

MAIGazine

The Newsletter of the Municipal Archives Interest Group

Issue 11

August 2015

Please join us for the 2015 Municipal Archives Interest Group's Open House in Peterborough!

Friday, October 2nd, 2015
10:00 am- 4:00 pm

Join us for an exciting day of archival discovery where we will visit both the Trent Valley Archives and the Peterborough Museum and Archives. The day will begin at the Trent Valley Archives at 10 am, and lunch will be provided. For more information about this year's Open House, please see page 17.

Trent Valley Archives

567 Carnegie Avenue
Peterborough, ON K9L 1N1
www.trentvalleyarchives.com



Peterborough Museum and Archives

300 Hunter Street East
Peterborough, ON K9J 6Y5
www.peterboroughmuseumandarchives.ca



Please RSVP by September 18th to
Gina Coady, MAIG Secretary-Treasurer
gcoady@elgin.ca or call 519-631-1460 ext. 154.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| Message from the Chair – Brenda Hicock | pg. 2 |
| Meet the MAIG Executive | pg. 3 |
| Minutes from the 2014 Open House | pgs. 4-6 |
| Minutes from the 2015 AGM | pgs. 6-9 |
| • Financial Statement | pg. 10 |
| Archives Updates: | |
| • Elgin County Archives | pgs. 10-12 |
| • Grey Roots Museum and Archives | pgs. 12-14 |
| • Lambton County Archives | pgs. 14-15 |
| • LCBO | pgs. 15-16 |
| • Middlesex Centre Archives | pgs. 16-17 |
| MAIG Open House Details | pg. 17 |

Message from the Chair – Brenda Hicock

Summer is winding down which means it's time to present this year's issue of our *MAIGazine*. A big thank you to Gina and Gillian for putting it together and to all of our readers who contributed articles. MAIG's annual publication is a great way to showcase your municipal archives and to keep your colleagues around the province informed.

Speaking of colleagues, this year's AAO Conference in London, Ontario, saw MAIG members once again gather together for our Annual General Meeting. MAIG's AGM is an event to which I look forward every year as it allows me to reconnect with archivists from around the province. The roundtable discussion is always enlightening and a great time to exchange ideas and pose questions to colleagues. During this meeting we said good-bye to former Chair Laura Lamb and thanked her for her dedication to MAIG while she served from 2012 to 2015. We then welcomed a new executive. I am excited to take on a new role as Chair; Gillian Shaw is our new Vice Chair, and Gina Coady continues on as Secretary/Treasurer.

With fall around the corner, it's time to start thinking about MAIG's annual Open House. Don't forget to mark your calendars - this year's Open House will be held in Peterborough on Friday October 2nd, 2015! We'll be touring two Archives – the Trent Valley Archives and the Peterborough Museum and Archives (please see page 17 for more details). It should be an interesting and informative day, and I hope to see you all there!

MAIG Executive, 2015-2018

Brenda Hicock, Chair

Brenda.Hicock@vaughan.ca

Gillian Shaw, Vice Chair

Gillian.Shaw@vaughan.ca

Gina Coady, Secretary/Treasurer

gcoady@elgin.ca

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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



Brenda Hicock is excited to take on the role of Chair after serving as Vice Chair since 2012. Brenda started working for the City of Vaughan Archives in 2008 as an Archives Technician shortly after graduating with a Masters of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Western Ontario. Following a year and a half of progressive responsibility, she stepped up to the role of Archival Records Analyst. In 2010, she was seconded to work in the Municipal Election where she recruited staff and helped organize various processes. 2011 saw the Archives move to the new City Hall, where staff now enjoy a state-of-the-art climate controlled storage facility. From responding to information requests and working with donors to promoting the archives and processing records, Brenda's job has been both varied and exciting. Most recently, she embraced the opportunity to become Acting City Archivist where her role will take on a larger scope and will include working with electronic records, retention by-laws, and classification schemes. She looks forward to the exciting times ahead as she continues to learn, and the Archives continues to grow and evolve. Brenda can be contacted by email at Brenda.Hicock@vaughan.ca or by phone at 905-832-8585 ext. 8189.



Gillian Shaw is the newest member of the MAIG Executive, sitting as Vice Chair for the 2015-2018 term. She holds a Master of Information degree from the University of Toronto (2011) and has experience in archives, museums, and records management for both the public and private sector. Prior to working at the City of Vaughan Archives as an Archival Records Analyst, Gillian worked at the City of Markham (Markham Museum) and the Ministry of Health. In addition to her role as Vice Chair, she is also a member of the AAO's Professional Development Committee, and sits on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild as their Secretary. She is excited about the opportunity to work with both Brenda and Gina on the MAIG Executive, and to contribute to the Municipal Archives Community. Gillian can be contacted by email at Gillian.Shaw@vaughan.ca or by phone at 905-832-8585 ext. 8793.



