

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WHITEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY HELD ON JANUARY 24, 2024 AT THE WHITEWATER MUNICIPAL OFFICE AT 12:00 HOURS

Present: Janis Tomkinson, Debbie MacDonald, Heather Campbell, Judith Humphries, Evelyn St. Amour, Stephanie Plebon, Daryl McLaughlin, Mark Bell, Amber Finan, Jim Butterworth, Joanne Pratt, Terri Saunders, Sandra Groves, Lawrie Barton, Sandra Buttle

A light lunch was served before the meeting.

1. WELCOME

President, Janis Tomkinson, welcomed everyone to the meeting and it was called to order at 12:20 h.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Evelyn St. Amour,
And seconded by Amber Finan,

That the minutes of the annual meeting held on January 20, 2023 be approved. –
Carried.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT 2023

An official report is not available as the treasurer is away. A report will be given at the February 2024 meeting.

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President, Janis Tomkinson, presented her report for the year 2023 as follows:

- Janis thanked everyone, every member, every volunteer, every project lead, everyone who helped make the Ross Museum look great, attract visitors, and involve our communities in 2023.
- In January 2023 the process was started to hire students through the CSJ program with the application being submitted.
- In April 2023 approval was received to hire two students and the hiring process was started.
- In May 2023 a new computer was acquired for the office.
- In June 2023 two high school summer students were hired under the CSJ program who started in July. Both students agreed to assist at the Plant Sale Day and the Antiques Appraisal Day in June. Joanne Pratt organized another very successful plant sale and we will look at hosting another Appraisal Day in 2024.
- Our Students were Gabriel Ambroziak and Isis Laviere-Bell. Gabriel's focus was working on the Past Perfect program with Fay Bennett. Fay indicated that he added quite a number of accessions to the program, understood the program well, and was very accurate. Isis focused on touring visitors through the museum and coordinating some of the events at the museum. Isis organized a Pioneer

Craft Day for Kids, working with ConnectWell. Both students worked quite well together and covered each other when absent.

- In July we hosted musician Marc Audet. The event attracted approximately 25 attendees. We may look at another event with Marc in 2024.
- In August we began the process of building a new website. The Committee included Janis Tomkinson, Judith Humphries and Sandra Buttle. The website was successfully launched January 9, 2024. We also hosted a successful Pioneer Craft Day for Kids and an Art Show was held at St. Aidens. A few members participated in painting Barn Quilts for the museum.
- In September we were invited to contribute to the 100th Anniversary of the Beachburg Public School. Our display showcased our museum in the community.
- Year-end Numbers:
 - 112 tourists signed the book that toured the museum between June and closing September 2nd;
 - Visitors to Art Show 36;
 - Marc Audit Musical 25;
 - Pioneer Day for Kids 13 children and 8 adults;
 - Over 400 visited the community through the Annual Tour de Whitewater Cycling Event in July.
- Over the summer we attended the Beachburg and Cobden Fairs as well as the Taste of the Valley in Cobden in October. While these events don't always increase membership numbers, they are worth attending for the visibility and it would be beneficial to add Renfrew Fair in 2024.
- We participated in the Canada Day Parade.
- The Exhibit Hall window had displays throughout the seasons.
- Fay Bennett completed her WW1 book and she presented at the Legion on November 11, 2023. As the Archivist, Fay worked with the summer student Gabriel, and answered questions via messenger and posted on Facebook.

A special thanks to the Executive: Judith Humphries, Vice-President; Zoë McMaster, Secretary; and Pat Krose, Treasurer, for supporting the President throughout the year and keeping everything in order.

Again, a special thank you to everyone who helped over this past year. All of the events, meetings, improvements to the museum, the administration, etc., couldn't have been accomplished without the support and help of ALL the members.

We look forward to 2024, building on events, our profile, and contributing to many events to include all our communities of Cobden, Westmeath, Beachburg and of course Foresters Falls.

5. DIRECTORS' REPORTS

A. REPORT OF VICE-PRESIDENT, JUDITH HUMPHRIES

Judith stated that it was a pleasure serving as Vice-President over the past four years and working with Janis Tomkinson, President. Her job was to assist the

President wherever possible and they spent many pleasant hours together working on projects. Some of these projects included the successful application for summer students, and working on the committee to find a website designer and launching our new website. She is pleased that the website which includes a land acknowledgement. We applied for a Trillium grant to house and restore the antique snow roller which is displayed outside the museum, but were not successful due to bureaucratic reasons. We plan to try again in March 2024. Judith would like to continue as chair of the snow roller restoration committee.

Judith emphasized that the primary job of a museum is to look after the artifacts donated and entrusted to its care. It is our legal responsibility and everything else is secondary. Information about the snow roller was included and can be accessed on the museum website. Judith stated that she believes the snow roller is unique in Ontario if not Canada. Everyone was encouraged to support our efforts to raise funds erect a shelter and restore the roller. Any information or stories about snow rollers would be appreciated.

Judith undertook the role of proper maintenance and storage of the quilts. Judith and Lenore Haycock sewed storage bags for the quilts which now belong to the museum.

