



HURON COUNTY MUSEUM AND HISTORIC GAOL

2018 ANNUAL REPORT





Corporation of the County of Huron

2018 ANNUAL REPORT: HURON COUNTY MUSEUM & HISTORIC GAOL

MISSION

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

VISION

The vision of the Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol is to nurture and inspire heritage and culture.

HURON COUNTY MUSEUM

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HURON HISTORIC GAOL

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MUSEUM PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT

2018 marked the final year of the implementation period for the Museum and Gaol's Strategic Plan (2013-2018). Work throughout 2018 aimed to fulfill goals of increased access to the Museum's resources through on-line initiatives as well as participation in the 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; as well as other tenants of the Strategic Plan.

Work began in the fall of 2018 to prepare a new Strategic Plan to continue successes of the past 5 years and prepare further initiatives and goals for 2019 to 2023. Staff workshops, community consultations, stakeholder consultations and investigations of other Museum initiatives guided the project.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

The major initiative for 2018 was to increase economic accessibility for Huron County residents to visit the Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol. Those holding Huron County library cards were now admitted for free to our sites. By the end of the year 1,230 library card holders visited the Museum and 287 visited the Historic Gaol.

Through a grant received from New Horizons for Seniors, Social Development Canada an interactive outreach programme and installation of touch screen technology was completed and launched regarding the history of the Huron Historic Gaol.

Grants were received from Young Canada Works in Heritage for summer staffing opportunities for the Museum, Gaol and Archives. An internship position funded through Young Canada Works at Building Careers in Heritage for recent graduates continued new programming project initiatives in the early months of 2018.

A new marketing and promotion initiative was undertaken with the development of a monthly on-line newsletter. By the end of 2018 there were 609 subscribed to the newsletter.



EXHIBITS

The Huron County Museum facilitated a number of temporary exhibits on site throughout 2018.

FARMTASTIC!

Farmtastic was a two part exhibit in both temporary exhibit galleries. The focus theme was a celebration of agriculture in Huron County with a juxtaposition of farming relations and techniques through archival & modern photography and artifacts from the Museum's collection. Production sponsorship was received from The Print Shop, Goderich.

HURON COUNTY ART SHOW & SALE

The annual Huron County Art Show & Sale displayed the works of 31 artists from around Huron County with the exhibition of their views of Huron County. Two artworks were selected from the entries for addition to the Huron County Art Bank.

COMMUNITY CURATORS

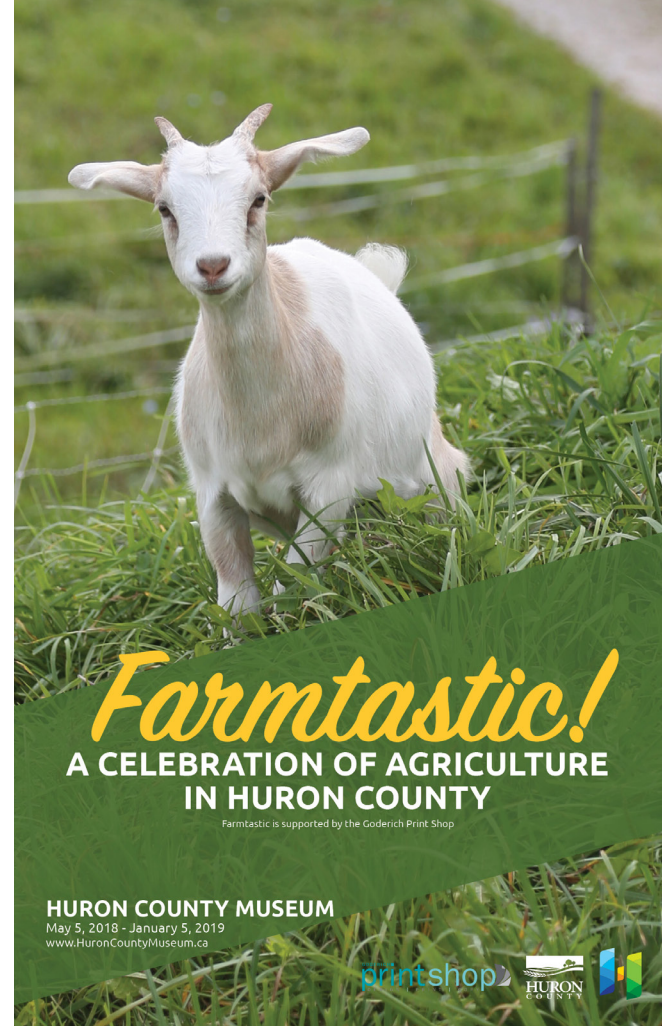
Community Curators for 2018 consisted of newcomers to Huron County Siham Mohammed, Wingham and Baraa Alali, Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh. Both families fled from Syria and have found homes in Huron County. Items on loan held personal importance to each family as a connection to their former home.