Gina Coady has been the Secretary-Treasurer of MAIG since 2014, and will continue to be the Secretary-Treasurer for the 2015-2018 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 gcoady@elgin.ca or by phone at 519-631-1460 ext. 154.

Minutes from the 2014 Open House

**Minutes
Municipal Archives Interest Group
Open House Meeting
October 24, 2014
Stratford-Perth Archives
(Stratford, Ontario)**

Executive Present: Laura Lamb, Chair and Gina Coady, Secretary-Treasurer

Executive Regrets: Brenda Hicock, Vice Chair

1. Laura called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
2. Discussion regarding making *MAIGazine* open to everyone. It was agreed that since members paid fees, we should keep the status quo.
3. Open House – suggestion for future locations.
2015 – Peterborough
2016 – Wellington County
2017 – Simcoe County (50th Anniversary)
4. Roundtable - News from around the province
 - London Public Library – Arthur McClelland.
Digitization is a work in progress. Staff are retiring and new staff on the horizon. Talk of new machines. Customers want to scan and email. Still using a typewriter. Arthur is trying to convince the organization to digitize the cards to make them accessible. Very busy. Anything online helps. Working on digitizing postcards. Relies on FIM students to help with organizing.
 - Wellington County Museum & Archives – Karen Wagner
County of Wellington is going to give better structure to its records management program and will be moving to use TOMRMS. They are open 7 days a week: Monday to Friday 9:30 to 4:30 pm and on weekends from 1 to 5 pm. They currently have three full time staff and one volunteer. Also, working on a re-cataloguing project to give better access to the art collection. Some de-accessioning is taking place.
 - Huron County Museum - Jenna Leifso, Archivist and Michael Molnar, Corporate Records
New ECM system. Just beginning to digitize newspapers. 1st digitization project. WWII images. Job Creation Program. Government of Ontario student worked on doing an inventory. Closely associated with the museum. Developing a mission statement.
 - County of Oxford – Liz Mayville
Future unknown. Mary Gladwin is retiring. No news on succession planning. The Archives of Ontario are not taking any more municipal archives and is looking into returning them to the municipalities. Service review is being conducted.

- Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre - Sue Schlorff and Deb Sturdevant
Beginning to do strategic planning. Consultants have been hired and meeting with key groups in the community. New Director/Curator. Created a collection plan. Looked at the Ontario Archives collection plan. Just finishing a busy season of researchers. 60% are from outside the county. Still working on backlog. Using PastPerfect database. Staff conducts a lot of outreach covering a very large area. Anne-Marie is working on a revamp of their military page.
- Lutzen Riedstra – Instructor at FIMS at Western University
Involved with the Middlesex Centre Archives. In Delaware. Open on Wednesdays.
- Lambton County Archives – Dana Thorne
Just completed a 5-year strategic plan. Plan focuses on organizing backlog. Dealing with backlog by reducing hours to focus on processing. Next year will see new shelving and organizing the archives. One new exhibit case. Oil Museum of Canada (virtual exhibit) Helping with research and digitization. Assistant archivist is helping with outreach.
- Stratford-Perth Archives – Cindy Sinko, Sean McCoy and Betty-Jo Belton
Big project is planning the new building and move. Posting pictures on HistoryPin.
- Region of Waterloo Archives - Charlotte Woodley
Working on renovating a courthouse built in the 1960s. Will add approximately 9000 sq. feet of staff and storage space. Region is planning a service review. Laura Miller came to do a risk assessment, which focused on the risks the region is facing. Moved and now located in the same department as the museum. Also wrote a recent article in Archivaria.
- Trent Valley Archives
Started as a group for people to go for advice and evolved into a place for people to donate their records. A bequest allowed them to hire someone to work on their website. Receiving lots of collections because there is no other place for them to go, i.e. municipal archives. Conducts outreach with other local groups. Acquired a digital microfilm reader through fundraising. Conducts ghost walks to raise funds.
- Solving Task Saturation for Museum Workers – Paul Thistle
Not currently working in an archival setting. Interested in the quality of life working in museums. Contact: paul.thistle@hotmail.com.
- AAO Archives Advisor – Iona McCraith
Trying to show the value of the organization by visiting groups who work with archives but are not currently involved with the AAO, i.e. the Catholic School Board. Working closely with the Preservation Committee.
Two plans:
 - Survey (early 2015) to membership targeted to find out what our needs and capacity are with regards to digital and analog materials.
 - Look at revamped AAO website, specifically resources. They are being moved into the member only section. Suggestions are welcome!

New area of interest. School archives. Iona wondering and asking for thoughts on why there is a sudden interest in school records, etc.

Received a question from the Municipality of Burlington, Records & Information Co-Ordinator, asking about the role of a city archivist. Role is typically combined with the City Clerks or Records Management role or something else? What is the prevalent way the function of caring for city records comes about? One suggestion includes contacting municipalities of similar size. There must be a strong link between the records manager (city clerk) and archivist.

