



ELGIN COUNTY MUSEUM ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Meeting Date: Wednesday, June 14th, 2023, 11:00 am

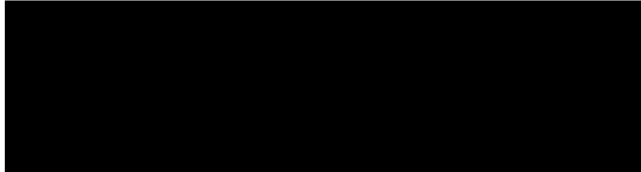
Location: Elgin County Heritage Centre

1. Call to Order
2. Additions to the Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes from February 15, 2023
4. Business Arising from Minutes
5. Correspondence
 - a) Crane Plaque
6. Curator's Report
 - a) Media Coverage: Globe and Mail Article, *Meet the Collector with Hundreds of Vintage Bikes*
7. Bushell Estate Update
 - a) Oneida Project
8. Collection Review
9. Museum Partner Reports
10. Committee Member Reports
11. Next Meeting Date –
Proposed meeting dates: Wednesdays September 6 or September 13, 2023,
November 1st, 2023
12. Adjournment

A light meal will be served.



October 12, 2021



Re: Elgin County Museum Expression of Interest for the Acquisition of Crane Conservation Area Plaque

Dear 

Further to our telephone conversation of October 6, 2021, enclosed please find the report that was considered by Elgin County Council on September 14, 2021 and minutes as it pertains to the Crane Conservation Area Plaque located on Iona Road in the Township of Southwold.

I am following up on the instruction provided to me by Elgin County Council. Please advise your client that Elgin County Museum has an interest in keeping this plaque in the public domain and is willing to work with your client towards a mutually beneficial outcome that may include acquisition by the museum under the terms of a Deed of Gift. A sample of this form is attached.

As discussed, please assure your client that privacy will be respected on this matter as our deliberations unfold.

Sincerely,



Brian Masschaele,
Director of Community and Cultural Services

Cc: Mike Baker, Manager of Museum and Archives

Encl: Elgin County Council Report and Minutes, September 14, 2021
Elgin County Museum Deed of Gift form

County of Elgin
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas, Ontario
N5R 5V1 Canada
Phone: 519-631-1460
www.elgin.ca

Meet the collector with hundreds of vintage bicycles

Part of Rick Wolfe's 200-bike collection is on display at the Elgin County Heritage Centre

OLIVER MOORE
URBAN AFFAIRS REPORTER
CENTRAL ELGIN, ONT.

Don't ask Rick Wolfe which of the 200 vintage bicycles in his collection he likes the most. They're too varied, and he's spent too much time hunting them down and fixing them up to single out a favourite.

After decades of acquiring rare and wondrous machines — this one with an actual steering wheel, that one with a sinuous frame of steam-bent wood, this other one with a gear so huge the rider needed to be pushed into motion — he keeps looking, and keeps making oddball discoveries.

The basement of his home in Komoka, Ont., has a raised ceiling to accommodate the collection of them, which resides in climate-controlled security. His wife Marian has laid down the law: What happens in the basement is up to him, the upstairs is her domain.

The physical limitations of the basement restrict him somewhat. But he keeps acquiring, sometimes buying a whole collection of bikes and parts to secure one or two items. To preserve them in the country. To prevent them ending up in a dump.

"As a collector, you grow to the realization that ownership is only one-tenth," he said. "Basically you're a caretaker to these things. Because you know, we move on. Life takes us and they have to go to another."

Such personal collections teeter on that line between obsession and labour of love. And as television programs such as *Antiques Roadshow* joust for attention with reality shows about hoarders, they speak to a contemporary tension: While stuff has become a dirty word, some stuff is still worth keeping. They also recall a



Bicycle collector and restorer Rick Wolfe stands among a portion of his collection on display at the Elgin County Heritage Centre in St. Thomas, Ont. PHOTOS BY NICOLE OSBORNE/THE GLOBE AND MAIL



concept known as the cabinet of curiosities. In previous centuries, wealthy people would display oddities and treasures, gathering whatever appealed to them. Some of these became the basis of modern museum collections.

