



Elgin County Museum Advisory Committee Meeting

November 4th, 2020

Elgin Heritage Centre

Present: Vice-chair- Perry Clutterbuck, Joan Mansell (Secretary), Sally Martyn, Amanda VandenWyngaert, Kim Teuscher

Regrets: Chair- Helen Van Brenk, Charlie Jenkins

Staff in Attendance: Brian Masschaele, Mike Baker, Ally Shelly (recording secretary)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:04 a.m. by Vice-chair Perry Clutterbuck

2. Additions to the Agenda

None

3. Approval Minutes from November 6th, 2019.

Moved by Sally Martyn, and seconded by Joan Mansell that the minutes from the November 6th, 2020 meeting be approved. Carried.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

None

5. Correspondence

A letter from the Ministry of Tourism and Sport was received regarding the approval of the museum's Canadian Museum Operating Grant application. The letter was received prior to the event held by minister, Lisa MacLeod announcing CMOG funding at the Heritage Centre July 2, 2020.

6. Curator's Report

a) Mike Baker updates members on museum projects.

Advantage was taken of available technology to continue to connect with people during the Covid-19 shutdown. Exhibit catalogues and installation photographs were posted on the website.

See exhibits here: <https://www.elgincounty.ca/museum/exhibits/>

A number of Zoom talks for local community groups were completed, recorded and posted on various YouTube channels (See links below).

Mike was invited to contribute articles to the North Shore Beacon, history section with Dr. Cole and Dan McNeil. Articles on the Kaoka coffee substitute fad and the Middlemarch Giant have been written so far.

(Read articles here - <https://northshorebeacon.ca/history-2/>).

Many artifact donations have come in as a result of the shut down, people have been cleaning house. Some of the more significant offers include Trinity Church 91st chapel, which is being reconstructed in the Heritage Centre, Elgin Regiment uniforms and a sample case from Cannon.

b) 2021 Exhibit Schedule

Mike circulated a proof of the 2021 exhibit schedule. This information will be published in the 2020 Elgin Tourism Guide.

Exhibits include:

Unmasking Influenza

January 9 to April 18

The Ones We Met - Inuit Traditional Knowledge and the Franklin Expedition

May 1 to August 29

My Story, My Tattoo

September 11 to December 23

(Rescheduled from 2020).

See attached proof of the 2021 rackcard for more information.

Two of the shows are free-standing, a semi-permanent show will likely be created to supplement the travelling exhibits and feature items from the museum's collection.

c) Attendance Report

Mike circulated an attendance report. Key figures comparing years 2019 and 2020, including programming, attendance, and giftshop numbers were provided.

Heritage Centre closed March 14, 2020

Reopened to public August 11, 2020

Attendance Totals January to October 31, 2020

Attendance	2019	2020
Total Attendance	3259	860
Total Offsite	238	36
Tours	80	6
Events	1189	186
Zoom		38
Room Rentals/Meetings	285	98
Teacher/Chap	48	
Education	285	
Walk Ins Total	1134	496

Zoom Talks

July 9 – Jumbo vs. Slippery: The Great Debate – 6

Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/B5QjkrDv1nQ> - 16 views

Aug. 5 - Alzheimer Society - 18 St. Thomas-Elgin: Our Railway Legacy

Aug. 25 - Golden K Kiwanis -25 St. Thomas-Elgin: Our Railway Legacy

YouTube Videos (recorded on Zoom)

Workshop talk – Jumbo and the Elgin County Museum - **83 views** Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/> June

18 - RCR - The Aerodrome of Democracy: The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan in Southwestern

Ontario – **106 Views** Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/L9DyElkBqgc>

Or listen to podcast here:

<https://rcrm-speakers-series-podcast.simplecast.com/episodes/the-aerodrome-of-democracy-the-british-commonwealth-air-training-plan-in-southwestern-ontario>

August 11- Southern Area Tweedsmuir [EDr5VHOGM7o](https://youtu.be/EDr5VHOGM7o)

d) Gift Shop Report

Total sales January to November 2020: \$851.40 minus vendor payouts \$175.90: net: \$675.50.

Admissions (donations): \$227.04.

January to October 31, 2019 net gift shop revenue: \$1,437.30. Admissions: \$1,340.19.

7. Bushell Estate Planning

Mike provided an overview of the gift's components and planning to date.

Estate of Donna Vera Evans Bushell Contributes \$425,000 to the Elgin County Museum

Outdoor Learning Environment - \$5,000

Purchase tables, chairs and other amenities to build a welcoming outdoor learning environment for visiting students and community groups.