- County of Lennox & Addington Archives – Shelley Respondek
Slide show to show the before and after process of moving to a new facility. Still expected to provide assistance. Accessibility was number one reason for renovations.

Minutes from the 2015 AGM

**Minutes
Municipal Archives Interest Group
Annual General Meeting
May 28, 2015
Rm. M2001-1 at Fanshawe College, London**

Executive Present: Brenda Hicock, Chair; Gina Coady, Secretary-Treasurer
Executive Regrets: Gillian Shaw, Vice-Chair

Present:

Ann-Marie Collins, Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre
Liz Mayville, County of Oxford Archives
Dana Thorne, County of Lambton Archives
Shelley Respondek, Lennox and Addington Archives
Matt Szybalski, City of Thunder Bay Archives
Ellen Millar, Simcoe County Archives

1. Call to Order

Brenda called the meeting to order at 1:16 pm and welcomed everyone. She introduced the executive and asked for everyone else to introduce themselves as well. Brenda announced that Laura Lamb was resigning.

2. Minutes

There were no omissions in the 2014 AGM Minutes.

Motion to approve the Minutes was put forth.

Motion to approve: Liz Mayville

Seconded by: Ann-Marie Collins

Carried.

3. Report of the Chair

Gina provided each member with a copy of the Report of the Chair (Laura's Report).

No comments were made.

4. Financial Reports

It was suggested that the format of the Financial Reports be changed to aid in transparency.

There was also the question of whether or not MAIG could carry over a balance from one year to the next. We decided that we should switch to another template to make the budget more transparent, maybe to a spreadsheet, and Gina said that she would look into it. Gina will also look into whether MAIG could carry over a balance.

4.1 Financial Report, 2014-2015

Motion to approve: Ann-Marie Collins

Seconded by: Liz Mayville

Carried.

5. Open House

Gina mentioned that Elwood Jones mentioned that he would work with Mary Charles to host the 2015 Open House in Peterborough. Gina said that she would follow-up with him regarding that. Shelley offered the Lennox and Addington Archives as a back-up location.

Ellen confirmed that the Simcoe County Archives could host the 2016 Open House.

The 2017 Open House would likely be held at the City of Ottawa Archives.

The 2019 Open House could be held at Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre.

6. Other Business

Proposed slate of officers for the 2015-2018 period were acclaimed:

Chair: Brenda Hicock

Vice-Chair: Gillian Shaw, City of Vaughan Archives

Secretary-Treasurer: Gina Coady, Elgin County Archives

7. Roundtable

- *Dana Thorne, Lambton County Archives:* The Museums Department of the County of Lambton's Cultural Services Division completed a five-year Strategic Plan in 2013. The Lambton County Archives is working towards goals associated with that plan, including catching up on a backlog of cataloguing, reorganizing the collections storage area, and engaging in more community outreach activities. A major shelving renovation was budgeted for in 2015 but County Council only approved part of the funding. The LCA hopes that the rest of the project can be budgeted for next year and the renovation completed next summer or fall. Major goals of the renovation include installing new flooring, mobile shelving, and improved oversized storage and book shelves. The LCA has been partnering with the Lambton County community to digitize their vintage film. Members of the community have been lending the archives old film, which the Archivist reviews to determine if there is material that has historical significance. Anything that would be valuable for the collection is being digitized and the original film is returned to the donor. A digital copy is kept by the LCA and provided to the donor as well. This partnership has turned up some interesting local footage. Screenings of this footage in Sarnia and Alvinston attracted 80-90 and 130 people, respectively. The community has shown a lot of interest in

seeing the old film. A new website was launched at the end of 2014 and is a great improvement over the old website.