But then, as now, collecting requires discernment. Anyone can accumulate whatever they like, and while it may mean a lot to them that doesn't make it meaningful.

Mike Baker, the curator at the Elgin County Heritage Centre, where some of Mr. Wolfe's bicycles are on display, remembers a few instances of being approached by people and having to tell them gently that their treasured items lacked display value. The owner of a collection of 157 vintage creches was particularly put out. Mr. Wolfe's collection appears to fall on the safe side of the line. He points out that there are

vintage bicycles in the permanent collection of the Canadian Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa. And there was a 2012 show about the art and machines of cycling's early era at the Guggenheim's Venice outpost to add credibility to the pursuit.

They've been enough of a draw at the Elgin museum — Mr. Baker estimated attendance is up 50 per cent — that the exhibition was recently extended a few months, through the start of September.

The robust market for classic bicycles also speaks to their value. But Mr. Wolfe says he's not chasing a payout with his collecting, noting that restorations can take him years of unpaid labour. He's machined his own spokes for the wheels, cut his own leather for the saddle. He has an Amish connection in Ohio for making wooden wheel rims and bought the whole tire supply of a Dutch company going out of business.

"If you're getting into it for the money, you're going to be a poor man," he said, quoting a collector who helped mentor him. "I find it

fulfilling. Some guys want to sit and do crosswords. Some people shoot pool. I go to my workshop."

One gets the sense that if two-wheelers had not been invented, Mr. Wolfe would have found something else to focus on. As a child he collected cigar boxes, admiring their designs. After leaving home as a teenager he earned extra money finding and selling antiques. He eventually landed at Ford Motor Company, where he worked for decades as a painter, artist and detailer before retiring at 50. Somewhere along the way he fell in love with vintage bicycles and motorcycles.

Mr. Wolfe loves to talk about where he found his bikes — tobacco kilns come up with surprising regularity — or their niche in history, and tends to find a willing ear for his stories at dozens of bikes shows annually. In late May he showed off his riding chops at an event at the Elgin museum. He was on a high-wheel bike, one of those comical-looking yet dangerous 19th-century machines with a small back wheel and an enormous front one, garbed in a reproduction of the outfit worn by a local cycling club of the same era.

But he's now 66, and not as spry as he used to be. The time he rode 1,200 kilometres in seven days on a high wheel, dodging full beer cans thrown at him in New York State, is a trip that won't be repeated. He's aware of the sands slipping away. The antique bikes crowd tends to be as grey-haired as the opera set, so he'd love to nurture protégés who might continue his life's passion. Some of his collection may end up in museums. But there needs to be a new generation as seized with saving and bringing back to life these old machines.

Mr. Wolfe recently tutored a younger man on how to put together a vintage high-wheel bike. It's not yet clear whether that achievement scratched an itch in the student, or ignited a passion.

"I'm waiting for a young person to come up behind me and grab the baton," he said.





REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

FROM: Brian Masschaele, Director of Community and Cultural Services

DATE: May 16, 2023

SUBJECT: Installation of Oneida Settlement Story Mural at Elgin County Heritage Centre

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT County Council hereby approve the installation of an interpretive mural depicting the settlement story of Oneida Nation of the Thames on the exterior of the Elgin County Heritage Centre subject to the terms and conditions contained in the May 16, 2023 report titled Installation of Oneida Settlement Story Mural at Elgin County Heritage Centre.

INTRODUCTION:

This report seeks County Council's approval for the installation of a mural on the west-facing exterior wall of the Elgin County Heritage Centre which will depict the 1840 settlement journey of the Oneida Nation of the Thames, a journey that took them from upstate New York, across Lake Erie and through present-day Elgin County to lands on the Thames River.

DISCUSSION:

The Department of Community and Cultural Services has established a strong working partnership in recent years with the Oneida Language & Cultural Centre. This was initially based on regular research visits by members of the Oneida community to the Archives and was elevated in 2019 when representatives of the Centre were invited to view the facilities and collections of both the Elgin County Museum and Elgin County Archives. This began a discussion on ways the two neighbouring communities can work more closely together on Indigenous programming and historical research. One outcome was Oneida's participation in the 'Museums of Elgin County Database' beginning in 2022 which is hosted by the County and directly supported by Museum staff. Another outcome is that the Manager of Museum and Archives provides regular curatorial support to the community. Furthermore, staff of Elgin County Library have recently begun to visit the community to promote library services to Oneida residents. All of these efforts are on-going.

