

MAIGazine

Newsletter of the Municipal Archives Interest Group

Issue 5

September 2009

**Peterborough Museum & Archives
2009 MAIG OPEN HOUSE
Saturday, September 26, 2009 – 1:00 pm
Mary Charles**

It's that time of year again; the AAO's Municipal Archives Interest Group is hosting its annual Open House. This year's location is the Peterborough Museum & Archives. On September 26 Archivists will gather at this site for a brief meeting, a fascinating facility tour, and an awesome barbeque hosted by Mary Charles. The meeting starts at 1:00 p.m., so there's plenty of time to get there. And if you get there early, feel free to enjoy the museum which opens at 12:00 pm.

The Archives is located at:

Peterborough Museum & Archives
300 Hunter Street East (Ashburnham Park)
Peterborough (K9J 6Y5 for MapQuest purposes)

So come on out, hang with your colleagues and enjoy a scenic late summer day in beautiful Peterborough! Please RSVP soon with Mary Charles (mcharles@peterborough.ca) or Dan Zelenyj (dan.zelenyj@vaughan.ca). We hope to see you there.



The Peterborough Historical Society established Peterborough's first museum, the Victoria Museum, at Inverlea House on June 22, 1897. For Canada's 100th birthday, the Peterborough Centennial Committee chose a to build a new Museum in Ashburnham Memorial Park as the City's official centennial project. On October 28, 1967, the Peterborough Museum and Archives (official name as it appeared in the 1967 Bylaw) opened incorporating much of the original Victoria Museum's collections. As time went on it became known as the Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives. By the 1970's the archival collection had developed a more significant role within the Museum and the local community.



The Archives offers research opportunities to the public. Due to space restrictions, public visits to the Archives require an appointment. The Mary Rogers Room on the main floor houses the museum collection's reference library and the local history reference library is located in the Archives Reading Room. The Archives collects, preserves, and makes accessible archival material relating to Peterborough and area such as the private papers of individuals and families; records of companies, clubs and other organizations; and the public records of the City of Peterborough. Two large and significant local photographic collections have been acquired over the past decade; Balsillie Collection of Roy Studio Images (300,000 negatives) and Parks Studio (75,000 negatives). The Parks Studio fonds, one of the Catherine Parr Traill botanical scrapbooks and Fred Roy's 4 decades of diaries have been designated as Canadian Cultural Property.

The original Museum building is a project of Eberhard Zeidler, a major influence in the Canadian architectural community. Zeidler Partnership is recognized for design excellence with over 100 national and international awards. Eberhard Zeidler is an Officer of the Order of Canada, the Order of Ontario and recipient of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Gold Medal.

In 2008, the Museum's name was officially changed back to the Peterborough Museum and Archives. Three Modular Buildings facilitate growing programming needs, including the Museum Management & Curatorship Program of Fleming College.

Currently, three Museum galleries offer exhibitions on the history and development of the Peterborough area. One gallery houses special and touring exhibitions.

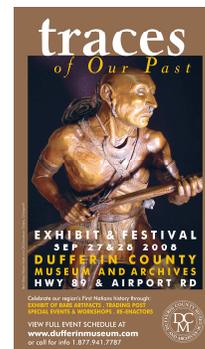
The Museum offers barrier-free access, a gift shop, picnic facilities, parking and a scenic location.



Photo courtesy of Matthew Fells

Dufferin County Museum & Archives 10th Annual MAIG Open House Saturday September 27, 2008

Steven Brown, and the staff at the Dufferin County Museum and Archives hosted the 10th Annual MAIG Open House.



On September 27, the Municipal Archives Interest Group held its 10th Open House. We enjoyed the DCMA's third annual "Traces Festival" which celebrated pre-contact and early-contact times in central Ontario.

We were led on a wonderful tour of the facility and enjoyed meeting with colleagues, and were also entertained by the Royal Newfoundland Regiment encampment, cannon and musket firings, period weaving demonstrations and more.



Photo courtesy of Matthew Fells

The Dufferin County Museum and Archives was opened in 1994 in a purpose-built facility that looks like a huge green bank barn with a red roof and silo. The archives is located in the “pig pen and straw shed” built on the side. In addition to records from the municipalities of Dufferin County, the collection includes the Abstracts of Title and Copy Books from the Dufferin County Land Registry Office, school records from the Dufferin County Board of Education, as well as the growing general archives generated in the community. Too learn more about the DCMA visit their website at www.dufferinmuseum.com.

From the Chair

Dan Zelenyj

I am very pleased to assume the role of MAIG Chair for 2009-2010. Having been Vice-Chair of the interest group for the last couple of years, I’ve had the opportunity to work with and learn from some great people, namely Ellen Millar of the Simcoe County Archives, Ann-Marie Collins of the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, and David Sharron of Brock University . In particular, I am indebted to past Chair David for his sound advice and support. Unlike most of us, Dave is not actually in the employ of a municipality. However, he has been a great advocate for municipal archives in general, and in the Niagara region specifically.

