

## **Dundas County Archives Meeting June 5, 2019**

**Present** – Clerk Jo-Anne McCaslin, Committee members: Eric Duncan, Susan Peters, Larry Empey, Lorraine Reoch, Brianne Scott, Evonne Delegarde, Darlene Fawcett.

Call to Order

**Motion by Eric Duncan/seconded by Brianne Scott to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Carried**

### **Old Business:**

- **Renovations** – Eric was happy with the move for the Lynne Cook/UEL records and everything went well. All invoices have been paid and those being reimbursed by the UEL will be sent to their treasurer, Michael Eamer. A few tax receipts will be issued. John Thompson still has to finish some electrical work in the UEL room. The microfilm reader has to be moved from Larry's house.
- **Computers & internet** – The Counties are working on an internet option and the best cost. It is hoped to be resolved within two weeks. Is it possible to “take over” the internet infrastructure in the building from the Medical Clinic which will be relocated by August 1<sup>st</sup>? Mike St.Onge is working with Eastlink. Advise Mike of the clinic moving. Eric will also speak with Tim Simpson. Can a “Hot Spot” be used through the Library? Eric will also check on this & it would be required for possibly two months.
- **Volunteers** – Susan advised there is difficulty in confirming people. Their availability changes frequently and some are only available evenings or weekends.

### **New Business:**

- **Website** – is now functioning and linked through both municipal web pages. Susan at this point is promoting the Archives and providing updates. Also promotes through Instagram and Facebook.
- **Archivist report** – See enclosed report from Susan. The following donations have been received for the digitization project: Mountain Lions - \$1000, Iroquois-Matilda Lions - \$500, Winchester Lions - \$355, Morrisburg Lions - \$500, Morrisburg Legion - \$500.
- **Fees, donations, charges** – it was the consensus of the committee that photocopying fees be paid by an individual prior to doing the copying including the charge for postage.
- **Installation of sign** – may become a lawn sign rather than on the wall. Make a sandwich board indicating where to go for the Archives & UEL entrance at the rear of the building.
- **Hours of operation** – Susan and Lorraine will work together to establish some public hours and they will be placed on the Archives & St. Lawrence Branch websites noting that they are subject to change and to contact either place to arrange a special time if required.

- **Visitor log** - it was agreed to have a book available for visitors to sign in

Lorraine enquired about installing a flag pole and the UEL will pay for half of the cost. It was suggested to have the St. Lawrence Branch website linked with the Dundas County Archives website.

Next Meeting - Wednesday July 10, 2019 at 9am

Meeting adjourned.

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Larry Empey, Chairperson

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Darlene Fawcett, Secretary

## Archives Committee Meeting June 5, 2019 - Archivist's Report

### Updates since last meeting:

Inventory has been completed for the back issues of the **Winchester Press** which had been delivered to the archives. This also included a collection of the press photos. During the inventory the fragile papers were placed into newspaper boxes, for preservation. The boxes have been labelled and shelved. The Publisher had kept the issues for the years ending in 19 in their premises for their regular "from the archives" section. I will have to conduct an inventory of these issues on site in order to complete the full listing of the newspaper. An agreement has been signed to donate the back issues of the **Morrisburg Leader**. I will be coordinating the transfer of these newspapers to the archives for processing and inventory.

### Web site:

Thank you to Katherine Wells of South Dundas and Stephen Mann of North Dundas for setting up a web site for the Dundas County Archives. This is linked through the municipal web pages at <https://northdundas/town-hall/clerk/dundas-county-archives/> and <http://southdundas.com/residents/dundas-county-archives/> This site is for providing information to prospective users / researchers and potential donors as well as to provide updates.

### The St Lawrence Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association and Lynne Cook Collections:

Through a combined effort of both North and South Dundas, the clerks and municipal staff of both, and members of council of North Dundas and volunteers from the community, we were able to move the records from Lynne Cook's home to the archives facility in Iroquois. They are actively in the process of setting up. This could not have been done without the many volunteers brought in by Eric Duncan to renovate the rooms in the building, establish shelving, and the truck from JED Express used in the move.

### Donations:

Eric Duncan presented the Committee with custom designed thank you cards for the Archives. When items or money are donated, a thank you card is sent right away. We received our first cash donation for \$100 for the archives from a member of the community. The Municipality of South Dundas was to issue a tax receipt. Comments have been made to me that others may consider a cash donation, if they could get a tax receipt and if the cash would go to something other than operational expenses (ie. Acquisition of archival records)

**Upper Canada Village** has generously donated a microfilm reader, as well as their entire collection of microfilm records. The printer on this machine needs repair but it does work as a

reader. They have digitized their collections, so they felt that they no longer needed to keep the microfilm or microfiche. These include early newspapers from Eastern Ontario and Upper New York State, The Kingston Gazette, the Bytown Gazette, The Ottawa Citizen, and the Montreal Gazette. There are numerous historic theses on topics relating to the United Empire Loyalists and early settlement in the area. There are census records and indexes for land records for the early to late 1800s. Early wills, probate records, church and parish records. They also had print outs of local census records and the research files on a study of the agricultural heritage of Dundas County. A thank you card was sent to Brent Santin of Upper Canada Village for this generous donation.

We have continued to receive donations from the general public of family and local history records. **Mr. James Jordan** continues to donate historic records, photographs and paintings mostly pertaining to the Village of Morrisburg history. He has also presented us with paintings which he had commissioned for his displays about Morrisburg history. He has also donated several ledgers for hotels dated to the late 1800s, and early school records and photos for the Morrisburg Collegiate Institute. He has completed renovations on the display case he donated and filled this with historic trophies from the Morrisburg Collegiate Institute. A thank you card has been sent to James Jordan.