A further opportunity to solidify this partnership now exists through a proposed mural project depicting Oneida's settlement story and the journey taken in 1840 to their

current location along the south bank of the Thames River which is directly adjacent to the Township of Southwold. A substantial part of this journey took place in Elgin County, emanating from Port Stanley and then northwards along Kettle Creek to the present location. This mural will provide an opportunity to make the public aware of this significant journey that intimately connects Oneida Nation of the Thames and Elgin County at a site located on a major tourism corridor.

The following are aspects of the proposed project:

- Attached is one depiction of the settlement journey previously produced by the Oneida Language & Cultural Centre which served as the initial inspiration behind the project and will act as the conceptual basis going forward.
- The mural will be 8 feet high and 16 feet wide and will be located on the west facing exterior wall of the Elgin County Heritage Centre (see attached photo). The preferred location is marked as “A” in the attached photo. This location is adjacent to a space already in use as a picnic area for the general public.
- Project specifications will be similar to those used for the installation of six murals across Elgin County as led by the Museum in 2021 and 2022 through funding received from the estate of Donna Vera Evans Bushell.
- The Oneida Language & Cultural Centre will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the County and will then commission the artists involved. It is expected that at least two artists will act as a team on this project, both of whom are residents of Oneida.
- The mural will be painted on site at the Oneida Language & Cultural Centre on smaller panels which will then be mounted together at the Heritage Centre to achieve the cumulative mural size of 8 feet by 16 feet.
- The mural will hang for a minimum of five years and will then be extended year to year depending on its future condition.
- The museum will make visitors aware of the mural and provide additional material from the Oneida Language & Cultural Centre to interested persons.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Total budget for this project is \$8,000 which includes the costs for artists' fees, materials, anti-graffiti coating and installation. These funds already exist in the Museum's 2023 operating budget through projects associated with the bequest received from the estate of Donna Vera Evans Bushell. No further County funds are required to proceed.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Serving Elgin	Growing Elgin	Investing in Elgin
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exploring different ways of addressing community need. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engaging with our community and other stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fostering a healthy environment. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhancing quality of place.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services now and in the future. <input type="checkbox"/> Delivering mandated programs and services efficiently and effectively.

LOCAL MUNICIPAL PARTNER IMPACT:

Completion of this project will further solidify relations with a key strategic partner along Elgin County's border and fits in well with the County's Indigenous outreach efforts. The Oneida Language & Cultural Centre will benefit by gaining free interpretive space at the Heritage Centre to bring awareness to their community's settlement story.

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Regular updates about the mural's development will be posted on the County's social media accounts. An unveiling ceremony involving representatives of the Oneida Nation of the Thames, County Council, the general public and local media will be planned upon completion.

CONCLUSION:

Should Council approve this project, it is expected that the mural will be completed and installed by the end of 2023 with an unveiling ceremony to follow either during fall 2023 or spring 2024. The Elgin County Museum Advisory Committee, which has two representatives from Elgin County Council (Councillors Giguère and Hentz), will have an opportunity to provide input into this project as it progresses.