MAIG’s focus for this year will be on strengthening our outreach efforts through a revised MAIG directory and working with the Archives Advisor to develop tools to assist municipal archivists in assessing their programs and advocating more effectively for resources with their sponsoring agencies. While municipal archives in the province have experienced considerable growth and success over the past 15 years, Ontario still lacks a comprehensive archival presence at the regional and local level. Therefore, there is still a significant need to educate our sponsors, supporters, and the public regarding the functions and potential organizational and societal contributions of archives. I believe that we must work to clarify the concept of “total archives”, stressing that in addition to their cultural role (extremely important in and of itself), archives form (or should form) an

integral part of the management of municipal business records for purposes of transparency and accountability, and to support organizational efficiency. Indeed, archives are the cornerstone of compliance with the record-keeping provisions of the Ontario Municipal Act. Far too many municipal leaders and members of the public continue to view archives as value-added services focusing solely on cultural records that would be nice to have if financial resources permitted, rather mission-critical, must-have business units that manage the essential evidence of government business.

Perhaps one area worth exploring is development of a greater understanding of archival functions among the records management community. My own view of the relationship is that the divide between records managers and archivists is largely artificial and needs to be bridged. The ideal solution, to me, entails a merging of archival and records management functions, or looked at another way, blurring professional boundaries to create an information management model where records are administered as part of a single broad function encompassing the whole of the records life cycle (or continuum, depending on which flavour you prefer) from record-keeping system design to final disposition. Some inroads in this direction have been made, but generally the dichotomy between archives and records management is alive and well, with change coming only incrementally and with consensus. So the order of the day would seem to be **educate, educate, educate!!!** Tell the sponsors (senior municipal managers, politicians, etc.), tell the records managers, and anyone else who will listen (and if they aren’t interested in listening, tell them anyway!). With more tools and resources available to spread the message, the greater the impact of that message and the greater the possibility of it being acted upon.

I would encourage all those interested in developing or improving promotional tools to contact the MAIG Chair or AAO Advisor. We look forward to hearing from you.

Executive Election

After the 2009 MAIG Annual General Meeting, a new officer was elected to the Executive. Mary Charles was acclaimed for a three-year term, and in 2009-2010 will act as the MAIG Vice-Chair.

Dan Zelenyj holds an M.A. specialized in Archives Administration from the University of Windsor, and is City Archivist at the City of Vaughan (it's the City above Toronto). He has held various positions at the City of Vaughan Archives during the past 19 years and has also worked at the Archives of Ontario and Wayne State University Archives. He has served on the AAO Board, is a past IDC Chair, and is presently the MAIG Chair. He believes that the development and expansion of municipal archives in Ontario can only be achieved by demonstrating to resource controllers and stakeholders that municipal archives are not only cultural agencies, but principally information management business units critical to statutory/regulatory compliance, business efficiency, cost savings, and government accountability and transparency. Let Dan know of any news, comments, suggestions, or concerns that you may have: dan.zelenyj@vaughan.ca or (905) 832-8585 ext. 3129.

Mary Charles has been the Archivist at the Peterborough Museum and Archives for over five years. Her role and responsibilities cover all aspects of Archival work within a publicly funded community archive collection.

While attending Waterloo University, Mary worked in the Woodstock Public Library local history collection on projects related to oral history and collections management. Following this she helped with the processing of the District of Brock *fonds*, which was then housed at the Norwich and District Archives and has since become part of the County of Oxford Archives Collection.

In the early 1990's Mary was hired to manage the London Life Archives, which was then part of the Records Management Department within the corporation. During this time Mary was an active member of the London heritage community and the local chapter of the Archives Association of Ontario serving on numerous committees and boards both locally and provincially.

In 2002 Mary became the Records Analyst for the City of Kitchener then moving in 2004 to become the Archivist at the Peterborough Museum and Archives (PMA).

The archival collection at the Peterborough Museum and Archives has been an integral part of the PMA since the 1960's. The PMA is the City of Peterborough's repository for municipal records and houses significant material related to Peterborough and the surrounding region.

The PMA is responsible for several large image collections, which depict one hundred and fifty years of community development and document everything from the building of the Trent-Severn canal system and local industry to vacationing, hunting and fishing in the Kawartha's.

Numerous projects are always underway at the Archives in a continuous mission to find more space; in 2004 the PMA was 4 – 5 times past capacity. A team of 8 dedicated volunteers and students from two Fleming College programs work at tasks designed to use space in the most efficient way possible and make research and access to the collections easier.

Every September the Peterborough Museum and Archives acts as the offsite campus for Fleming College hosting the Museum Management and Curatorship program with 25 to 30 students graduating annually. The Archives also works closely with a second Fleming College program over the summer semester, this involves preventative conservation projects with about 20 Collections Conservation and Management students.

