



HURON COUNTY MUSEUM AND HISTORIC GAOL

# 2017ANNUALREPORT





Corporation of the County of Huron

## **2017 ANNUAL REPORT:** HURON COUNTY MUSEUM & HISTORIC GAOL

### **MISSION**

The Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol engage our community in preserving, sharing, and celebrating Huron County culture.

### **VISION**

The vision of the Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol is to nurture and inspire heritage and culture through partnerships and collaboration in our communities.

#### **HURON COUNTY MUSEUM**

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#### **HURON HISTORIC GAOL**

181 Victoria Street North, Goderich On

p. 519-524-6971





# MUSEUM PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT

2017 marked the fourth full year of the implementation period for the Museum and Gaol's Strategic Plan. Work throughout 2017 aimed to fulfill goals of dynamic programming; further creation of a distinct brand for the Museum; alignment of physical facilities with future aspirations; development of community partnerships; increase in attendance; and building capacity in marketing, communications and sponsorships; as well as other tenants of the Strategic Plan.

2018 initiatives will include the increased access to the Museum's resources through on-line initiatives as well as participation in community events and programming with a diverse and inclusive perspective; an increase in community partnerships, research and programming; an increase in attendance through accessible visitor pricing; diversification of funding through sponsorship and donation opportunities; and site improvements to the exhibit, storage and care of Museum collections.

## SPECIAL INITIATIVES

- A grant was received from New Horizons for Seniors, Social Development Canada for the development, installation and outreach use of touch screen technology regarding the history of the Huron Historic Gaol. A 30 page booklet "The Huron Historic Gaol" was also written and produced for use with programming, outreach and sales.
- Grants were received from Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations and the Ontario Summer Experience Programme for summer staffing opportunities for the Museum, Gaol and Archives. Two internships were also funded through Young Canada Works at Building Careers in Heritage for recent graduates. Each allowed us to work on various projects including collections management, public programming, and research.
- Marketing was extended through radio and print advertising, increase in social media, and development of an on-line newsletter. New street facing signs were installed at the Museum & Gaol to reflect the site's new branding.



# EXHIBITS

The Huron County Museum facilitated a number of temporary exhibits on site throughout 2017.

## HURON POTTERY: UNEARTHED

*Huron Pottery: Unearthed* exhibited artifacts from the Huron Pottery which was one of Ontario's oldest and longest operating earthenware workshops, producing pottery from 1853 to 1910. The Huron Pottery operated in Egmondville, Huron County and excavations of the site took place from 1974 to 1976 with the archaeological collection now stored at the Huron County Museum.

## HURON COUNTY: THE DRY YEARS

*Huron County: The Dry Years* was developed and installed in the Feature Gallery for the busy summer season. The exhibit explored the story of prohibition in Huron County during the time of the Scott Act (1878 to 1959). As one of the last counties in Canada to uphold the Act, a dry Huron saw many different incarnations during that time.

## HURON COUNTY ART SHOW AND SALE

The annual *Huron County Art Show & Sale* displayed the works of 35 artists from around Huron County with the theme of "My Canada." Two artworks were selected from the entries for addition to the Huron County Art Bank.

## HOT OFF THE PRESS

Finally, for the end of 2017, an exhibition *Hot off the Press* was developed and displayed featuring notable articles from our rural newspapers from the 1840s to the present, and the stories behind the headlines. The exhibit served as backdrop to various programming and event activities which made use of the space for the winter months.

## COMMUNITY CURATORS

*Community Curators* continued with 3 new curators from our community. Thanks to Museum volunteer Louise Dockstader, university student & and past Museum staff Becca Marshall, and youth participant Mary Murdoch for their participation selecting items from our collection that spoke to them.



# SPECIAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol participated in a variety of special events & activities over the course of 2017.

## BEHIND THE BARS

The *Behind the Bars* popular interpretive tours were well attended at the Historic Gaol again this year. Volunteers enthusiastically portrayed Gaol inmates and staff, circa 1840 – 1910. Held twice weekly during July & August, 1869 visitors attended the evening events. An extra Behind the Bars was also held in October.

## FAMILY & HERITAGE DAY

In partnership with the Museum Friends, the 8th Annual *Family & Heritage Day* was held in February and the Haunted Main Street Halloween event was held in October. The 60 volunteers at the Museum & Gaol provided 2,863 hours of volunteer work for events and collections activities.