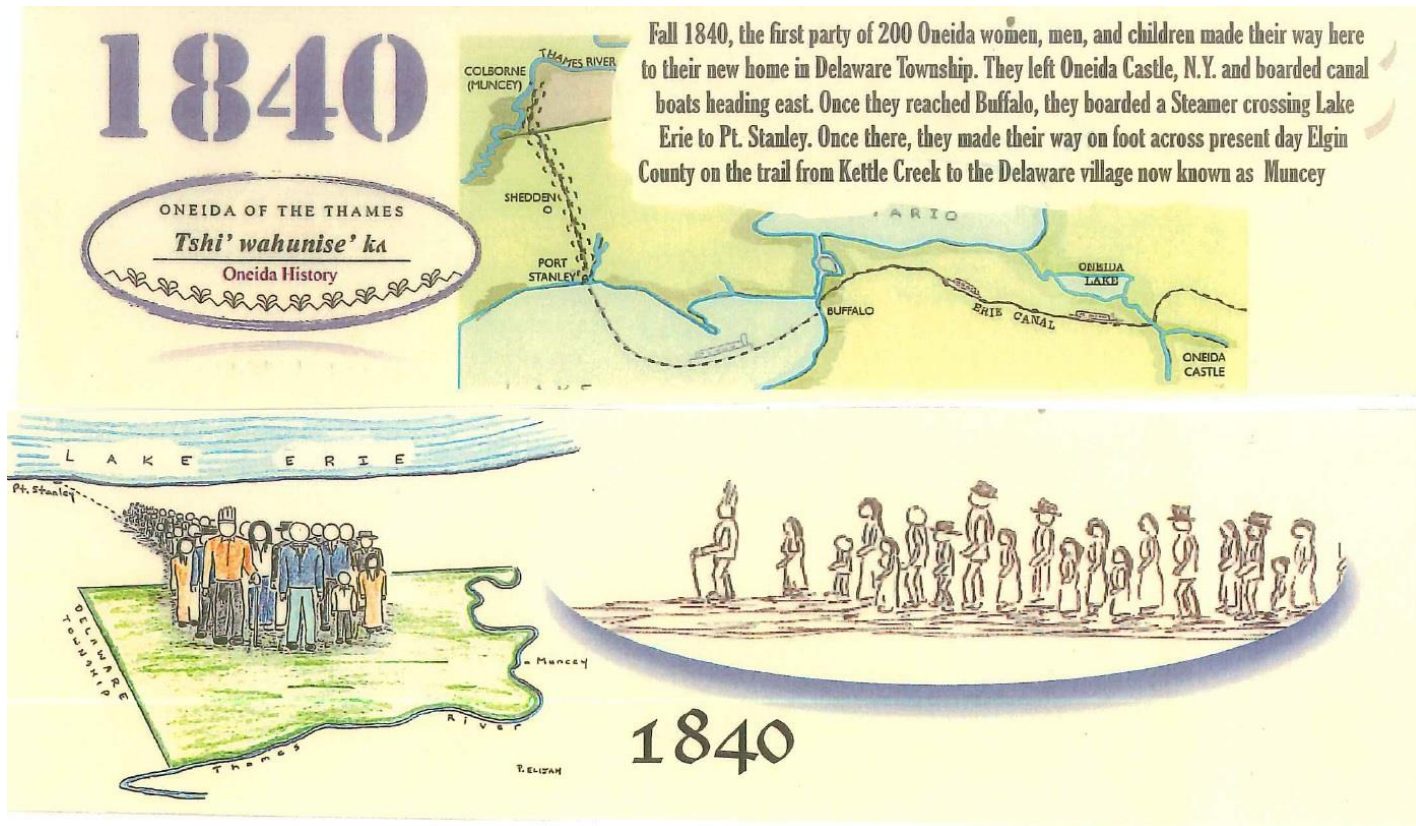
All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Brian Masschaele
Director of Community and Cultural
Services

Approved for Submission

Steve Gibson
Chief Administrative Officer (Acting)





Location A

Location B

ROB FLACK, MPP
Elgin-Middlesex-London



Constituency Office

750 Talbot St., Suite 201, St. Thomas, Ontario N5P 1E2

☎ 519-631-5995 ☎ 1-800-265-7638

📠 519-631-9478 ✉ rob.flack@pc.ola.org

🌐 www.robflackmpp.ca

April 12, 2023

Elgin County Heritage Centre
460 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas, ON
N5R 5V1

Members of the Advisory Committee,

I would like to voice my support for the creation of an exhibit honouring Dr. James W. Crane (1877-1959) in the Elgin County Museum. His contributions to the community and to conservation were truly ahead of his time.

Dr. Crane served as a doctor in Iona and Wallacetown, was a University of Western Ontario Professor and Dean of the Medical Centre. He purchased land and created a conservation woodlot in Iona Station, where in 1938, he planted over 7000 trees of 85 different species. His intention was to preserve this woodlot for generations of people to enjoy. He donated the lot to the University of Western Ontario, who later passed it to Elgin County to maintain as a conservation woodlot. In 1976, the woodlot again changed hands to the Lower Thames Conservation Authority who maintained the woodlot in memory of Dr. Crane.