With the help of Volunteers the Archives answers both online and telephone requests, fills image orders, supports in-house exhibits and educational programming and assists onsite researchers.

The Archives has a staff of one and is open by appointment five days a week from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm and 1:00 – 5:00 pm. Mary can be contacted via e-mail at: MCharles@peterborough.ca or phone at (705) 742-7777 ext 2472.

Ann-Marie Collins is the Archivist at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre in Southampton. Ann-Marie started at Bruce as the Archival Assistant on a training grant and has

worked her way through the AAO Post Appointment Training courses as well as two Records Management certificate courses through the University of Toronto. Ann-Marie was appointed Archivist in December 2008. The Bruce County Archives is staffed by two full time and one part time staff and is open seven days a week

Ann-Marie is the MAIG Secretary/Treasurer and will continue the duty of *MAIGazine* editor as well as compiling the *Directory to Municipal Archives in Ontario*.

Ann-Marie can be found at: acollins@brucecounty.on.ca or (519) 797-2080 ext. 114

The MAIG executive would like to thank David Sharron for his term on the MAIG executive.

If you would like more information about serving a three-year term on the MAIG executive please contact Dan, Mary or Ann-Marie.

2009 MAIG AGM Review

The MAIG Annual General Meeting was held at York University, Toronto on June 11, 2009. David Sharron, Chair, called the Municipal Archives Interest Group 2009 Annual General Meeting to order at 2:00 p.m., and welcomed all of the attendees.

Minutes of the 2008 Annual General Meeting were approved as amended. (If you would like a full copy of the minutes please contact Ann-Marie Collins.)

The **2008-2009 Financial Report** was not yet ready.

Financial Report 2008-2009

REVENUE	
Grant from AAO	<u>700.00</u>
TOTAL	<u>700.00</u>

EXPENSES	
Open House	?
Publishing/Mailing	172.61
Other Meetings	<u>?</u>
TOTAL	<u>?</u>

Budget 2009-2010 – Same as last year

REVENUE	
Grant from AAO	<u>700.00</u>
TOTAL	700.00

EXPENSES

Meetings	100.00
2009 Open House	400.00
Publishing/Mailing	<u>200.00</u>
TOTAL	700.00

Open House

The 2009 MAIG Open House will be held Saturday, September 19, 2009 (now changed to September 26) starting at 1:00 pm at the Peterborough Museum and Archives. Dinner will be provided at Mary Charles home. Dinner is free for MAIG members and at \$15 for guests. Attendees will have an opportunity to tour the PM&A.

The 2010 open house is tentatively scheduled for September 25 at the Wellington County Museum & Archives.

If you would like to showcase your community archives at future Open Houses please contact a member of the MAIG Executive.

MAIG Directory Update

We still need to update the MAIG Directory for 2009. It will be updated soon.

For more information, or to request a submission form, please contact Ann-Marie Collins.

Working Group

Municipal Records Reference Guide – Ellen Millar and Mary Charles will be discussing and continuing with a meeting including Anne Hepplewhite and Charolette Woodyly, as well as Carolyn Bart-Riedstra.

Survey

Carolyn Bart Riedstra, Archives Advisor has been receiving lots of questions from municipalities looking into cost of new archives as well as operating costs, cost per square foot, etc. Preservation committee also looking to do a survey and we may be able to do it together, depending on length. Has been put on hold but we are hoping to get them done in September 2009. We are planning to use Survey Monkey. If you have any questions relevant to this survey that you would like included please contact Carolyn at:

archivesadvisor@ROGERS.COM

Expansion of the Wellington County Museum and Archives

Canada-Ontario Partnership Funding

Funding for the expansion of the Wellington County Museum and Archives will help preserve local history, while stimulating the local economy

FERGUS - Michael Chong, MP for Wellington-Halton Hills, announced funding for the expansion of the Wellington County Museum and Archives. This funding, coming from both the federal and provincial governments, will benefit local residents by allowing the County of Wellington to complete an addition to the current building.

“With its varied programming and engaging exhibitions, the Wellington County Museum and Archives makes a valuable contribution to the cultural vitality of this region,” said Michael Chong. “I am proud to be able to support this local institution and, thanks to the cooperation between governments, we will be better able to preserve the memories and contributions of those who came before us, who built Wellington County into the place it is today.”

“I am very pleased that the Wellington County Museum and Archives are receiving Building Canada funding so that their major expansion project can proceed,” said Perth-Wellington MP Gary Schellenberger. “Renewing and replacing our existing cultural infrastructure is extremely important and these investments also help to create jobs and stimulate the economy.”

"Congratulations and thanks to our County Council and Staff for their superb work in making a compelling case for this project," said Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott. "I was glad to support it, and know that it will help to give our local economy a boost."