- *Ann-Marie Collins, Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre:* New boss, who has no archival or museum background. New strategic plan being developed over and above the County strategic plan. Number of people coming into the archives is down, but the revenue is up from LDR and photo reproductions. Have about 200 visits a year. Installed new LED lights from UV coated. MF project from Kincardine up to 1972 done. Newspaper had bound copies, and they were able to microfilm them. They aren't accessible yet, but they have created an Excel sheet. Up to almost 20,000 images. They have the diaries from the 1930s, furniture catalogues (probably the biggest number of catalogues in NA), 100,000 postcards in Bruce's collection. Vision for website is to identify people from the First World War. Supposed to be launching June 20th, from an Excel websheet. During Archives Awareness Week, conducted tours at the archives and museum. The attendance wasn't as good as expected. Maybe send out a pass to everybody in the County? Living History Visual Heritage Society. Three-part video on the history of the county. Working on it with their historical society for the 150th anniversary, 2017. Also partnering with their historical society. Still looking for new space. 10-year anniversary this year in the new facility.
- *Liz Mayville, County of Oxford Archives:* It was announced two weeks ago, Liz is now the Archivist. Not hiring anybody else. They decided that they only need two staff people. Assistant hasn't made any attempt to retire. Hopefully, she will be retiring within the year. Currently have two student volunteer. No way that the University of Ottawa will be moving in. Would be fine with moving into something proper.
- *Shelley Respondek, County of Lennox and Addington Archives:* Have been open 9 months from the renovation. Been dealing with a lot of little things, HVAC. In the late fall, something broke. For about a month, five people have been in. Had a part-time assistant for about 6 months, but no longer. More long-distance requests lately. Most of visits to the archives are genealogy. Getting more academic requests due to putting PDFs on their site. Been doing a lot of talks. Recently had a large acquisition of negatives from a local photographer.
- *Ellen Millar, Simcoe County Archives:* Still dealing with backlog. From 33 to 16 municipalities. Have two students with them this summer. Enough in the budget for the summer. Were at the plowing match. Did a scrolling slide show. Still involved with SUMAC. Just did some strategic plan. Did some update to the website. Provided the Barrie Public Library and Our Digital World with scans. Right now, space isn't an issue. Doing a clean-up right now.
- *Gina Coady, Elgin County Archives:* Currently have two summer students (May-August) – positions funded by Young Canada Works and Canada Summer Jobs programs. Contract digitization assistant (March-August) – principally working on digitizing mf corporate records of our municipal government partners. Volunteer (prospective student at FIMS, Western) working two days per week helping to process backlogged accessions. Social media: Flickr site now has 3.6 million total views, averaging 5,000 views per day; Twitter feed approaching 1,000 followers; Facebook page established last month. Digitization equipment:

- acquired 2 new ST ViewScan III digital microfilm reader/scanners; acquired new book2net Spirit book scanner, owned in partnership with the Oxford County Library-using to digitize and publish online key local history publications, including St. Thomas city directories. Repatriated (delivered earlier today) the St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital fonds from Archives of Ontario (6m textual records, ca. 100 photographs) – records were donated to the AO by the hospital in 1985 prior to the establishment of the Elgin County Archives. Assisting St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital Foundation to create a "History Wall" as part of the hospital's current expansion campaign. Approved to participate in Archives of Ontario's new Digitization Partnerships Program: borrow, digitize and publish online under licence the AO's Thomas Talbot fonds and Mitchell F. Hepburn fonds. Received \$5,000 grant from the Elgin County Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society to fund various projects. Facilitated by working with the copyright holder (the Alma College International Alumnae Association) and the publisher the Aylmer Express the third printing of a new history of Alma College, St. Thomas – originally published in 2011 and sold out first two printings. Assisted Elgin Federation of Agriculture in preparing successful nomination of former Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food Elgin Office Representative, Elgin MPP, and Ontario Minister of Agriculture Fletcher S. Thomas for induction in the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame. Acquisitions: Mills Collection – photographs documenting London & Port Stanley Railway operations, principally in Port Stanley, ca. 1915-1930; Dave Rock Collection (former Elgin County Warden and STFD member): textual records and photographs documenting the history of the St. Thomas Fire Department ca. 1870-2000; Clachan Women's Institute fonds, including 5 vols. of Tweedsmuir Histories. Participated in London Free Press Shunpikers Tour 2015 (May 10) – approximately 150 visitors. Setting for film shoot by LA-based digital film production company newformdigital.com – scheduled for launch on YouTube in mid-June.
- *Brenda Hicock, City of Vaughan Archives:* Information requests and tours are up from last year. Going to explore new ways to promote archives using social media. Working on exhibit marrying photography and artwork with a past/present theme for either this summer or early 2016. EDMS still moving forward. Staff changes with retirements and new faces. 2014 was busy with the municipal election.
 - *Matt Szybalski, City of Thunder Bay Archives:* Have had a Flickr account since about Nov. 2013. Hit 1.3 million. Promoted it through the city's website. Got more promotion through print media. Only posts low-resolution. Last spring, the library started a First World War collaboration. Did a presentation to city council, a book and film. Have a commitment to celebrate the city's 50th anniversary. Summer student this year, a project for indexing city by-laws. There is a city by-law relating to a railway by-law. Working 2004 and backwards. In a space crunch. Found an extra room in their building. Are going to use TOMRMS for their records storage. Have money possibly starting next year. Castle, the anti-spam legislation. FOI and access to privacy. Secretary of the Heritage Society committee.

