



Newsletter - May 2025

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History In The Making in Bayfield!

There is nothing more exciting than seeing the restoration of a community landmark! The Albion Hotel in Bayfield suffered extensive damage in December of 2024 and the owners moved quickly to secure the building and are now in the middle of a major renovation/restoration of the 150 year old building.

In the very early 1840s a man named Robert Reid constructed a one story building as a general store on the site that is today known as 1 Bayfield Main Street North. In 1856 the building was modified to add a second story and the doors were opened as The Albion Hotel. We printed some of the building's history in our December Newsletter.

Your Huron County Historical Society supports these important commitments to community and heritage and to that end awarded Leigh and Jeff Graham a \$500 cheque for restoration of their Heritage Plaque.



Making the presentation are David Armstrong, left, Ralph Laviolette and Rhea Hamilton Seeger, right, with Jeff and Leigh Graham in the centre.

The Albion Hotel logo, right, is still bright on the side wall. All the windows carefully boarded while interior is gutted and rebuilt. Looks rather naked without its iconic veranda.

Photo by Klaus Seeger

What's in your closet or barn?!

The Huron County Museum is on the hunt for pieces of local industrial history!

Do you have items tucked away in your home, attic, or garage that tell the stories of Huron County's industrial past? They are especially interested in small to medium-sized artifacts and historic photos from areas like Exeter, Seaforth, Bayfield, Wroxeter, Clinton, and nearby communities.

Have something to share? Please email museum@huroncounty.ca prior to May 30.

Sneak Peak Opportunity

Drop into the Museum on

Sunday, May 18 from 1-4 p.m.

to speak with our Senior Curator during their sneak peek of developments in the new Industry Gallery.

Please note: Offers of donation will be considered prior to approval. Not all donations may be put on display.



Executive for 2025

David Armstrong - President 519-524-1156

Ralph Laviolette - Secretary-treasurer 519-440-6206

Elaine Snell - Membership 519-523-9434

Directors

• Mary Gregg 519-524-9372

• Rhea Hamilton- Seeger 519-612-1201

• Mac Campbell

• Susan Glousher

• Larry Mohring

• Ben Woodward

• Mandy Sinclair



The history of the Huron County Historical Society was the topic of a spring talk to interested local historians at the Knox Church, Main Street, Bayfield. Hard to see are the lovely stained glass windows in the back.

Working as a tag team was David Armstrong, left, and Ralph Laviolett right with organizer Judy Roy and Historical Society Notes Editor Rhea Hamilton Seeger. Photo by Klaus Seeger

Commemorating a Community Historian - Joe Wooden

Joseph L. Wooden, was a community historian in every sense of the word. Even as a young person in high school he earned sports scholarships which enabled him to attend the University of Western Ontario, where he graduated with a degree in Geography and was a varsity wrestler. He joined the teaching staff of South Huron District High School in Exeter in 1955, where he became principal in 1967, a position he held until 1983, when he became principal of Central Huron Secondary School in Clinton. Joe returned to SHDHS as principal in 1989, where he remained until his retirement in 1993.

During his years in Exeter Joe contributed to the community as a teacher, school administrator, a member of the town council and the planning board and as a baseball player and coach.

In 1973 he published *A History of Exeter, Ontario*, as part of the town's centennial celebration. This was preceded by another well-regarded work of local history, *A Drum to Beat Upon*, the story of St. Joseph, Ontario, published in 1971 which led to the designation of the historical plaque in St. Joseph. He was a board director for the Blyth Festival Theatre, Huron Country Playhouse, and St. Joseph & Area Historical Society for many years.

Always an avid student of history and literature, Joe earned his Master's in English from UWO after he retired. In addition to reading the many books he often had on the go, he enjoyed attending the theater in Stratford and Niagara-on-the-Lake. He loved gardening, biking, playing cards, and of course following his beloved Detroit Tigers and Toronto Maple Leafs. Joe was a long-time congregant, board member, warden of Trivitt Memorial Anglican Church in Exeter and St. John's-by-the-Lake in Grand Bend. Joe was the recipient of The Governor General's Jubilee Medallion in 2013 for his significant service to his community and country. Above all he loved spending time with his family and friends.

Joe was born in 1932, in Paris, Ontario, to the late Ernest and Lily (Lane) Wooden. He died on January 10, 2025 in his 93rd year at Strathmere Lodge in Strathroy. Joe is survived by his wife Linda (Holden) Girard, of St. Thomas, and four children and their spouses. Joe will always be remembered for many things but for us he was a valuable community historian



Roz and Mac Campbell continue to be active members of the Huron County Historical Society. Mac sits on the Executive.

Community Historian celebrates the Big 90

Mac Campbell has long been photographing and collecting history of his community and interests throughout Ontario. Family and friends gathered to celebrate his birthday in the renovated historical Benmiller Hall recently.



Don't Forget

MAGIC LANTERN SHOW

AT THE 1890 TOWN HALL IN ZURICH

SATURDAY JUNE 7 AT 2 P.M.

Gary Flaxbard will be giving the history of the Magic Lantern and the George Hess family June 7. He will explain that many of the photos have been reproduced in the 2006 Vintage Photos Disk during Zurich's 150th Anniversary celebration. He will also touch on the histories of Hay Township and Zurich while projecting some of the glass slides with the Magic Lantern. There will be a switch to a multimedia projector to show various photos from that 2006 disk and Gordon Hess's binder of photos. In the course of it, Gary hopes to explain the history behind some of the photos, as well as the history of the Hess Family in Hay Township and Zurich.

Accessibility to the magic lantern slide projector is thanks to the generosity of the Dorothy and Gordon Hess Family. Barry Hess got the magic lantern working again with an update to an LED bulb, so no fan is necessary. It had been converted from the original oil lamp to an electric light. Harry, Gordon's father, continued to make glass slides and show them with the Magic Lantern.

Membership renewal....

If you received this newsletter by mail, the date shown above your name on the address label is the year to which your membership is paid up, according to our records. Call Elaine Snell if you are not sure or need clarification. If you are in arrears, consider this a reminder that the membership fees are \$20. To reserve your member's hard copy of Historical Notes, keep your dues up to date.

We are making it easy to renew membership or simply to make a donation by using e-transfer. Send the e-transfer to: hchs1965@gmail.com

Copies of recent past Historical Notes are available, please email hchs1965@gmail.com (past copies are \$8 to \$10 per copy).

To access the members-only section for the Historical Notes or to do a search for names or places in the Historical Notes, go to www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca, open the dropdown menu for Publications, click HCHS Members Login. If you cannot get access using the password, then check if your web browser is up to date. If the password is lost or not available readily, contact hchs1965@gmail.com

Just an added note. The login password has been the same for a number of years and our web master suggested it was time for a change. So if you have not renewed and are having problems accessing the archives, please contact Elaine about renewing.

Where to get your Local History Books
And back copies of the Historical Notes

Fincher's and The Book Peddler both of Goderich, North Huron Citizen in Blyth, The Book Barn off Hwy 86 between Wingham and Whitechurch, The Village Bookshop, Bayfield and Bayfield Archives.