“We are indeed grateful to be receiving this grant for the Archive addition to the Museum and we sincerely thank Michael Chong and Ted Arnott for their support of this project,” said Warden Joanne Ross-Zuj. “We have great admiration and respect for the staff who work at our Museum and this addition will enhance their ability to provide excellent service to the residents of the County.

“We are absolutely delighted with the announcement,” said Bonnie Callen, Administrator of the Wellington County Museum and Archives. “It is a wonderful show of support by our federal and local governments, and is tangible evidence of their commitment to the preservation of local history, today and for future generations.”

Surrounded by heritage gardens, the imposing Wellington County Museum and Archives is a National Historic Site, housing twelve galleries with collections reflecting the region’s history. Exhibitions include decorative arts, textiles, historical displays, travelling exhibitions, and installations by local artists. The museum also organizes a number of community events and activities for all ages. The expansion will double the existing archive space and provide a common entrance with the current community hall. An elevator and accessible washrooms will also be added to make the whole building more available to the larger community.

The governments of Canada, Ontario and the County of Wellington will each contribute up to \$1,522,800 in this project, for a total project cost of \$4,568,400. The expansion to the museum is expected to start this year and be completed within two years.

The funding for this project is an example of how all three levels of government can work together to stimulate the Canadian economy through the creation of jobs in communities like Wellington County. Close to 1,200 infrastructure projects in communities across Ontario will receive joint federal and provincial investments. Many of these projects will improve transportation efficiency, help create a healthier environment, enhance local services and create local jobs.

The Government of Canada’s Economic Action Plan is accelerating and expanding the existing federal investment of \$33 billion in infrastructure across Canada with \$12 billion in additional infrastructure stimulus funding over the next two years.

Collection management “survey” at Stratford-Perth Archives A Progress Report

Betty Jo Belton, Archivist

The Stratford-Perth Archives must have a clear grasp of what we have and where it is, to be able to manage and develop the collection, serve our clients and plan for the future.

This daunting sentence from a report that I was preparing for County Council dominated my thoughts in the spring of 2008 – well, at least while I was at work. Stratford-Perth Archives staff had been working towards better collections management through a number of initiatives, but were experiencing frustration at the inability to measure overall progress and to co-ordinate the projects undertaken at the three branches. How to get that “clear grasp of what we have and where it is”? While attending the AAO conference in Windsor I found myself with a happy combination of lengthy periods of solitude and a compelling view of the river from my hotel room -- lots of time and inspiration for thinking outside of the Hollinger box. I began e-mailing colleagues about a “little idea” to address some of our collection management challenges. When I got back to the office we considered various solutions and ultimately decided to go back to basics by actually opening every box in our holdings and recording the location, origin and contents – collecting data from records themselves – and then matching boxes with their accession records where such documentation exists. That both my colleagues and director were supportive of such a basic approach was a relief to me as I had spent a fair amount of time in Windsor listing the data elements to be included and planning a rudimentary collection management database.

A blank ‘survey’ form was created to standardize the data being collected. We agreed that the project should address the following objectives from our business plan in a measurable and systematic fashion:

1. Establish an in-house database documenting location of archival holdings linking each container (box, map folder etc.) with specific shelf or map drawer number.
2. Establish an in-house database tracking accessions at all three branches.
3. Identify heavily used or fragile records that should be microfilmed to ensure long term preservation of the original records.
4. Identify records series considered high priority for inclusion in an on-line descriptive database accessible via our website and ARCHEION
5. Review all holdings in all branches to determine if they fall within approved mandate. Clearly document these appraisal decisions using standard forms in all branches.
6. Transfer holdings outside of approved mandate to other cultural-heritage partners such as museums, libraries and art galleries as appropriate to their stated mandates and in accordance with the terms of the original donation to the Stratford-Perth Archives.
7. Dispose of non-archival holdings not of interest to other cultural-heritage partners, such as multiple copies of published items, discarded equipment, and Archives own transitory records as quickly as possible.
8. Review existing documentation proving Archives legal custody of all holdings on an accession by accession basis. Where documentation is inadequate, take necessary steps to ensure that Archives can prove legal custody of records and fully understand its obligations to donors.
9. Establish a paper-based system to track movement of records from storage areas to reading rooms, staff offices etc until records returned to proper storage area. Consider conversion to electronic tracking system as future multi-year goal.

One part-time Archives Clerk, Sonia Robin, has been temporarily re-deployed to this work exclusively. Other staff are working on this project at the Stratford, Mitchell and Listowel branches in addition to their regular duties. At this point, survey forms have been completed for Mitchell and Listowel branches and two off-site storage locations. A third off-site storage area is nearly complete and work is well underway at the main branch in Stratford. Given the number of boxes involved and the time required for each storage bay, it will almost certainly take until the end of 2009 to complete a form for each box. I’ve started work on an Access database but don’t expect to have that up and running for planning purposes or good old fashioned physical control of holdings until the end of 2010. In the meantime, I keep a copy of another archivist’s commentary on this less than glamorous part of the archival endeavour, as often quoted by Ian Wilson, posted at my desk:

It may be a dream but it is a noble dream. It has often spurred me to renewed effort, when the daily drudgery - for it is drudgery - was telling on mind and body.