**Pam French** generously donated several bookshelves for our archives, assisted me in delivering them and donated a used Dell Computer.

The donation agreement has been signed by the **S D & G Head Librarian** to transfer the Local **land records** from their custody to the Archives. This fact has been posted to social media as an announcement. We are waiting the scheduling of a crew to move the records, as soon as we can locate a space to establish them in our facility. Archives storage Space is becoming full.

A collection of vital records had been discovered at the **Old Town Hall in Winchester** in the basement. This includes old ledgers for companies such as the Winchester Rink Company from the 1920's and other early businesses. There are police and fire records dating from the 1950's and 1960's. Originals of Vital records such as marriage, birth and death records were found in this collection dating back to the late 1800's and early 1900s. These records were all delivered to the Archives and have been organized and boxed in the North Dundas section of the shelves.

I have continued to post new arrivals on the **Facebook** page and on **Instagram** for the Dundas County Archives - thanking donators and providing updates on progress.

I have continued to **provide research assistance** to members of the municipalities in locating files, building permits and historic reports. I have also continued to respond to emails requesting research assistance to members of the general public (family history and requests to search newspapers), and reporters of local newspapers. **The Chesterville Record** will be searching their back issues for materials to put into a commemorative issue in June.

Along with Katharine Wells, I have set up a new display in the display case at the Morrisburg Municipal Centre. This display has been in commemoration of the anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic, along with the loss of the North Dundas family, the Allison's from Chesterville. The next display will feature the June 1959 visit of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip to the area. This **display case** will have a rotation of displays showcasing local history, (both North and South Dundas). These will link to items in our collection as promotion for the archives.

### **Volunteers:**

This past month, 24 volunteer hours have been contributed to the archives in assisting me to catch up with the back log of records to be organized. Thank you to Evonne Delegarde, (and her sister), for this assistance.

An appeal to volunteers was sent out in the winter. 29 people did respond, and each was communicated with several times. Some are available only in the winter, some only on evenings and weekends, but a list of potential volunteers has been kept. Most of the tasks which **volunteers** would be conducting can not be done until we have received equipment in the archives – such as:

- We could have volunteers help to organize and scan photos in our collection, but we will first need to set up a scanner in order to do this. While we do now have a scanner – it will not yet communicate with our computer so this will have to be resolved before we can move forward. I need an administrative code in order to open the software.
- I could use assistance by volunteers to help input cataloguing data into a computer database, but we first need the software to create the catalogue
- I could have help to prepare the newspapers for the digitization project, however I must acquire more newspaper boxes and archival tape to repair the fragile newspapers. The Mountain Township District Lions Club, Morrisburg Lions, Iroquois - Matilda Lions Club, the Winchester Lions Club and Morrisburg Legion have donated funds towards the purchase of these items, but they will need to be ordered. Once we have these in place, we can bring in volunteers to assist with the preparation of the newspapers for digitization
- I could use help to man the research room once we are open, but this is not required yet as we are not yet open to the public.

### **Newspaper Digitization Project.**

The United Counties Council has agreed to provide a budget towards this project, to be split between the Dundas County Archives, The Glengarry County Archives and the Lost Villages Historical Society. Ian MacDonald of the Glengarry County Archives handled the RFP process and The Firm **Image Advantage** has been selected to conduct the digitization of the local newspapers. We have approached local service clubs for some financial support to this project, particularly for the supplies of acid free Newspaper boxes, acid free tissues and archival repair

tape. The Mountain Township and District Lions Club, the Matilda Lions Club, Morrisburg Lions Club, Winchester Lions Club and the Morrisburg Legion all provided generous support for this project.

Our next steps will include the purchase of the newspaper boxes and archival tape to begin the repair and stabilization of the more fragile early newspapers. This is a delicate and time-consuming process but needs to be done before these documents can be handled to be digitized. Once digitized, we will preserve the original newspapers in our archives, and the researchers will have access to an OCR searchable copy of these issues.

### **Archives Networking and workshops:**

In recently attending the Archives Association of Ontario annual Conference, I was able to network and became a member of the **Municipal Archives Interest Group**. I was able to learn about the digitization journeys of several other institutions. Happily, I was able to include our local **Tweedsmuir Histories** in a digitization project by the Federation of Women's Institutes, through Image Advantage. This networking has helped me to learn new ways of outreach and engagement for our local community, in order to better serve the community.

June 18 I will be conducting one such outreach programme, with the **South Mountain Branch of the S D & G County Library**. My presentation will illustrate the story of the Dundas County Archives, and how it can provide a service to you. I will continue to seek other such endeavors of outreach for our communities.

### **Moving forward:**

Plans, moving forward are to continue organizing and cataloguing records of the municipalities, as well as any donations from individuals or groups, assisting researchers and facilitating the process by which we can open to the public.

As we now have a sizable collection of Microfilm and microfiche, we will need to find a way to service the microfilm reader / printer which was donated to the Archives by Upper Canada Village. I donated a microfiche reader; however, it needs servicing. There is a Microfiche reader in storage in the Brinston Municipal Building. It was too heavy for me to move on my own so it will be helpful to arrange to have someone from the municipality collect it and move it to Iroquois.

As we have freed up some space in the storage area, perhaps we can schedule a crew to bring in the Land Records currently in the top level of the municipal building.

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