

Wolfville Historical Society

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NEWSLETTER

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Randall House Museum

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With the welcome assistance of a grant from the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, we are giving Randall House a new coat of paint.

Once again, this has been a busy and fruitful summer season at Wolfville's Community Museum – thanks in large part to its versatile and multi-talented staff, led by Curator Krystal Tanner. In order to give you a sense of what has been happening at Randall House over the past few months, much of what you will find in this newsletter is taken from Krystal's end-of-season report, which she submitted at the Society's September Board meeting. You will be interested to know that following her much-appreciated labours on our behalf, Krystal is completing her Museum Management and Curatorship qualification at Fleming College in Ontario by serving an internship in Halifax under the guidance of Dr. Roger Marsters, our former Curator, who is now Curator of Marine History at the Nova Scotia Museum.

Krystal's Comments

This year Randall House and the Wolfville Historical Society held a variety of events. We began the season with the official opening of the *Birth of a Festival* exhibit, guest-curated by Wolfville resident Katherine Ryan. We followed that with a very interesting lecture marking the 800th anniversary of *Magna Carta* by Dr. Jennifer MacDonald and Judge Alan Tufts. And on a more frivolous note: Randall House threw open its doors to the entire Apple Blossom Party, including Queen Annapolis!

One event that stood out as a crowd-pleaser this year was the Strawberry and Ice-cream Social that we held in late July. We not only had a local band, *Country Heat*, providing music for our guests, but we also had a special visit by Princess Wolfville and her attendant. (*over*)

We also continued the tradition of offering Afternoon Tea each Saturday at the museum, in support of which we must acknowledge the gracious volunteer support of Heather Frenette and Terry Tanner, who provided fresh-baked tea biscuits and other treats for visitors to enjoy. Our thanks also go to *Just Us!*, who generously donated boxes of tea. We raised nearly \$600 for Society coffers and welcomed over 100 new and returning visitors throughout the summer months. The teas became so popular that we often joked that the museum should be renamed Randall House Café, as we often had visitors coming in all days of the week expecting to find a seat for teatime!

It's always good when museums can bring in visitors who are not the typical "museum-going" crowd. We broadened our horizons this season by hosting several new events, one of which was Scary Story Night. There's a bit of a story here about Sister Annie, the museum's resident ghost, who often likes to be playful by turning on the cordless phone, stopping cell-phones from working properly – and once she even slowly dimmed and then brightened the light at the top of the stairs... We learned one of Sister Annie's new tricks on the night of our very first Scary Story event. Let me set the scene: It's nearing 5 o'clock and we have all just finished setting up for the event in the dining room. We are standing in the kitchen when all of a sudden we hear the clock in the dining room start to chime. Nothing strange in that, you might say – apart from the fact that this clock hasn't worked in a VERY long time!



*We were pleased to have our local MP, **Scott Brison**, seen here with Board-member Michael Bawtree, for the official opening of our 2015 Special Exhibit, Birth of a Festival, on June 12th*



This Summer's Team

We have been very fortunate in the team that has worked with Krystal over the last few months. **Devon Thomson** (*above left*) returned to the fold as the Collections Management Assistant and, under the guidance of WHS Board-member Christine Lynch, made significant progress in the important task of digitizing our permanent collection. And thanks to his expertise in graphic design and film-making, the Society was blessed both with custom-made posters for the season's events and with promotional videos for our special exhibit "Birth of a Festival" (which can be viewed on the WHS website and on YouTube), and for the museum itself (still in production).

On another front, **Mercedes Peters** (*above right*) brought an enthusiasm and skill to the role of Heritage Interpreter/Guide that resulted not only in a revamping of the Randall House tour material but also in the research, creation and performance of interpretive dyke tours. She also researched and created several Special Events that took place in the course of the season, such as Murder Mystery Night and Scary Story Night... And in her spare time, she worked with Devon on photographing, cataloguing, updating and entering records online. We're not sure how they're doing with their song-and-dance routine...

From the Visitors' Book

"Make sure to take the tour instead of just looking around as you get so much information from the guide who brings the house to life. They have done an amazing job trying to preserve the local history as well as the house itself. The history of the house is fascinating and then there is the ghost of Annie. Apparently on days when the museum is closed grounds crew have seen Annie's face looking out the window as she never left the house but would get after the children stealing apples from her property which overlooked her bedroom. After visiting there my cell phone would ring just once then stop. This happened probably at least 3 times a day during our 18 day trip. We laughed that Annie was doing it. It has not happened since we left Nova Scotia!"

"I loved being in this old house. It takes you back to when houses had large rooms with big windows letting in the sunshine. I would move in in a minute."

"The history of the house is interesting and the artifacts are relevant. The young guide was excellent and all the staff very friendly."

WOLFFVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Festive Season 2015



Randall House Museum, 259 Main Street.



'Victorian' Christmas Cards



Packet and Prices

Four Cards
ONE of each design
with envelopes
\$10.00



Packet and Prices

Six Cards
ONE DESIGN
with envelopes
\$15.00

To obtain Christmas Cards, please e-mail randallhouse@outlook.com giving your Name and Phone Number, and we will call you to provide options for Card Pickup (or delivery) and Payment.

Images for the cards are taken from Victorian Christmas Cards in the Helen Beals Collection of Christmas and New Year Cards in the Randall House Museum and from a Wolfville Historical Society member's private collection. Proceeds in support of the Randall House Museum.