Douglas Brymner, Dominion Archivist in Public Archives of Canada, *Report*, 1889, p. xv.

Elgin County Archives

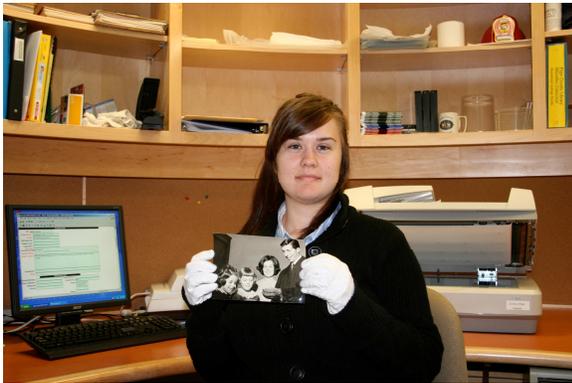
Archives Begins Work on St. Thomas Times-Journal Photographs Digitization Project

Stephen Francom, Manager of Archives

With funding received from Heritage Canada through the Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions Program administered by the Canadian Council of Archives, the Archives was able to hire a student digitization assistant to begin work on a multi-year project to digitize and publish online an estimated 50,000-item collection of original photographs published in the *St. Thomas Times-Journal* from the late 1940s to the mid 1980s.

To date, more than 4,000 images have been digitized, documenting institutions, organizations, businesses, individuals and events of central importance to Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas, enabling the Archives to contribute to milestone anniversary celebrations organized this year by the St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre; Regional Mental Health Care, St. Thomas (formerly the St. Thomas Psychiatric Hospital); and the St. Thomas branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society; and to provide assistance to organizers of the 2010 International Plowing Match and the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay.

Item-level descriptive records and images are available through the Archives' [online database](#).



Digitization assistant Jeanette Robilliard. Jeanette is a St. Thomas resident and third-year undergraduate student at the University of Ottawa.

First World War Digitization Project Completed Stephen Francom, Manager of Archives

In late March, 2009, the Archives launched its most recent digitization project, entitled “Elgin’s Great War: Sources on the First World War from The Holdings of the Elgin County Archives.” This project, made possible through the financial support of the Canadian Culture Online Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage, Library and Archives Canada, and the Canadian Council of Archives, provides searchable online access to more than 3000 photographs, documents and objects relating to Elgin County’s contributions to Canada’s First World War effort. The successful completion of this project is directly attributable to the support the Archives has received from Elgin County Council, the Elgin County Museum and our community partners the 31 Combat Engineer Regiment (The Elgins), and is a testament to the excellence of the work of digitization assistant Jan Row.

The project website can be viewed by clicking on the “Explore Our First World War Resources” link on the Archives’ website at www.elgincounty.ca. Highlights include more than 500 portrait photographs of Elgin County soldiers and their families from the Scott Studio fonds, most of which we have been able to link to corresponding records in Library and Archives Canada’s collection of First World War attestation papers.

Another highlight is a wonderful series of drawings and letters sent from the front lines in France by the Canadian war artist H.W. Cooper to Ella Lewis, a past executive member of the Elgin Historical Society who at the time of her correspondence with Cooper was acting as a representative of a local service club that had undertaken to prepare and supply care packages for the troops overseas. Cooper served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force at most of the major battles on the western front from 1915 to war’s end and his drawings and letters provide a wonderfully detailed account of daily life on the front lines.



*Corporal Wallace Antill and family, 1916.
Scott Studio fonds, Box 149, N # 6916.*

One of the most rewarding aspects of this project was the overwhelming interest and support we received from local organizations and individuals who volunteered records for inclusion in the project. For example, the Rodney, Ontario branch of the Royal Canadian Legion generously allowed us to include a unique collection of photograph portraits of Rodney-area men who served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. To add contextual depth and significance to the records digitized for this project, we included a detailed series of education resources focusing on elementary school children which teachers can use to bring the First World War to life for their students using documents and images that tell the story of Elgin County's involvement in and contributions to the war effort. These resources are freely available from the project website and include complete lesson plans and student activities, along with grade-specific expectations taken directly from the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum for Grades 1 to 8. Lesson plans in visual arts, drama, language and social studies are available and usually include ready-to copy student assignments and marking guidelines. The education resources component of the project was designed and