In 1961, there was a cairn placed on this property with a brass plaque commemorating the conservation efforts of Dr. James Crane where it remained until recent years. Sadly, the woodlot changed ownership again in 2019 and has since been compromised, and the plaque has been removed.

I believe that the Elgin County Museum would be an excellent home for the recovered original plaque (if it can be recovered) or a new plaque in honour of Dr. James W. Crane. It is my understanding that the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority has confirmed that there is \$9000 available to create a memorial for Dr. Crane.

Mr. Jim Crane, great nephew to Dr. James Crane is a great source of information about the legacy of Dr. Crane and his contributions to Elgin County. He will be able to provide photographs and relevant documents for an exhibit.

Rob Flack

Cc: Mark Peacock, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (mark.peacock@ltvca.ca)

Cc: Mr. Jim Crane (jecranefarmer@icloud.com)

Elgin County Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Heritage Centre Information

The following information contains the goals, progress and timelines for the Elgin County Heritage Centre. The details provided below are included in the Elgin County and Local Municipal Partners Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2021-2026. Some of the other progress and goals not included in the list below will apply generally to all Elgin County facilities and staff. The full Joint MYAP can be accessed on the Elgin County website on the [Accessibility](#) page.

General Requirements

Goals

- Continue training of Heritage Centre staff, Elgin County Museum Advisory Committee members, and volunteers on the AODA and Ontario *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to people with disabilities

Timeline –Ongoing

- Continue training Heritage Centre staff, Committee members and volunteers on AODA and OHRC

Information and Communication

Progress

- Heritage Centre collaborates with Legislative Services Department and Cultural Services Department staff to upload content to the website to ensure it is compliant with the WCAG 2.0 Level A and AA requirements

Goals

- Following website redevelopment - develop robust accessible document training strategy for website content uploaders onto the County Site, including Library and Heritage Centre staff
- Provide social media training for Heritage Centre and Cultural Services staff for web content accessibility to ensure that social media posts are compliant with the IASR requirements

Timeline –Ongoing

- Provide social media training for Heritage Centre and Cultural Services staff

Employment

Goals

- Continue to ensure that volunteer recruitment and onboarding for Heritage Centre volunteers is compliant with the AODA requirements
- Update Heritage Centre volunteer application form to ensure public knows accommodations and accessible formats and/or communication supports are

available upon request during the recruitment process for Elgin County Museum Advisory Committee members and volunteers

Timeline –Ongoing

- Ensure volunteer recruitment and onboarding for Heritage Centre volunteers is AODA compliant

Timeline –2021-2023

- Update Heritage Centre volunteer application form to ensure public knows accommodations, accessible formats and/or communication supports are available upon request during the recruitment process

Design of Public Spaces Progress

- Elgin County Heritage Centre constructed in 2017
 - Building is equipped with designated accessible parking spaces, a universal washroom, accessible door operators at entrances, paved walkways and accessible ramp for barrier free path of travel
- Elgin County Heritage Centre continues to consider people with disabilities who use mobility aids and wheelchairs when designing exhibits and displays to ensure full access to facilities for all visitors

Goals

- Create Universal Washroom Emergency Call Button Alarm Procedure for all County facilities equipped with universal washrooms
 - Collaborate with Heritage Centre and Admin Building staff to ensure procedure is implemented for universal washroom and training is provided as needed
- Create Service Counter Design Guidelines including mobility device friendly access to be shared with Local Municipal Partners
 - Consider placement and location of information, signage, brochures etc.
 - Redesign service counter area and desk in the Heritage Centre to make more accessible for all visitors

Timeline –2021-2023

- Collaborate with Heritage Centre and Admin Building staff to implement and provide training on procedure

Timeline –2024-2026

- Redesign of Heritage Centre service counter area

**Customer Service
Progress**

- Considers people with disabilities when providing services to the public including school group programs and public events
 - Ensures exhibits, displays and facilities are accessible to all visitors, and accommodations are made available upon request

Goal

- Ensure all Heritage Centre staff, Museum Advisory Committee members and volunteers receive the accessible Customer Service Standard training

Timeline –Ongoing

- Training for Heritage Centre staff, Committee members and volunteers on Customer Service Standard