MAIG Financial Report

Financial Report 2014-2015

REVENUE

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Amount previously in bank | \$633.30 |
| Grant from AAO | <u>\$250.00</u> |
| TOTAL | \$883.30 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Open House | \$0.00 |
| Publishing/Mailing | \$0.00 (now being published electronically) |
| Advertising | \$0.00 |
| Meetings | <u>\$0.00 (in kind)</u> |
| TOTAL | \$0.00 |

TOTAL: **\$883.30** (Final amount)

Budget 2015-2016

REVENUE

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Amount previously in bank | \$883.30 |
| Grant from AAO | \$250.00 |
| MAIG Open House | <u>\$0.00</u> |
| TOTAL | \$1133.30 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 2015-16 Meetings | \$0.00 |
| 2015 Open House | \$300.00 (catering) |
| Advertising | \$0.00 |
| Publishing/Mailing | <u>\$0.00</u> |
| TOTAL | \$300.00 |

FINAL BANK BALANCE: **\$833.30**

Elgin County Archives and the Archives of Ontario: A Productive Partnership **Stephen Francom, Manager/Archivist**

In May, the Elgin County Archives (ECA) acquired the entirety of the records comprising the Archives of Ontario's (AO) St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital (STEGH) fonds, F 1399. The fonds was deaccessioned by the AO and transferred permanently to the ECA in accordance with an agreement resulting from discussions during a site visit last September by AO Senior Archivist Sean Smith, as part of the AO's "archivists on the road" initiative. Sean offered that the AO is open to identifying records in its holdings that are better suited to retention at the local level

and repatriating such records to willing and qualifying municipal and other local archival repositories. ECA was the first institution to repatriate AO records under this recent initiative.

The STEGH fonds had been donated to the AO in 1985 by then STEGH President Jon Skafel, largely because no suitable archival repository then existed in the St. Thomas-Elgin community. Soon after its establishment in 2002, ECA acquired corporate STEGH records created since 1985 and therefore was eager to acquire the AO STEGH records and reunite a split fonds.

The repatriated STEGH records are extensive (ca. 6 m. of textual records and graphic material) and present a rich source of information documenting the history of STEGH (opened 1954) and its predecessor institutions the Amasa Wood Hospital, established 1892, and Memorial Hospital, which opened in 1924. The accompanying image, digitized from one of approximately 100 original photographs repatriated with the AO STEGH fonds, presents a staged but nevertheless intriguing glimpse of the Amasa Wood Hospital operating room and surgical staff ca. 1905.



Amasa Wood Hospital Surgical Staff ca. 1905

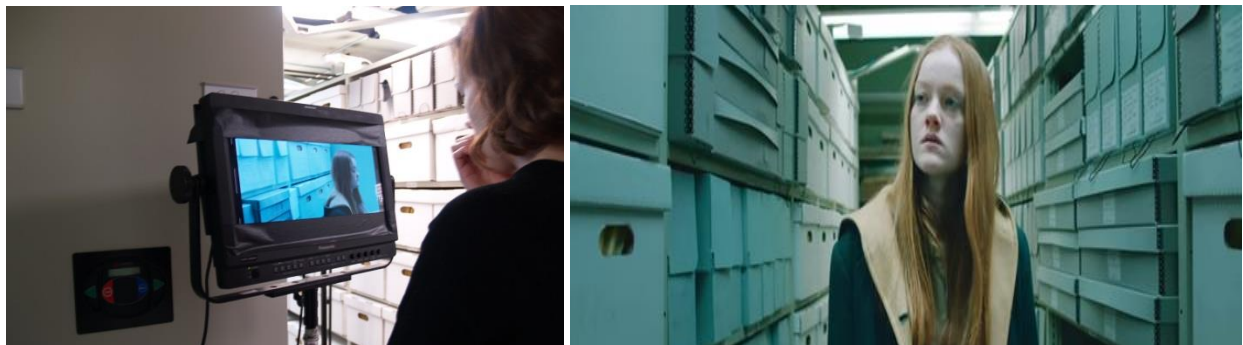
ECA is also partnering with the AO by participating in the AO's Digitization Loan Program, whereby qualifying archival institutions are granted permission to borrow and digitize original AO records and, under license, to publish and host the resulting digital archives online. The ECA and AO have concluded a loan agreement allowing ECA to borrow, digitize and publish online the AO's Thomas Talbot fonds, F 501.

The fonds includes 45 large-format plans (1802-1832) and a lease settlement register (1841-1846) documenting land distribution in the 29 townships throughout southwestern Ontario in which Talbot controlled land allocation. The plans show survey grids, clergy and school reserves, town sites (including London), first nations villages, mill seats, footpaths, trails,

waterways and crossings, local and regional roads. Most significantly, perhaps, the plans include personal land settlement information, with the names of grantees and dates of occupation penciled in by Talbot on individual lots.

ECA's digitization and online publication of the Thomas Talbot fonds has been financially supported by the Elgin County Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society. The Talbot fonds digitization project is already approaching completion, with online publication of the digitized maps and a nominal index to property holders named in the maps via the ECA website (<http://www.elgincounty.ca/archives>) to follow in the fall.

In March, 2015 New Form Digital filmmaker Emily Diana Ruth shot her short feature "Cold" at various locations in and around St. Thomas including the Elgin County Archives: <https://youtu.be/2Ke7tNSFPDg>.