Spring 2021 plans will be made to create an outdoor learning space for educational programming near the Heritage Centre. Plans are in place to enhance the space with building date stones.



Augmented Reality App - \$205,000

This major donation will build up the profile of the Museum and boost Elgin County as a compelling tourism destination. London-based EXAR Studios will develop the 'Engage' app to allow residents and visitors to see communities like St. Thomas and Port Stanley in a brand-new way. The free app will guide everyone on adventures that are essentially digital scavenger hunts, allowing users to experience attractions just by looking through the camera of their smart phone. Murals will come to life, billboards and signs move, and most significantly, the history and present of the community come to life through a new visual reality.

Augmented Reality Research Associate - \$50,000

Generates content for the app in collaboration with regional museums and archives.

Mike has identified a few locations in St. Thomas to explore as possible locations.

Fiona Murray has been hired to fulfil this position. Fiona has been a summer student in the past and recently completed a communications certificate from Centennial College. Position begins mid November.

Digital Archivist position - \$50,000

Preparing archival collections for on-line access through the county website.

Position will be posted soon for successful candidate to start in the new year.

Cycling Trials Signs and Murals - \$75,000

Create artwork and signs to interpret locations along the network of cycling trails in Elgin County highlighting its historical roots and current culture.

Restore Link Trainer - \$5,000

The Link trainer is a WWII era flight simulator used to train pilots at the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan schools all over Canada including two here in Elgin County. Visitors will be able to experience some of pitch and roll characteristic of these trainers while inside the restored unit.

Restoration of four major works of art - \$10,000

First work, Spohn's Flats by R.H. Whale has been sent to the conservator.

Acquisition of significant historical and cultural artifacts - \$25,000

A collection of interest is being explored, more information will be provided at a later date.

8. Review of Reopening Procedures

Brian Masschaele provided an update on the re-opening of the Heritage Centre.

The Heritage Centre closed March 14, 2020 due to the pandemic and reopened to the public August 11, 2020 after implementation of new health and safety procedures for staff and visitors.

Council approved all protocols and procedures including new hours (Tuesday to Saturday 10:00a.m to 12: 00p.m and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.) and limiting visitors in the building to 3 individuals who do not reside in the same household or two social circles provided each group is 5 people or less.

New signage, protocols, contact tracing and screening have worked well so far.

Visitors should feel welcome, but safe when visiting the museum and archives.

9. Year-to-date Statistics

See Curator's Report

10. Future Committee Direction

Brian reminds the committee that appointment of officers needs to take place in 2021.

Elgin County Museum Advisory Committee members terms as of 2021 are:

- Helen VanBrenk, Chair (4rd Year of Third 4-year term, 5th year as Chair) – WI member
- Perry Clutterbuck, Vice-Chair (3rd Year of Fourth 4-year term, 6th year as Vice-Chair) – Member at-large
- Joan Mansell (3rd Year of Fourth 4-year term, 3rd year as Secretary) – WI member
- Kim Teuscher (3rd Year of First 4-year term) – Member-at-large
- Charlie Jenkins (4th Year of First 4-Year term) – Agricultural representative
- Amanda VandenWyngaert (3rd Year of First 4-year term) - Museum liaison member
- Councillor Sally Martyn – County Council representative

Membership succession planning needs to be addressed. The opinions of the members of this committee are valued, open discussion on plans for the future are welcome and any recommendations will be taken back to council.

We recognize the limits of members and ask members to contemplate their position and ability to stay on the committee. Please consider your membership and let us know your plans in order for the museum to prepare for 2021.

11. Museum Partner Reports

Amanda VandenWyngaert provided an Elgin County Museums Update, including partner events for the Aylmer-Malahide Museum and Archives; Backus Page House Museum, Edison Museum/Collection, Elgin County Railway Museum, Gay Lea Museum and Port Burwell Marine Museum. See Attached.

Amanda shared that the Aylmer-Malahide Museum and Archives also received a donation of \$130,000 from the Donna Vera Bushell Estate to fund a digital archivist position for one year.

Sally Martyn reports on the Sparta Forge and Anvil Museum and The Sparta Church and Cultural Centre.

They were able to open June 22 to Labour day, 2020. Grants were received for 2 summer students; these students returned from 2019. Their past experience was beneficial as they were able to set up the space they felt comfortable with regarding new protocols.

The students have prepared the Church Museum for an exhibit on “Pioneer Know How” for the 2021 season.

