Over the past few years the Oxford County Archives has been working conscientiously to make our resources more accessible. Now, in this age of rapidly developing technology and information at our fingertips, members of the public are often surprised when they visit the Archives to find that not all of our collection is readily available for them to use. We hope to bridge the gap between the public we serve and our collection through our public programming.

We decided that we wanted programs that were not only educational and showcased our collections, but also served some of the needs of our local community. When we think of education we often think of young students in classrooms but there are eager students of all ages and backgrounds in the Oxford community. After conducting a little research, we found that many museums have developed interactive, educational outreach programs designed specifically for a senior audience. This got us thinking, if museums can do this why can't archives? This was how *Memories from the Vault* was created.

Memories from the Vault is an outreach program the Oxford County Archives has been running since 2018. The program, designed by Archives Technician Megan Lockhart, promotes continuous learning, encourages memory sharing and creates an opportunity for social interaction among seniors in the community. We compile records on specific historical themes relating to the county. The themes are chosen with relatability in mind. For example: topics such as farming, local events, summertime recreation, and early school days are more likely to stimulate conversation and stir up memories for participants compared to a lecture on a significant Oxford politician. Archival records such as photographs, journals, newspaper articles, books, posters, postcards, etc. are brought to long-term care centres and retirement residences and shared in a show-and-tell format with participants. Participants are also encouraged to bring their own archival records, most often photo albums, to share with the other attendees.



Archives Technician Megan Lockhart presenting summer themed archival records to residents at Woodingford Lodge in Ingersoll.

Thus far, the program has been highly successful. It is formatted to not only be an educational experience, but also a social one. Participants are provided with some history of the county and given the opportunity to examine the records. Many of the records are designated for programming so they can be handled; having participants actually *touch* the records makes the experience a little more special. The setting is casual and we encourage interruptions, if someone has a story to tell or a question their voice is just as important as our staff's. Staff are not the only "experts" in these sessions. Seniors in the community have memories of events, people and places that no longer exist. Even photo identification has been an unexpected outcome of this program.



Archives Technician Megan Lockhart sharing a "Donkey Baseball" poster with program participants - the funny poster is always an audience favourite!

Our approach to the program has led to it being not only a learning experience for participants but for staff as well. What is a more valuable resource than speaking with people who have firsthand accounts of historical events? We leave time for conversation at the end of the program. This often extends our initially planned hour an extra thirty or forty-five minutes longer. Participants will often look at these photos, posters and other publications with a smile... "My mother was a nurse there for twenty years.; "I was a farmer in Ingersoll for forty-five years and I remember using that harvester". The enthusiasm to tell their stories is palpable and their appreciation of having someone lend an ears a fulfilling experience for all parties involved. Often staff running the program will take notes on the back of copies of photos, recording any information that we were lacking or confirming information we had.

Memories from the Vault has allowed us to increase our relevance and visibility in the community, permitting us to make new connections and strengthen relationships. We have already had program participants express interest in donating their family albums to be preserved for future generations. In addition, the program allows us to serve our audience in new ways, creating a social experience, promoting learning at any age, and providing an opportunity for members of the community to contribute to a lasting heritage legacy. Through innovation within our programming sphere we are always striving to offer more services for our community and are moving away from solely existing as a repository for records.

2019 MAIG Open House Details

This year we are excited to announce that the MAIG Open House will be taking place on Friday October 18th at the Stratford-Perth Archives! Please join us and our gracious host Betty Jo Belton and her team as we explore the beautiful City and its archival collection. Lunch and lively archival conversation will be provided, so we hope you will be able to join us.

When: Friday October 18th, 2019 - 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Where: [Stratford-Perth Archives](#)
(4273 Line 34, R.R. 5, Stratford, ON N5A 6S6)

Agenda: 10:00am-12:00pm • Welcome and Tour of Stratford-Perth Archives

12:00pm-1:30pm • Lunch followed by a chance to explore the Perth County History Trail (weather permitting - please bring comfy walking shoes or boots)

1:30pm-3:00pm • View exhibits next door at the Stratford-Perth Museum (www.stratfordperthmuseum.ca/)

3:00pm-4:00pm • MAIG Meeting

Don't forget to register for this year's Open House! **Please RSVP by Friday October 11th** to: Gina Dewaele, MAIG Secretary-Treasurer: gdewaele@elgin.ca or call 519-631-1460 ext. 154.



Stratford-Perth Archives

