



Wolfville Historical Society

Randall House Museum
259 Main Street, Wolfville, Nova Scotia B4P 1C6

NEWSLETTER

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Dec.7, '09

Board of Directors:

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RANDALL HOUSE CHRISTMAS PARTY

At our generous hosts, the Fleckenstein's,
576 Main St.

Thursday, Dec 10th,

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

*Good music, good food and good
fellowship! Free will donation at the door.*

THE WOLFVILLE SOCIETY WINTER PROGRAM 2010

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20TH, 2 p.m. at
Wolfville Fire Hall

The Annual General Meeting – The Mayor,
His Worship Robert Stead will give us a look
at the state of the Town at the beginning of
the New Year.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH, 2 p.m.. at
Wolfville Fire Hall

As we commemorate the 250th Anniversary
of the coming of the New England Planters,
Political Scientist, Agar Adamson, will tell us
about the coming of Representative
Government in Nova Scotia.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17TH, 2 p.m. at
Wolfville Fire Hall

Charles Curry and Robert Palmetter will tell
us about their work in caring for the Grand
Pre Dykes and Dykelands.

APRIL – MEMBERS' DINNER – TBA

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19TH, 2 p.m. at Wolfville
Fire Hall

Dr. A.J.B. Johnston will speak on "Endgame
1758, Louisburg's Last Decade"
(ajbjohnston@hotmail.com) 454-0768

THE KINGS-HANTS HERITAGE CONNECTION

As the New Year approaches the Kings-Hants Heritage Connection is preparing to take an active part in observing the 250th Anniversary of the arrival in this part of Nova Scotia of English-speaking pioneers, the forefathers of a great part of our community.

The KHHC was formed more than a decade ago by representatives of our local Historical and Heritage Societies coming together to discuss common goals and to find joint solutions. Our Past President Gordon Haliburton was the first Chairman and continues in that position, while our current President John Whidden was for many years Secretary and effectively managing director.

The Connection has no budget and no costs. It meets monthly to share information and to plan measures to strengthen the preservation of various types of heritage. The money sometimes needed for worthy heritage causes comes from the member societies, the Nova Scotia Museum and provincial and federal sources intended for such purposes.

To help the public properly understand the momentous anniversary of the coming of the “New England Planters”, the settlers from Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, to the townships of Cornwallis, Horton, Falmouth and Newport, the Connection has put up a fascinating web site <http://khhc.blogspot.com/>

As well, it has sponsored the writing and publication of short histories of the four townships. It is producing brochures containing maps of the townships noting significant places, sponsoring the production of “Edu-Kits” for use in the schools, and designing, producing and installing signage to bring attention to boundaries and significant landmarks of these historic communities.

Other activities will be taking place as organized by a variety of institutions and entities, including Acadia University (a Planter Studies Conference), but the KHHC is playing a crucial role in arousing general interest and taking practical steps to educate the present inhabitants about the history they are prone to forget.

MILESTONES OF MEMBERS:

Best Wishes are in order for our immediate Past-President Glen Hancock, on completing his 90th year this month.

As well, congratulations to Don MacKay, who recently launched his new book on the Irish famine.

WE WISH TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Rosemary S. Feener, Britney & Mindy Ferris, Peter & Christine Herbin, Jane & David Mangle, Shirley Marston, Karen Maser, Robert & Hilary Sircom

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

After a busy summer with all committees working hard and making great progress, and many of us attending a succession of Strategic Development meetings, it has been a quiet fall though with excellent talks by Dr. Alan Marble and Dr. Merritt Gibson. Both were well attended by members and by a surprising number of non members, few of whom, however, were interested in joining the Society. While this is disappointing in that one of our main strategic aims is to increase membership and volunteer numbers, it is nonetheless important that we have speakers who can appeal to a broad sector of the community.

The winner of the Society's Watson Kirkconnell History Prize for a Horton High School History student this year was Ms Sarah teBogt. The prize consists of a history book or books in the winner's area of historical interest, plus a small cash amount, and is intended to help him or her in future history studies. While modest in relation to the large scholarships won by top graduating students heading to university, it is a recognition that history studies are important, and puts the Society's name forward in the school community.

The Town and Society lost a valued member last summer with the death of Mr. Jerry Porter. He had been involved in the last few years in going through the index of the Town's pre WW1 buildings, mostly houses, with board members Glen Hancock and Gordon Haliburton to supplement what is recorded about these buildings and some of their former owners. The project is going forward, and we are happy that Enid Davison has joined Glen and Gordon.

I look forward to seeing you at the Christmas party hosted by Martin and Shelly Fleckenstein on December 10th, and at our annual meeting on January 20th at the Fire Hall.

Best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year.

John Whidden

Fund Raising and Membership Renewal – Derek Watts, Treasurer

The Board heartily thanks all of our renewing, regular and sustaining members, particularly those who donated over and above their renewal. The total from 89 subscribing units to date, amounts to \$7,105. We also acknowledge with sincere thanks the 5 businesses who have donated \$675. As you are aware, we have received a wonderful donation of a dinner for 6, from one of the Wolfville inns, which is being raffled with a potential revenue for the Society of \$1,250. 250 tickets were printed and we have high hopes of a sell out.