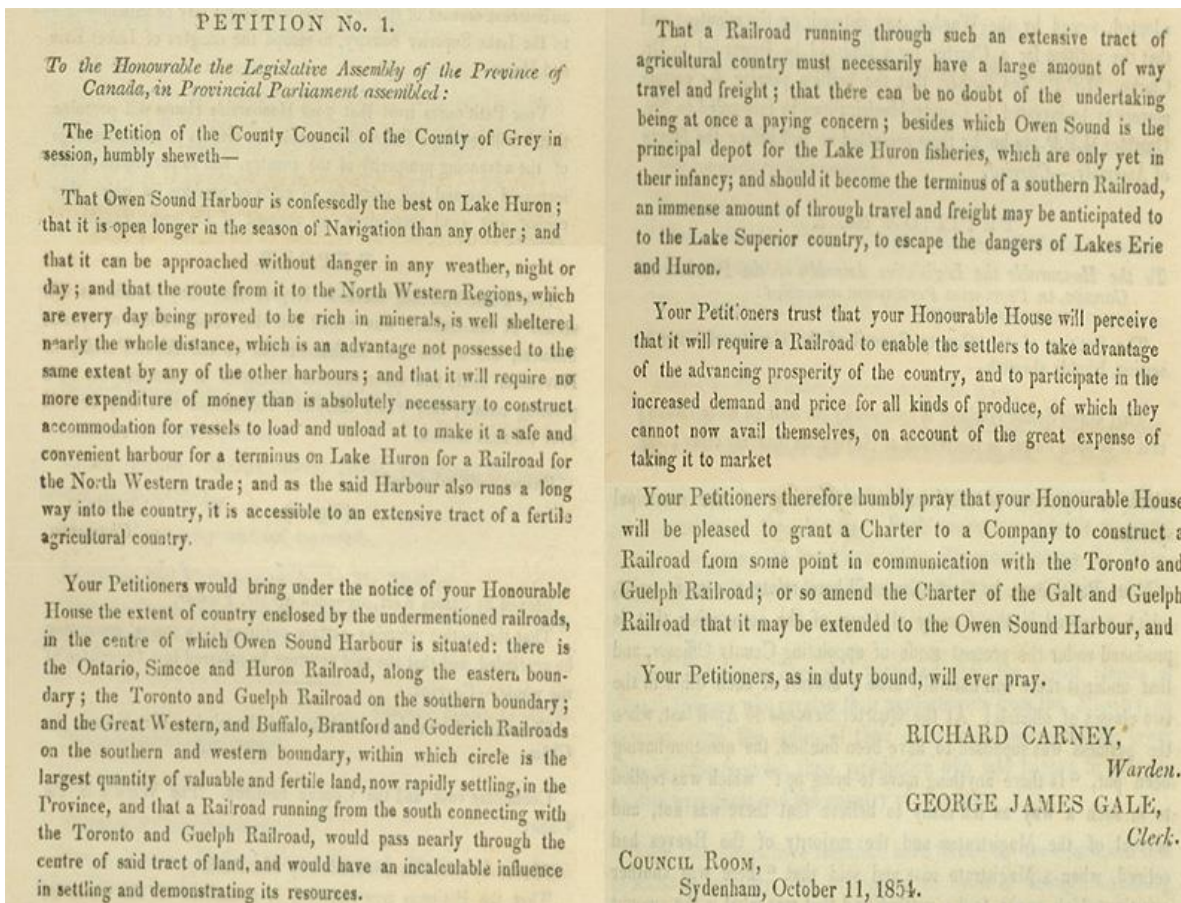
Images from the filming of "Cold", 2015

Summer 1854 Railroad Petition: The Start of a Long and Arduous Journey

Rebecca Shaw, Archival Assistant Summer Student - Grey Roots Museum & Archives

An exhibit entitled *Arrivals and Departures: The CPR in Grey County* recently opened at Grey Roots Museum & Archives. At its centre is a diorama of the east side of Owen Sound harbour, circa 1910, which took four years and thousands of volunteer hours by members of the Bluewater Modellers to build - not unlike the amount of work that went into bringing the railroad to Owen Sound.

Although the first train would not arrive in Owen Sound until June 12, 1873, petitions, by-laws, and reports on the benefits of a railroad from Toronto to Owen Sound began as early as 1850.¹ Largely isolated during the winter months, the benefits of a railroad to Owen Sound were numerous: farmers would be able to reach new markets; commerce and industry would boom; and, populations would expand. However, were these benefits worth the exorbitant cost to build the railroad? This was the question on many minds during more than two decades of debate over the railroad.