MEAGAN BARNHART

A small front lobby display of original beaded artworks by Meagan Barnhart, a Mississauga Ojibwe (Anishinabe)/ Cayuga (Haudenosaunee) artist included beaded flowers which were fan art inspired both by Anishinabe and Haudenosaunee beading traditions (including raised beading), as well as the artist's fandom of the currently popular K-pop group BTS.

NEILL GALLERY

In the Permanent Galleries, the Neill Gallery at the Museum was redeveloped in early 2018. Walls were repainted, exhibit bases were constructed/installed, and the exhibits were redesigned with new graphics and text panels. While the permanent exhibit space continues to focus on the original collection of the Museum, the design creates a clean, succinct look with a variety of interactive components. This room is the first space many visitors to the Museum experience. The redevelopment practice was continued through the Early Settlement and Clearing the Land galleries as well.



SPECIAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol facilitated a variety of special events & activities over the course of 2018.

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 & and three times weekly in August, 1,112 visitors attended the evening events.

In partnership with the Museum Friends, the 9th Annual Family & Heritage Day was held in February and the Haunted Main Street Halloween event was held in October. Overall, the 79 volunteers at the Museum & Gaol provided 2,580 hours of volunteer work for events and collections activities.

Programming & Development staff also coordinated activities throughout the year including a Historic Book Fair, Journalism speaker series, activities for International Museum Day; evening Gaol tours; themed Movie Nights; STEAM Power summer camps & PD Day camps for children; Lights Out Nights Out children's programming; Governor's House Parlour Parties; Haunted Gaol activities; various special event focused activities; and a County Department Holiday Tree Challenge.

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, and various local fairs and events. Staff also presented on various topics such as Gaol history, digitized newspapers and reminiscence topics to groups across Huron County.

Partnerships continued with a variety of local groups including Rural Response for Healthy Children Dads n' Kids nights, Blyth Festival panel discussions, and the Goderich Maker's Market. New partnerships were developed with the Huron County Alzheimer Society Timeslips exhibit, Goderich Escape Room Escape the Gaol evenings, local churches for an Indigenous Voice Film Festival and events, and Avon Maitland District School Board SOAR programme Takeover Day.

***“Held twice weekly
in July and August,
1869 visitors attended
Behind the Bars”***





COLLECTIONS

Donations to the Collection

There were 86 accessions in 2018 with 263 catalogued artifacts and photos. The following items are a representative sample of items donated to the collection in 2018:

- Pins, jersey patches, and medals for Young Canada Week.
- Rocking chair and water jug from the Sunset Hotel.
- Gramophone and cabinet including the crank and needles; metal label inside "Concert Grand Wingham, Ontario" and five records for the gramophone.
- Pottery jug/water pitcher made by Joseph E. Bradwin in Wingham, Ontario around 1883.
- Oval pastel drawing of Stanley Herbert Moore in uniform, photograph of the 161st Battalion "Goderich Own. 161st BN. C.E.F. 1916", and shadow box of medals which include: the British War Medal, the Victory Medal, and the Memorial Plaque (Dead Man's Penny)
- Framed Canada Company land deed for Usborne Twp (George Westcott) 1842
- Quilt made by the Hurondale Patriotic League in 1917
- Baptismal gown worn by three generations of the Sale family.