12. Committee Member Reports

Joan Mansell shared a newspaper clipping from a small event the Elgin District Women's Institute held at the Dan Patterson Conservation Area.

A scholarship of \$500.00 was presented to Karen Reymer and the Woman of Excellence Fair Award was awarded to Madeline Jenkins for her continued service and dedication to the Mapleton Women's Institute. The Mapleton Women's Institute is disbanding after 112 years. The Elgin District Women's Institute had planned to hold a district meeting in August, which was unable to go ahead as planned. Instead a Zoom meeting was held. The theme was Green Eggs and Ham. 50 people attended via Zoom or telephone.

Perry Clutterbuck shares that the Shedden Remembrance Day event will not be hosted as usual this year. Approximately 25 people will attend, an invite only ceremony which will be hosted online for people to attend virtually. The Harvard's are still arranged to fly over and Ted Barris has pre-recorded a talk which will be included in the program.

On Sunday November 8th, 2020 at 10:00 AM, members of the community that would like to view the Remembrance Day service, are encouraged to visit Establish Media's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/establishmedia>

13. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held February 3, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. at the Heritage Centre.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

Motion to adjourn, moved by Amanda VandenWyngaert. Carried.

ELGIN COUNTY
Heritage Centre

460 SUNSET DRIVE, ST. THOMAS

JANUARY 9 - APRIL 18, 2021

Unmasking Influenza

The world's deadliest influenza pandemic — known as the Spanish Flu — swept across Canada between 1918 and 1919. With no effective vaccine or treatment available, the virus infected Canadians living in cities, towns, and farms. Approximately 55,000 Canadians died; most of the casualties were young adults. This new display examines the lasting impact of the influenza pandemic in Canada.



Presented by Ingenium – Canada's Museums of Science and Innovation - and developed by Canadian Geographic Enterprises, Unmasking Influenza is a travelling display that showcases artifacts from the collections of the Museum of Health Care in Kingston and from the City of Ottawa.

MAY 1 - AUGUST 29, 2021

The Ones We Met - Inuit Traditional Knowledge and the Franklin Expedition

The fate of Sir John Franklin's 1845 expedition was one of the Arctic's most enduring mysteries, until the wrecks of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror were found. This exhibition explores the role of Inuit oral history in solving that mystery. It features photographs, illustrations and an animated map of routes charted by Europeans looking for a Northwest Passage in the 350 years before Franklin's expedition. Visitors can hear stories of Inuit encounters with Franklin and his men, and of Martin Frobisher's voyages to Baffin Island in the 1570s.



*Watercolour illustrations
by Heather Campbell,
an Inuit artist from
Nunatsiavut (Labrador)*

Developed by the Canadian Museum of History and the Inuit Heritage Trust.

SEPTEMBER 11 - DECEMBER 23, 2021

My Story, My Tattoo

My Story, My Tattoo features 32 photographs and stories of people and their amazing tattoos. The exhibit includes audio stations, videos, and text panels. Participants represent every walk of life - from a cancer survivor to teachers and their students, a firefighter and a farmer – and all living throughout Wellington County. All of the individuals were open and honest, and their stories and personalities are represented through this series of thought-provoking and colourful images. *A Travelling Exhibit from the Wellington County Museum and Archives*



Call or check our website for hours of opening.
519.631.1460 ext. 193   elgincounty.ca/museum

Elgin County Museums Update
November 4, 2020

Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

- Open by appointment only
 - Current exhibit, “In Service Of” an exhibit that looks at the history of the local service clubs, fraternal orders, and other community groups, and the impact they’ve had on the community
 - Maximum of 6 visitors at a time
 - Masks mandatory
- Tour of Homes cancelled

Backus Page House Museum

- The house is decorated for Christmas
 - Open Saturday and Sunday until December 20
 - You have to pre-book and pre-pay for your tours
 - Maximum of 5 people at a time
 - Masks mandatory

Edison Museum/Collection

- The Edison, Vienna & Area Museum Operated by the Bayham Historical Society has moved into their new building (the old restaurant)

Elgin County Railway Museum

- Closed from September 20 until mid-November to the public
- When they reopen it will be for their winter hours (Saturdays from 12 pm – 4 pm)
- Cash transactions are discouraged and face coverings are mandatory

Gay Lea Museum

- Site closed due to COVID-19

Port Burwell Marine Museum & Lighthouse

- Due to COVID-19 the Marine Museum and Lighthouse remained closed for the 2020 season