Scan of the 1854 Railroad Petition – “PETITION No. 1.” [GF1S1F1I89]

Owen Sound was first suggested as the northern terminus of the Toronto and Lake Huron Railroad in 1852, but was quickly replaced by Collingwood in January 1853. This decision prompted a flurry of newspaper articles extolling the virtues of Owen Sound and a petition from the Grey County Council to Legislature in April 1852 to extend the Toronto to Guelph railroad into Owen Sound.² They made another petition in October 1854, however it was to no avail (please see the above petition).³ Richard Carney, Warden of Grey County, had mistakenly persuaded community leaders that no financial commitments to the railroad companies would be necessary; he believed that the railroad companies would recognise Owen Sound's superiority and select it on this basis alone. Unfortunately for Owen Sound, the Northern Railroad still selected Collingwood as its northern terminus and the Toronto and Sydenham railroad scheme collapsed.⁴ In 1857, Carney, now mayor of Owen Sound, requested a report on the practicality and advantages of a railroad into Owen Sound from the Grand Trunk line, but this also fell through.⁵

Debate over the benefits of a northern railroad extension from Collingwood versus a central railroad line to Toronto, and concerns about the costs of either one, kept the railroad out of Owen Sound for the next fifteen years: “Tempers through the County were easily ignited. Friends became temporary foes. Churches sent prayers to heaven of wide demand. Even

farmers, depending on their locality, were divided in their opinions.”⁶ Finally, a By-law passed on April 20, 1871 in favour of the Toronto Grey and Bruce Railroad. When the first train arrived in Owen Sound in 1873, citizens relieved the tensions of the past two decades with a celebration that lasted until the early hours of the morning: “There were great throngs of spectators...Third and fourth avenues were crowded! The Band of the 31st Battalion played. The engine was tastefully decorated with garlands of flowers and flags. Addresses were given...”⁷

End Notes:

1. Melba Morris Croft, *Fourth Entrance to Huronia* (Owen Sound: Brown Printers Ltd., 1980), 50, 128.
2. Paul White, *Owen Sound: The Port City* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2000), 44–5.
3. Proceedings of the Municipal Council of the County of Grey, 10–12 October 1954. A transcription of this petition can be viewed online: <https://greyrootsmuseum.wordpress.com/2015/05/28/1854-railroad-petition-the-start-of-a-long-and-arduous-journey/>
4. White, *Owen Sound: The Port City*, 45–6.
5. Croft, *Fourth Entrance to Huronia*, 72.
6. *Ibid.*, 117. Some of the correspondence over the railroad can be seen at the Grey County Archives [PF77, Box 46, Railroads].
7. *Owen Sound Advertiser*, 19 June 1873. Quoted in Croft, *Fourth Entrance to Huronia*, 128.

With thanks to Archives Volunteer Mike MacLean, scanning

Grey Roots Museum & Archives is located at 102599 Grey Road 18 – just west of Inglis Falls and a few minutes south of Owen Sound in the Municipality of Georgian Bluffs. For information on any of the programs or services at Grey Roots, please refer to our website at www.greyroots.com or call 519-376-3690 or toll free 1-877-GREY ROOTS.

Discoveries at the Lambton County Archives

Dana Thorne, Archivist

What are historical facts? What happens when historians cannot agree on one version of history? Who decides which facts are right? This type of historical debate is stirring in Lambton County surrounding the man who tapped the first oil gusher in Canada, which spewed thousands of barrels of oil into the sky and launched a bona fide oil rush in sleepy Oil Springs, Ontario. For decades historians have thought it was a man named Hugh Nixon Shaw, but recent scholarship suggests that it was actually John Shaw.

Newspaper articles from the *Toronto Globe* and the *Hamilton Times* in 1861 and 1862 refer to "Hugh Shaw" as a successful businessman who patented a still and opened a refinery in Oil Springs, however there are no references to Hugh and the oil gusher in any 1860s newspapers.

Furthermore, Hugh's own journal of business expenditures from 1861 to 1863 does not refer to the gusher.

In comparison to Hugh, John Shaw was a significantly less successful businessman. The *Toronto Globe* described on February 2, 1862 how "... last January found him a ruined, hopeless man, leered at by his neighbours, his pockets empty, his clothes in tatters..." John got lucky with his gusher, and his accomplishment is referenced numerous times in 1860s newspapers including *Hamilton Times*, *Toronto Globe*, and *Sarnia Observer*. Additionally, secondary sources published between 1900 and 1935 all credit John.

If virtually all of the primary sources refer to John Shaw as the man who tapped the gusher, how did history come to celebrate Hugh Nixon Shaw?

Belden's Illustrated Historical Atlas of Lambton, Ontario was the first source to credit Hugh in 1880 but matches the description of the penniless John: "[Hugh Shaw] had been reduced by his want of pecuniary straits, that it is related of him that the very day he struck oil he was refused credit for a pair of boots." Two men melded into a single story.

When Oil Springs celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1958, a flurry of articles credited Hugh with the discovery. The Reverend William G. Shaw, Hugh's grandson, paid homage to his grandfather with by visiting Oil Springs. He told the *Sarnia Observer*, "I was quite surprised... to find that there were write-ups about the Shaw well in the newspapers..."