- Handmade wooden cradle made by Wendel Smith (Schmitt) for his son's Adelbert's children's use. Adelbert and Laura Smith were married in 1925 and had 21 children.

Part of the Huron County Museum artifact, photograph and archival collection was launched as new online collection database resource – PastPerfect online. By the end of 2018 there were approximately 3400 artifact & photograph records available on-line to researchers.

The 2018 Collections Committee met through the year to discuss Museum & Gaol collections issues including storage, space needs, deaccessioning, and site planning.

Members consisted of:

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



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 displayed in the permanent galleries and at the Huron Historic Gaol was initiated.

Conservation work was undertaken to repair damaged portions of the Sherman Tank exhibited outside the Huron County Museum. With the assistance of other Huron County Departments a new cement base was also installed for the tank to rest on

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Staff participated in a variety of workshops and webinars over the course of the year including those offered through Ontario Museum Association, Pillar Nonprofit Network, Canadian Conservation Institute, and the Archives Association of Ontario. Museum staff attended the Ontario Museum Association's annual conference and Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property Conference.

ATTENDANCE

ANNUAL 2017 SITE VISITS	MUSEUM	GAOL
Individual Admissions	6,407	7,487
Groups, Programmes, Special Events	1,230	287
Outreach	5,521	2,491
Object Depositors, OGS, Researchers, Volunteers, Others	2,249	1,481
Meetings, Rentals	3,652	7
ANNUAL TOTAL 2018	21,278	12,888
comparative 2016	22,146	14,844
comparative 2015	22,900	11,605



HURON COUNTY MUSEUM AND HISTORIC GAOL 2018 Statistics

ON-LINE TRAFFIC



WEBSITE:
Sessions

26,248

UP 62% OVER 2016

DIGITIZED NEWSPAPERS:
of online sessions

8,181

UP 18% OVER 2016

individual newspapers now searchable online:

XXX

UP 44% OVER 2016



PAST PERFECT ONLINE:
of artifacts available online

XXX

NEW!

SOCIAL MEDIA

f 2,039 UP 26%
i 1000 UP 98%
t 1,614 UP 10%
b 609 NEW!

XX

ACTIVE MUSEUM MEMBERSHIPS

79

VOLUNTEERS
PROVIDING 2580
VOLUNTEER HOURS
UP 26% OVER 2016

ARCHIVES

XX
ARCHIVES
VISITORS
UP 50%

XX
RESEARCH
REQUESTS
UP 139%

ATTENDANCE

TOTAL ATTENDANCE:

XXX

UP 8% OVER 2016

EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

XXX

UP 13% OVER 2016

GROUPS:

XXX

DOWN 26% OVER 2016

SPECIAL EVENTS:

XXX

DOWN 24% OVER 2016

OUTREACH PROGRAMS:

XXX

UP 65% OVER 2016

REVENUE

ADMISSION

XXX

UP 16% OVER 2016

ROOM RENTAL

XXX

UP 19% OVER 2016

GIFT SHOP

XXX

UP 27% OVER 2016

PROGRAMS

XXX

UP 74% OVER 2016



"Behind the Bars
is a Must Do!"



"FUN FOR THE
FAMILY!"



"Love the Huron
County Museum!"



"One of the best
country museums
we've seen!"



Above comments from TripAdvisor
The Gaol is the #1 attraction in
Huron County and the Museum is #3.
Both sites maintain a 4.5 star rating*

*TripAdvisor stats factual at time of writing



f facebook.com/huroncountymuseum
i instagram.com/huroncountymuseum
t twitter.com/hcmuseum

www.HuronCountyMuseum.ca

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