The conservation of woolen military garments and various other garments need urgent attention. Judith has put them through her freezer to eliminate cloth moths and some of the collection is still waiting freezing as it takes three weeks of freezing to get rid of moths and grubs. Eggs are more difficult. This process was prompted by a visit from Janet Carlisle retired curator of the Arnprior Museum as arranged by our Curator, Lawrie Barton.

Janet Carlisle also suggested a video of the interior of the museum on our new website but we do not want to provide information about what is in the museum but that may attract theft of artifacts.

Judith also helped Joanne Pratt with the garden and participated in the creation of barn quilts that will be displayed outside one of the museum buildings in 2024.

Judith thanked everyone and stated it was a pleasure to serve on the executive under President Janis Tomkinson.

B. REPORT OF CURATOR – LAWRIE BARTON

A decision was made by the Board to hire a person to clean the Exhibit Hall, Log House and St. Aidens Church. The cleaner was very thorough and took pleasure in putting things back with a few interesting ideas.

The hiring process of two summer students was completed in June. The students were capable of doing the designated work of archivist assistant and tour guide. It is recommended that for future students that a complete list of

duties be made as a guideline/reference and include the cleaning and keeping the buildings safe.

A Members Art Show was held at St. Aidan's which went well and it was suggested that it would be worth while doing this event again in 2024.

The Exhibit Hall window was changed seasonally by Lawrie Barton, Amber and Evie Finan, Mary, Joanne Pratt and Janis Tomkinson, who also put Christmas lights on the Ross House railing.

Many items were accessioned. Some larger items were offered but had to be declined due to space.

The cleanup of the Drive Shed was a huge success with many volunteers turning out. Doug Severin took on the job of property manager for some repairs and helped with the Drive Shed clean up but we still require volunteers to help with changing light bulbs, etc.

Once the museum closed the job of putting away items for the winter began. Volunteers rolled and stored the quilts in special bags, and Judith Humphries took on the task of looking after the wool garments and placing them in her freezer to kill insects and then bringing them back for storage. It would be helpful if we had a freezer on-site.

Some baby nightgowns were received but yellowed with age. They have now been refreshed and ready to be placed in the museum. Fay Bennett assigns items accession numbers and once accession numbers are on each item they are placed in the appropriate building.

Lawrie has enjoyed her time as the Volunteer Curator over many years.

C. ARCHIVE REPORT – FAY BENNETT

No official report was received.

D. GARDEN REPORT – JOANNE PRATT

Joanne advised that the rain barrels were a great addition and Judith Humphries assisted her in the gardens. The picnic tables were put away for the winter. A plant sale will be held in June 2024, exact date to be determined.

E. MEMBERSHIP REPORT – EVELYN ST. AMOUR

We have approximately 40 paid members and 40 unpaid members. We need to develop a strategy for unpaid members. A redesign of the membership card is also underway. The membership fee has been increased to \$20.00 each as it has not been increased since opening the Museum in 1995.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that a fire hydrant was installed in front of the exhibit hall. You must park 3 metres (9 feet) from a fire hydrant.

7. ELECTIONS 2024 – ELECTIONS OFFICER, SANDRA BUTTLE

The Nominating Committee consisted of Hazel Hawthorn, Janis Tomkinson and Evelyn St. Amour. The same committee was used for the past election. If anyone would like to be on this committee, please contact the President.

The committee worked through the membership list, including former members, making phone calls and sending e-mails, to contact possible nominees for vacant positions as well as asking people we knew.

The Executive for the Whitewater Historical Society requires three Executives members to constitute a quorum so that business and decisions can be carried out.

The importance of filling all positions is crucial to our existence as the Whitewater Historical Society. If you would like to nominate yourself for a position this is acceptable. It is also possible to be on the Executive and also be involved on other committees so your volunteerism can be expanded to as much as you would like and we always need help.

Nominations of members can be made if they are not in attendance but permission must be obtained before nominating them.

The 4 Executive Positions are: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

A. PRESIDENT

Our current President, Janis Tomkinson, has agreed to stand as President for another 2-year term so Janis Tomkinson was named President by Acclamation.

B. VICE-PRESIDENT

It was moved by Hazel Hawthorne,
And seconded by Lawie Barton,

That Daryl McLaughlin be nominated for Vice-President. Daryl accepted the nomination. – Carried.

C. TREASURER

It was moved by Evelyn St. Amour,
And seconded by Judith Humphries,

That Debbie MacDonald be nominated for Treasurer. Debbie accepted the nomination. – Carried.

D. SECRETARY

No nominations were received for Secretary.

It was resolved that Sandra Buttle will be the Recording Secretary until this role can be officially filled.

2024 Officers:

Janis Tomkinson, President

Daryl McLaughlin, Vice-President

Debbie MacDonald, Treasurer

Sandra Buttle, Recording Secretary

The Whitewater Historical Society will remain healthy because you all have agreed to fill these important positions.

8. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Daryl McLaughlin,
That the meeting adjourn. – Carried.

Time of Adjournment: 13:10 h