Current histories written about oil discoveries in Lambton County consistently credit Hugh Nixon Shaw as a penniless, down-on-his-luck vagabond who made an incredible discovery. The stories of Hugh Nixon Shaw and John Shaw have melded together under a single name, and it appears the wrong name is being commemorated for an important discovery.

Local Government Archives: Too big to fail: A review of the Local Government Archive Survey of 2014

Dave Evans, Corporate Archivist - LCBO

Recently, the ICA journal *COMMA* published a survey of local government archives in North America. This survey was the result of a three year project initiated by the government records section of the Society of American Archivists. While not being the only survey ever done in this area, it does have the unique distinction of being the only one to contain hard statistical data derived directly from contacting any organization holding local government archival records. Put simply, the survey is as broad and as representative as it could possibly be. This is both its strength and weakness.

The survey of local government archives in North America was conducted in 2014 covering Canada and the USA. This survey has told us two things which were probably already known by archivists. The first is that collaboration with the community is essential. In the survey it is quite clear that the majority of support for the care and use of local government archival material comes broadly from the community volunteering its time. Those who are connected with local government archives will have known this for a long time.

The problems of funding and legislation are not specifically addressed by the survey. This is not surprising as it covered fifty states, ten provinces and respective territories. To address differences in funding and legislation relating to all of those jurisdictions at once seemed impossible at this stage. The survey itself was meant to give a broad overview of structure and focus of local government archives. It would then serve as the basis to focus in on specific areas or topics. Clearly though the reliance on non-government funding seen in the survey, suggests chronic underfunding has dramatically affected the way these are archives operate. Clearly the issue of legal control of government records in the hands of private community organizations is the elephant in the room that the survey does not address.

The survey's deficiency is too broad to give us specific guidance to some of the more pressing day to day concerns of archives. It does however help shows us the second important aspect of the survey's findings. The results clearly show that local government archival documentation is in hot demand and enjoy wide spread public support. This support appears to be mainly coming from genealogists that have broadened their research to include a wider historical context. However, how the 'life of a person' has been broadened to become the 'life of community' is still unclear. Despite this, researchers of local history and historical societies remain the go to organizations if you want to know where the record of a local government lies.

The survey leaves us with a broad overview of the landscape, and as such, reaches its stated objective. The work of future surveys must therefore focus on the crucial difficulties in transforming what is clearly ad hoc and locally driven, to a more sustainable model where isolated local organizations can network and derive the benefits of that synergy.

Middlesex Centre Archives Now Open for Researchers!

Carolynn Bart-Riedstra, Archivist

Middlesex Centre Historical Society and the Middlesex Centre Archives Committee are pleased to announce the opening of the Middlesex Centre Archives (MCA) to the public. Starting in October, 2014, the archives are now open every Wednesday (weather permitting) and the first and third Saturdays of the month. The archives is closed for statutory holidays.

Thanks to the dedication of the Executive Committee, which includes Bev Hughes (Chair), Carol Small (Vice-Chair), Dr. Ken Veldhuis (Secretary) and Wayne Tingle (Treasurer), MCA is the recipient of a two-year provincial Trillium Grant totalling \$50,000. The grant was approved to hire a professional archivist from May 1st, 2015 - March 31st, 2017, and Carolynn Bart-Riedstra rejoined MCA on May 1st, after a brief sabbatical. Bart-Riedstra served as the AAO's Archives Advisor from May 2005 - March 31, 2012. Prior to that, she was the archivist at the Stratford-Perth Archives from 1986-2005.

The MCA Committee is working diligently to continue to save and protect the documentary heritage of the Municipality of Middlesex Centre. This includes records from the former London, Westminster, Lobo and Delaware Townships.



Image of the Middlesex Centre Archives

If you know of someone who is interested in volunteering or who has donations for MCA please contact us at 519-518-5590. The MCA is located at 2652 Gideon Drive, Delaware, ON. For more information please visit our website at www.middlesexcentrearchive.ca or follow us on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/MiddlesexArchiv>.

MAIG Open House Details

This year we are excited to announce that the MAIG Open House will be taking place in October in Peterborough! We are very fortunate to be visiting both the Trent Valley Archives and the Peterborough Museum and Archives this year, and to discuss what is happening with Municipal archives across the province. Lunch will be provided, so we hope you will be able to join us.

When: Friday October 2nd, 2015 - 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Where: [Trent Valley Archives](#) (567 Carnegie Avenue)

[Peterborough Museum and Archives](#) (300 Hunter Street East)

Agenda: 10:00-11:45 am • Welcome and Tour of the Trent Valley Archives
12:00 –1:30 pm • Lunch at Peterborough Museum and Archives new multipurpose room
1:30 – 3:00 pm • Tour of the Peterborough Museum and Archives
3:00 – 4:00 pm • MAIG Meeting

Don't forget to RSVP for this year's Open House! Please RSVP by September 18th to:
Gina Coady, MAIG Secretary-Treasurer: gcoady@elgin.ca or call 519-631-1460 ext. 154.