## PROGRAMMING

Programming staff also coordinated activities throughout the year including a Pottery speaker series, activities for International Museum Day; a Temperance Picnic; evening Gaol tours; themed Movie Nights; Member Appreciation days; various special event focused activities; and a Community Holiday Tree Challenge.

## OUTREACH

Outreach took the Museum & Gaol to local libraries with Museum on the Go; as well as to the Multicultural Festival, the Huron Perth Agriculture & Water Festival; County Plowing Match, Sesquifest, and various local fairs and events. Staff also presented on various topics such as Nursing Sisters, Gaol history, digitized newspapers and reminiscence topics to groups across Huron County.

## INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH

*The International Plowing Match* in Walton, Huron County was a major undertaking for 2017. Staff participated with a large exhibit and artifact loans in the County Tent, artifacts loaned to Heritage Tent and Huron Plowmen's Association for the Legacy Tent, and display items loaned to the Quilt Tent.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships continued with a variety of local groups including Rural Response for Healthy Children Dads n' Kids nights, STEM camps for local youth, and the Goderich Maker's Market. A new partnership with Blyth Festival was developed with focus on their local history play "Ipperwash."

***"Held twice weekly  
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## COLLECTIONS

There were 83 accessions in 2017 with 443 catalogued artifacts and photos. The following items are a representative sample of items donated to the collection in 2017:

- Wooden Trunk – writing on top of the trunk “H.D. Turvey R.C.A.F - J16730. Turvey was stationed at Sky Harbour.
- Wedding dress worn in 1909 for the wedding of Jennie Maud MacLagen and Amos David Cox; dress worn in 1963 at the Blyth United Church for the wedding of June Pierce and Charles Knox; and a wedding dress worn by Pat Jewell in 1968.
- Eilber/Fritz Family artifacts including the desk of Henry Eilber M.P.P., glassware, household items and photographs.
- Small hair brooch (funeral brooch) with intricate weave of hair from Margaret Scott. The engraving on the back reads “Margaret Scott- died 2nd Oct. 1846 – Aged 72.
- Adding machine that was used at John Burke Limited, Real Estate, Insurance and Mortgages in Exeter (1957 to 1967).
- Hay fork used in the barn of the Scott family near Seaforth.

The 2017 Collections Committee met through the year to discuss Museum & Gaol collections issues including storage, space needs, deaccessioning, and site programming plans.

Members consisted of:

Rhea Hamilton-Seeger (Chair), Anne Capper, Al Sanders, Louise Dockstader, Christopher Spaleta, Jennifer Turner, Megan Foxton, Jerry McDonnell, Jim Ginn (Warden)

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# CONSERVATION

Collections staff from the Huron County Museum continued to work through a RE\_ORG review of the Huron County Museum, collection and storage areas. The process of inventory of artifacts held in our main storage areas was completed and inventory of the permanent galleries was initiated in the fall.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Staff participated in a variety of workshops and webinars over the course of the year including those offered through the Ontario Museum Association, Reynolds-Alberta Museum, Canadian Conservation Institute, Ontario Historical Society, and the Archives Association of Ontario. Museum staff attended the Ontario Museum Association's annual conference.

# ATTENDANCE

ANNUAL 2017 SITE VISITS	MUSEUM	GAOL
Individual Admissions	6,953	8,851
Groups, Programmes, Special Events	8,021	3,861
Outreach	2,996	0
Object Depositors, OGS, Researchers, Volunteers, Others	1,852	878
Meetings, Rentals	2,322	1,254
<b>ANNUAL TOTAL 2017</b>	<b>22,146</b>	<b>14,844</b>
comparative 2016	22,900	11,605
comparative 2015	18,909	9,350

# MUSEUM STAFF

Meighan Wark, Director of Cultural Services  
 Elizabeth French-Gibson, Senior Curator  
 Sinead Cox, Curator of Engagement and Dialogue  
 Patti Lamb, Registrar  
 Jeremy Allin, Administrative Assistant  
 Jenna Leifso, Archivist  
 Erin Samuelli, Business Development Manager  
 Heidi Zoethout, Technician  
 Dana Lumby, Technician Assistant  
 Michael Molnar, Corporate Records Coordinator

The Museum and Gaol also employed a number of students and interns throughout the year.