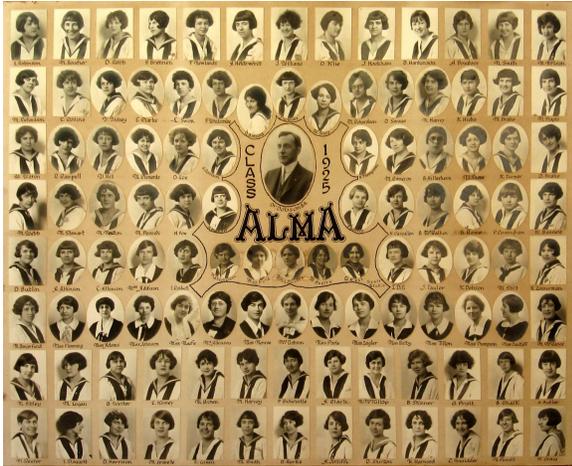
completed by Julie Berry, a County resident who is a retired elementary school teacher, artist and award-winning radio documentary producer. Preserving the memory of the service and sacrifice of Canadians during the First World War, particularly that of veterans, is a matter of paramount cultural significance and importance for Canadians. This record of service and sacrifice is a central component in Canada's cultural heritage, and we hope that our project will in a small way contribute to its preservation and strengthening by digitizing, publishing and interpreting records that reveal the extraordinary depth and breadth of contributions by Elgin County individuals, families, organizations, businesses and governments to Canada's First World War effort.



H.W. Cooper fonds, C3 Sh6 B2 F16a.

Alma College Composite Class Photos Digitized Stephen Francom, Manager of Archives

With funding received through the Canada Summer Jobs Program and additional financial assistance provided by the Alma College International Alumnae Association (ACIAA), the Archives hired a student digitization assistant to digitize and publish online a collection of 35 Alma College composite class photographs for the period 1925 to 1983. The photographs were donated to the Archives by the ACIAA in May, 2009.



Alma College composite class photograph, 1925

The original composite photographs were removed from frames and digitally photographed for reference. More than 5,700 individual student, faculty and staff photographs were then removed from composite sheets and transferred to permanent archival storage media. The individual photographs were digitized and linked with a descriptive database record created for each photograph. Database records and corresponding digital images were published on the Archives [online database](#) for public reference. This project will be completed at the end of September, 2009.



Digitization assistant Charlene Burgess. Charlene is a St. Thomas resident and student at Althouse College, University of Western Ontario.

Alma College Exhibit Installed at Queen's Park **Stephen Francom, Manager of Archives**

From April to September, 2009, the Archives mounted an exhibit documenting the history of Alma College as part of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario's Community Exhibits Program. The exhibit featured photographs and documents from the Archives' collection, student uniforms from the Elgin County Museum collection, and a 1936 composite class photograph made available through the generosity of the Archives' long-term community partner, the Alma College International Alumnae Association. The Archives was particularly pleased to facilitate this exhibition during MPP Steve Peters' tenure as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Peters once acted as a volunteer archivist for Alma College and he is a keen supporter of the Community Exhibits Program.



Members of the Alma College International Alumnae Association toured the exhibit and the Legislative Assembly building in mid-September as Speaker Peters' guests.

Oxford County Archives **Mary Gladwin, Archivist**

This fall, the County of Oxford Archives is making preparations for a move to Woodstock. Plans are underway to completely retrofit the former Jail Governor's residence as a Heritage Centre to house the Archives, the Oxford Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, and the Oxford Historical Society. Their new home will provide "one stop shopping" for local history. Meetings with the architects are currently underway, the 1860s heritage building is being totally gutted, and Archives staff are working cooperatively with their new partners to make both the planning and the move a success. By next summer, the entire undertaking should be complete.

Grey Roots Museum & Archives Online Virtual Exhibits

www.greyroots.com/exhibitions/virtual-exhibits/



For Home and Country: The Women's Institutes of Grey County

An assemblage of intensely local history books, called Tweedsmuir Histories, detailing the growth and development of the villages, hamlets, towns, and people of Grey County.



Mary Williams Trout: Diaries of a Small Town Lady

Find out what life was like in the early days of Grey County from someone who was there. This collection of 26 diaries, spanning from 1867 to 1920, documents the life of Mary Williams Trout, a teacher turned housewife from Meaford.



A Canadian Nursing Sister

The story of Luella Euphemia Denton, who finds herself in the middle of the Great War, is told at the Grey County Archives. Read her touching letters written home to a friend.



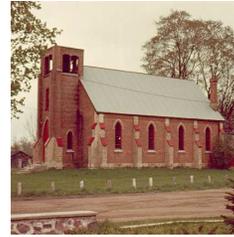
Grey Battalions

A tribute to the boys of Grey who served in the Great War, 1914-1918, with a special focus on the 147th and 248th Battalions.



Black History in Grey

Find out about black migration to Grey County and prominent personalities in the virtual exhibit based on our award winning exhibit From Slavery to Freedom: African-Canadians of Grey County.



A Backwoods Preacher

Find out about the life of Reverend George Keys, who served Anglican congregations in Grey County from 1861 to 1904. Experience 19th century Christian life through his sermons and journal at the Grey County Archives.