In the past we enjoyed large contributions (in 2007, three and in 2008, four) that were recorded in a column headed "Angels". This year so far there have been none. Also the number of supporting businesses is fewer. This means our fund raising revenue overall this year may be some \$ 3,000 below that of the past two years. However that will not cause unmanageable problems for the Society this year.

Of course we cannot forget that our principal supporter is the Council of the Town of Wolfville, who awarded the Society the grant of \$10,000 we requested. Without that we could not afford

to hire the curator; the operation of the museum would thus be severely compromised. Our gratitude for that support is overwhelming.

Following are the Wolfville businesses who helped us. Remember them when next you require goods or services of the kinds they sell, and on which they, too, depend :

Eos Fine Foods, Front Street;

Davies O'Leary, Plumbing & Electrical Service, Front Street;

Dr. Wayne Hills, Main Street Dental Centre;

Victoria's Inn, Main Street;

Herbin's Family Jeweller, Main Street;

Blomidon Inn, Main Street.

The Society's Strategic Plan

A Strategic Plan for the Society and a Concept Interpretive Plan for the Museum was recently completed for us by consultants Andrea Arbic and Leah Hamilton. The purpose of the Society's Strategic Plan was

"...to develop a strategic plan that will broadly promote the society (and its museum) as an important heritage and cultural component in the community so that it can better achieve greater sustainability".

A Strategic Planning Group (SPG), comprised of the Board of Directors, eight society members and the curator, contributed to the development of the plan in significant ways by taking part in five working meetings with the consultants. A satisfying consensus in favour of the Society's Strategic Plan existed within the SPG at its final meeting.

The Concept Plan, was generally considered to represent too major a shift of museum interpretation to recommend immediate implementation, in spite of evident benefits.

A meeting of members took place on 16 September 2009 to consider the two documents. The meeting first voted unanimously in favour of adopting the Strategic Plan and in a second motion, voted unanimously to receive the Concept Interpretive Plan.

A chronological list of 61 strategies for action by the Society, to be completed between 2009 and 2012, was contained in the Plan. The list provides the time frame for each strategic issue, the description of work/outcome, the required resources and the person(s) responsible for each one. Work has begun!

In receiving the Concept Interpretive Plan, the meeting expected the board and curator to immediately integrate into future exhibits the insights derived from the plan. In due course, they would then determine in general the overall impact of the plan on the available space in Randall House with a rough order of magnitude cost.

Foundational Statements contained in the Strategic Plan adopted by the meeting follow. The words "*intangible forms*" include folklore, oral history, social and religious customs, language, knowledge and skills:

MISSION

The Wolfville Historical Society is committed to preserving and to cultivating an appreciation of the Heritage of Wolfville and the surrounding area.

VISION

Our community is actively engaged in and values its heritage and recognizes the Wolfville Historical Society as a leader in the preservation and interpretation of that heritage.

MANDATE

The Wolfville Historical Society's mandate is:

- to tell the history of Wolfville and the surrounding area by collecting, preserving and interpreting artefacts, archival material and intangible forms of heritage;
- to cultivate a greater understanding of the people and events that have shaped the area from the earliest inhabitants to contemporary times through research, publications, exhibitions, public programs and other activities.

VALUES

We value:

- history and historical knowledge
- high professional and ethical standards
- physical and intellectual accessibility
- collaboration and partnerships
- community engagement
- accountability to our stakeholders

Derek Watts - Strategic Plan Project Manager

WHS MEMBER, Donald MacKay's updated edition of "Famine, The coming of the Irish to Canada" was published by Dundurn Press of Toronto this autumn. He is currently completing a 60,000 word memoir of 25 years as a foreign correspondent. Other books are: "Scotland Farewell", "The People of the Hector" & "The Lumberjacks".

Passage Project Update

Although the Passage team lost two valued members when Phyllis Westbury and Caroline Powers moved away, we - Jan Baldwin and myself in concert with Curator Bonnie Elliott and assisted by our summer students and intern - have worked through the summer and fall to continue digitizing records of the Wolfville Historical Society/Randall House collection. Records for recent accessions have been entered into the data base, an inventory completed, and more of our photograph archive documented thanks to another team led by Society archivist Heather Watts. More of the photograph records have been entered into the database and more of those images scanned. As of Nov. 10 we have 2384 entries in the Passage database and of those 1435 have been sent to CHIN, many of them with images attached. While this regular Passage work is ongoing, our main focus at the moment is the annual enrichment project for CHIN, which this year targets art pieces in the WHS collection. Enrichment involves photographing the item, updating information in the record (for example reviewing its physical condition) researching its provenance and importance in the local context and adding this information to the database. We have picked out about 40 pieces to highlight and we have so far completed about half of the work. Early in the new year these records, with images and completed documentation, will appear on the Artefacts Canada website and so will be available to a national audience.



One of the art pieces we picked out to highlight for CHIN was this cartoon by Bob Chambers which was also displayed in the exhibit at Randall House this summer. In the historical narrative for this piece, which includes a short biography of the artist and a description of how the donor obtained the cartoon, there is this explanatory background to the drawing: *“This cartoon published in the Chronicle Herald Monday 10 June 1957 on the eve of the federal election is classic. One wonders if the cartoonist, Bob Chambers, had a premonition of how historic that vote would be for Canada, toppling Louis St Laurent’s Liberal government and bringing to power John Diefenbaker’s Progressive Conservatives after twenty-two years in the political wilderness.”*

Christine Lynch, Passage Project Co-ordinator