The Kennedy Empire

Discover more about this fascinating Canadian manufacturer, once located in Owen Sound, that played a vital role in the growth of almost every sector of Canadian industry over a 140-year period.



Grey County Luminaries

Find out about figures who have shaped our fair County, or whom you may know about, but may not know that they have Grey County connections.



Home on the Range: The Meaford Tank Range Story

After Canada's declaration of war in September 1939 facing Hitler's army of armoured and mechanized units came a greater need for equipment and training for allied forces. This is the story of the growth and development of one of Canada's state-of-the-art military training facilities.

Archives and Accessibility

**ByCarolynn Bart-Riedstra, AAO Archives
Advisor**

During my travels to archives it is interesting to note that many are inaccessible to someone with physical challenges. Apart from having no elevator or mechanism in place to help staff retrieve records from different floors, there is also the issue of no elevator for people who are physically challenged. This is just one type of accessibility issue that has been identified. What are the implications for archives? In view of the fact that many are not accessible to physically challenged, how will records be made available to someone with a vision problem? Accessibility to the physically challenged is an issue that many of our institutions have not addressed. If you are in a municipally owned building it is something that is relevant to archives and to our researchers.

Ontario has moved further than other provinces, and in 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) became law. Under this legislation, five Accessibility Standards are at various stages of development, and the first one: Accessible Customer Service requires compliance by public sector organizations by January 2010.

(OLA website, www.thepartnership.ca)

What does Accessible Customer Service mean?
The following are some websites and organizations that might help to provide information.

The Ontario Library Association is providing seminars about how to make libraries more accessible. Visit their website at: http://www.thepartnership.ca/partnership/bins/calendar_page.asp

The www.accesson.ca website provides some helpful information about what can be done to make businesses accessible.

The Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario website also has information about the legislation including submissions that they have made to the government regarding some of the wording and implications for municipalities. Their website is:

<http://www.amcto.com/db/newsinfo.asp?it=728&itimid=11646&DataIT=&ListName=>

Finally, the Ontario Historical Society (www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca) has taken the lead on this issue and worked with various advisory committees to supply recommendations. This has resulted in the publication: *Accessible Heritage: An Accessibility Tool Kit for Ontario's Heritage Organizations and Institutions* by The Ontario Historical Society and The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario. This resource is available for \$45. I have purchased a copy for the archives advisory services and will keep you posted about what might need to be done in archives to meet the legislation. In the meantime let us know what you are doing to be compliant with the new accessibility legislation.

**Making Ontario's Heritage
Accessible for People with Disabilities
Saturday, November 7, 2009
10:00 am – 3:30 pm**

**Simcoe County Museum
1151 Highway 26, Minesing, Ontario
www.museum.simcoe.ca**

This workshop is presented by The Ontario Historical Society (www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca) in partnership with The Simcoe County Historical Association.

Workshop topics include:

- * *The Ontario Historical Society's Accessibility Information and Resource Tool Kit*
- * *Why we should ensure full accessibility*
- * *Heritage and Museums – Issues of Access*
- * *Beyond The Ramp: New attitudes and new approaches*
- * *Customer Service for Historical Organizations and Institutions*
- * *Practical Case Studies and Partnerships for Funding*

Registration is \$25.00 (payable to The Ontario Historical Society) and includes a kit of resource materials, lunch and refreshments. The Simcoe County Museum is wheelchair accessible. Space is limited.

For more information about this workshop contact:

Rob Leverty (Registration) by phone:
1-866-955-2755 or e-mail:
rleverty@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca
Ellen Millar (Local Information) by phone:
1-866-893-9300 ext. 1288 or e-mail:
ellen.millar@simcoe.ca

Spreading the Word of Municipal Archives

By David Sharron

Archivists are often very good at promoting themselves to the most logical groups of users – genealogists, historians, students and the like. Our materials are always on their radar and they are most likely our best supporters. These users can often keep us busy enough that we may forget to reach out to perhaps a less present, but equally important stakeholder in municipal records – the record creators themselves. Recent events at Brock University highlight this.



Since the late 1970s, Brock University has been the caretaker of hundreds of metres of municipal records for various municipalities in the Niagara Region. These records were still controlled by the municipalities but Brock provided a secure and environmentally stable space. Talks about establishing an archival / records management facility for the Region and its municipalities prompted various clerks to come to Brock and see the storage situation for their materials. The initial reaction of municipal representative was shock. A majority of Brock's holdings were tax rolls, clerk records, minutes and ledger books dating back from the 1800s up to the 1980s. It was not just the

volume that was surprising to the clerks. It was also the fact that they had no idea that many of these records existed. This was not the case of disinterest on the part of the clerks. It is a matter of time. Over the years, those who saw the original transfer of records to Brock had since retired or moved on to other positions. As this office turnover occurred again and again, the lasting memory that was left thirty years later was simply that Brock had "some old records." Of course, this is more likely to occur in situations where municipal records are maintained by a repository outside of the municipal administration or if the repository is far removed from the central office setting.

Since this revelation, the current clerks have had an opportunity to work more closely with these records. Some have found files that are still relevant to their work today. For example, there is a lot of street repair happening in St. Catharines. Brock held many records from the public works department detailing past work on these very streets that may help in the planning and modernizing of the City's infrastructure. Some records have privacy and MFIPPA concerns that needed to be monitored. Remember, most of these records came to Brock before privacy became a major issue for municipalities. And other municipalities found more appropriate storage situations for their records. In one case, tax rolls were divided between two institutions. Now they are together in one repository.

We work in a time where, on average, the longest a person will stay in a position is seven years. Over the career of a municipal archivist, that is a lot of people to educate about the records in our control. But the effort is important. The clerk's office and other municipal employees can be among our best supporters and users. Their awareness can lead to a greater appreciation for the records that we maintain and bigger projects and opportunities for the archives and records management department. When there is a turnover in a notable department within the municipal government, use it as an opening to introduce the new staff members to the archives department and the services that you provide. The more people know about the archives, the easier it will be to promote your materials and be relevant within the municipal administration.

**Municipal Archives:
A Postgraduate Viewpoint**
Brenda Hicock, MLIS, Archival Records
Analyst, City of Vaughan Archives

In the fall of 2008, I accepted my first permanent job as an Archival Records Technician (I've recently been promoted to Archival Records Analyst) at the City of Vaughan Archives. Prior to this position, I had volunteered at the Roman Catholic Diocese of London Archives and had worked for a short time at Time Capsule Inc. I graduated in the spring of 2008 from the University of Western Ontario's Masters program in Library and Information Science and the prospect of starting my career was both exciting and daunting. During this past year, however, I have learned more than I had thought possible and my experiences have been many and varied. I have done conservation work, performed reference services, and worked on the arrangement and description of backlogged records. I have taken on several projects such as working towards submitting our descriptions to the Archeion database and updating our website through the Vaughan Online initiative (a combined intranet/internet site). I was even fortunate enough to complete a Records Management certificate at the University of Toronto's Professional Learning Centre and I attended the Archives Association of Ontario's conference at York University in June. In the near future, I would like to take other professional development courses on RAD and copyright and would like to increase my knowledge of electronic records management and preservation. I would also be interested in learning more about genealogical research. I look forward to expanding my knowledge and skills in the years to come.

I have to admit, however, that coming into this job I had a very limited understanding of the true nature of municipal archives and the vital roles they play within their parent organizations. Before Graduate School, I thought Archives meant history. Higher education altered that viewpoint somewhat. However, it was while working at the City of Vaughan Archives that the Canadian tradition of total archives became clearer and I came to understand the twin roles municipal archives play as both cultural agency and business tool, managing and preserving both community records and municipal business. I must admit that I am fascinated by the non-government cultural records and will always find them alluring. They tell the stories of our forefathers and the founding of our cities. Tattered letters and yellowed maps, ink-

stained diaries and century old photographs - each is a story waiting to be explored, each is a treasure that preserves our city's unique heritage and ensures that future generations will not lose sight of their past. I love working with researchers and genealogists, digging through the various collections and studying the old records. The reference process becomes a journey, a treasure hunt even, on which the archivist and researcher must embark together in order to complete the quest.

Nevertheless, municipal archives are more than old photographs and kindly genealogists. The reality is that records management plays a key role in municipal archives and it is critical that municipal archivists work with other city departments to create, maintain and preserve good recorded evidence of actions and activities. Moreover, a municipal archives is mainly concerned with municipal business records that have long-term value since it is those records that will provide evidence of local and regional functions, roles, and decisions in the centuries to come. Unfortunately, in Vaughan many City residents and staff do not understand this concept; we are sorely understaffed with many records waiting to be processed and more and more arriving each year. Aspiring young archivists have told me that government records are dry and boring. They would rather sift through the non-government "historic" records, feeling the past with their fingers and reliving the lives of the first pioneers. But think about this: 200 years from now future researchers and archivists will look on 2009 by-laws with the same awe and fascination with which we view 1850 by-laws today. They will marvel at our ways and wonder at our decisions. In short, we are living history right now, today, and it is the duty of municipal archivists to preserve today's history. A city is a living, breathing entity with a past, present, and future. Thus, a municipal archivist's role in the lifespan of a city is to select and preserve those records that are testaments to the people who lived, whether they be our forefathers who carved out the land with their bare hands or present day residents and staff who continue to improve and expand the city. It is a vital role and a large responsibility, but I wouldn't consider a career in any other field. I have fallen in love with municipal archives, the City of Vaughan, and the City's rich and varied history. But even more importantly, I have come to understand the true function of a municipal archives and the important part it plays in a city's future.